

Academic Survival Guide

Get Help Here!
This guide is for all students...

If you're struggling, have questions, or need assistance, then you've come to the right place!

Let us help you get connected by pointing you in the right direction.



Contents

1) Time Management	
❖ Definition	3
❖ Self Test - How well do you manage your time?	
❖ How much time do you really have?	4
❖ Time Monitoring Form	
❖ What are your goals?	5
❖ Do you have a schedule?	
❖ Set your priorities.	
❖ Procrastination	6
❖ Time Management Tips	
2) Sensory Preference	
❖ Self Test	7
❖ Sensory Preference Information	8
❖ Sensory Preference Comparison	10
3) Effective Note-Taking	
❖ The 5 C's	11
❖ Pre-reading Questionnaire	
❖ Concentration	12
❖ Note-Taking Questionnaire	13
❖ Note-Taking Styles	14
❖ Tips	15
4) Surviving Text Anxiety	
❖ Signs of Anxiety	16
❖ Test Anxiety Questionnaire	17
❖ Coping Strategies	18
❖ Overcome test Anxiety	19
5) Test-Taking Skills	
❖ Test-Taking Questionnaire	20
❖ Planning your Approach	22
❖ Strategies for Various Tests	22

1 - Time Management

Time management is straightforwardly defined as the management of time. But in a 2001 interview, David Allen observed: You can't manage time, it just is. So "time management" is a mislabeled problem, which has little chance of being an effective approach. What you really manage is your activity during time, and defining outcomes and physical actions required is the core process required to manage what you do.

Time - the measured or measurable period during which an action, process, or condition exists or continues.

Management - the act or art of **managing**: the conducting or supervising of something (as a business).

Managing - to handle or direct with a degree of skill.

Before you begin deciding on the best way to manage your activities, first analyze how well you already manage your time.

Directions: Circle the number that best describes your actual behavior during an academic term. (N=never, R=rarely, S=sometimes, O=often, A=always)

N	R	S	O	A	
0	1	2	3	4	1. I keep a daily schedule or personal calendar of appointments and high-priority tasks.
0	1	2	3	4	2. I schedule some time for fun or physical exercise every day.
4	3	2	1	0	3. I take a few days off from studying right after final examinations.
4	3	2	1	0	4. I have no time to sleep just before exams and therefore feel very tired during exams.
0	1	2	3	4	5. I make a point of getting 50 minutes of concentrated study for every hour of scheduled study time.
0	1	2	3	4	6. I carry a personal calendar or schedule as a handy reference.
4	3	2	1	0	7. I find it necessary to make excuses or apologize for being late.
0	1	2	3	4	8. I get enough sleep so as not to feel sleepy during the day.
0	1	2	3	4	9. I know fairly accurately how much time is spent on various activities on a daily basis.
4	3	2	1	0	10. I allow calls or visits from friends to interfere with following a study schedule.
0	1	2	3	4	11. I have designated times to carry out daily and weekly tasks.
0	1	2	3	4	12. I consult a personal calendar or schedule each day.
0	1	2	3	4	13. I say "no" to invitations that irretrievably interfere with a planned study schedule.
0	1	2	3	4	14. I check a personal calendar or schedule before agreeing to take on a project or attend.
0	1	2	3	4	15. I carry something to study while waiting for class to begin, between classes, waiting to meet a friend, and the like.
4	3	2	1	0	16. I postpone studying to accept a social invitation during a scheduled study time.
4	3	2	1	0	17. I study only when "in the mood."
4	3	2	1	0	18. I plan to do most personal studying on the weekends.
4	3	2	1	0	19. I fall asleep while studying.
4	3	2	1	0	20. I watch television more than one hour per day.

_____ **Total score (sum of circled items)**

If your score is in the 60-80 range, you manage your time well. If your score is in the 40-59 range, you have the basic concepts but need practice and perseverance. If your score was below 40, **read on!**

How much time do you really have?

There are 24 hours in a day, 7 days in a week (168 hours), and 365 days in a year. There is an extra day during leap year. By analyzing your time, you will know what time of the day you do your best work. You will discover how much time you're wasting with telephone calls, interruptions, or just hanging out with friends. Use the time monitoring form below to see exactly where you spend your time:

Time Monitoring Form

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5:30a							
6:00							
6:30							
7:00							
7:30							
8:00							
8:30							
9:00							
9:30							
10:00							
10:30							
11:00							
11:30							
12:00							
12:30							
1:00							
1:30							
2:00							
2:30							
3:00							
3:30							
4:00							
4:30							
5:00							
5:30							
6:00							
6:30							
7:00							
7:30							
8:00							
8:30							
9:00							
9:30							
10:00							
10:30							

What are your goals?

- 1) Make your goals specific and concrete.
- 2) Set long-term and short-term goals?
- 3) Set a deadline for your goals.
- 4) Monitor your goals.
- 5) Change goals if needed.

Do you have a schedule?

- 1) Set up your semester calendar.
 - A. Review Syllabus for class schedules.
 - B. Block all class and lab times
 - C. Highlight exams and project due dates.
 - D. Identify routine homework.
 - E. Incorporate break time.
- 2) Divide study time into 50-minute blocks.
- 3) Use spare time to review.
- 4) Don't forget to reward yourself when you do something right.

Set Priorities

- 1) Which goals are important to you?
- 2) Which goals are urgent?
- 3) Assignments due at the end of the semester can be completed in a series of steps and need not be completed immediately.
- 4) It is important to work on one task at a time.
- 5) Plan time to begin the process, i.e. visiting the library on several occasions to gather research data for a paper that is due.
- 6) Try to plan at least two hours of study time per day to review class notes from your courses and to work on assignments that are due.
- 7) Faithfully using your student planner/calendar will help you to prioritize your work.

How can you establish priorities?

- 1) "To-do list" – Cross off each task as you complete them.

Balancing Life

Most of the time we struggle to keep a balance between:

- 1) Our Needs - eating, sleeping, personal hygiene, etc.
- 2) Our Desires - socializing, concerts, vacations, reading, exercising, shopping, TV/video games.
- 3) Our Obligations (fulfilling the expectations of others) –
 - A. Hanging out with friends instead of doing homework or preparing for an exam.
 - B. Arriving late or missing class will send a negative message to faculty about what you value.
 - C. Constant stress and anxiety of accompany ineffective time management.
 - D. An awareness of how you balance your time is good.

Find a balance between your academic schedule, social life, and alone time!

Procrastination

Procrastination is a major obstacle that can prevent you from practicing good time management skills. It is the constant pushing aside of tasks that need to be completed and is the archenemy of all students.

Ways of overcoming Procrastination

1. Make the Task Meaningful

Ask yourself why the task is important to you and what it has to do with your long-term goal.

2. Take the task apart

Sometime an assignment can appear to be overwhelming. Breaking large assignments into manageable parts will help. Set dates to work on each of the pieces.

3. Keep yourself organized

Having everything you need right at your fingertips will save a lot of time when starting a project.

4. Be positive

Avoid speaking negatively about the task and your ability to move toward completion. Instead, be positive. Tell yourself, "I know that I can finish this work."

5. Plan a reward

Do something for yourself that you would not normally do, but withhold the reward if the task remains incomplete.

6. Just do it – Complete the task

The moment you find yourself procrastinating, complete the task; then, you won't have to think about it anymore.

Time Management Tips

- 1) Write things down. Don't rely on memory
- 2) Prioritize your list
- 3) Plan your week. Spend some time at the beginning of each week to plan your schedule.
- 4) Carry a notebook. Write down those great ideas and brilliant insights (capture your thoughts).
- 5) Learn to say no. Say no to low priority requests.

Food for Thought

Students who control and monitor their time give themselves the ability to be flexible. They understand that **TIME** can be used as an important resource.

2 – Sensory Preference

In this short self-test you will examine which senses you prefer to rely on when processing information and learning. Answer each question with your first “gut reaction” and try not to think too hard about each response.

		A	B	C	D
1.	If you could choose any way to learn, which would you choose?	Reading information on your own	Listening to a lecture	Participating in an experiment or lab activity	Watching a film or looking at diagrams
2.	When giving directions for how to get somewhere, do you:	Write the directions in sentence form	Describe the directions aloud	Show someone the way by taking them or having them follow you	Draw a map
3.	Which are you more likely to recall?	What was written in words	What was said in conversations or lectures	What you did	What you saw
4.	Which type of instructor do you prefer? One who...	Assigns reading and other text materials	Facilitates class discussion	Lets you discover ideas through experience	Uses flow charts/diagrams/slides/charts
5.	In planning to buy a car, what influences your choice the most?	Reading materials about cars	Talking to friends about their cars	Test-driving different cars	Television/promotional advertisements about different cars
6.	Which are you more likely to recall?	The way a person's name is spelled	The sound of a person's name	Your interactions with a person	The person's face
7.	Which would you prefer to do?	Write a story	Listen to music	Make something	Watch a movie

Total A ___ **Total B** ___ **Total C** ___ **Total D** ___

Results

Reading/Writing (Higher score on Column A)

The more read/write answers you chose, the more likely you learn best through reading or writing. Therefore, read all assignments. Focus on headings and subheadings to help you find the author's organization of information. You might find it useful to reread and rewrite words and notes. Use flashcards, lists, and charts to study.

Listening/Aural (Higher score on Column B)

The more aural answers you chose, the more likely you learn best by listening. You might think that you should tape your lectures, but that won't help you separate and organize important lecture ideas. Instead, try converting written lecture notes to audio tapes. To do so, you first review and edit your notes to identify the main ideas and important details. Then read your notes aloud into a tape recorder, leaving brief amounts of time between main ideas and questions. This gives you time

to think and study. Participation in study groups and class discussions also provide ways to learn from what you hear.

Interactive/Kinesthetic (Higher score on Column C)

The more kinesthetic answers you chose, the more likely you learn by direct experience. When you learn from direct experience, you learn by touch or by physical movement. The more you do, the more you learn. Highlighting, underlining, labeling information, and writing add movement to learning. Mapping, charting, or creating other graphics also are ways to learn by doing. Role-plays, models, and experiments also help you learn actively. Participation in study groups or tutoring others provide additional ways to become an active learner.

Visual/Sight (Higher score on Column D)

The more visual answers you chose, the more likely you learn visually. Visual learners prefer flash charts, visual outlines or maps, and graphics. Adding meaningful symbols, colors, and graphics to notes also provide visual cues. Try to visualize how information appears on a page. In study groups or discussions, focus on how people look when they speak.

Sensory Preference Information

We learn through all of our senses, but generally favor one or two. We process visually (through images, color and form), aurally (by hearing and sound), kinesthetically (by moving and manipulating) and through formal text processing (through reading and writing.) Here are your results:

Visual/Sight:

Visual learners prefer seeing what they are learning. Pictures, images, graphs and colors help them understand ideas and mentally organize information better than explanations. A drawing may help more than a discussion about the material. When someone explains something to a visual learner, he or she may create a mental picture of what the person talking describes.

Visual learners prefer to study with charts, visual outlines or other images. Adding meaningful symbols, colors, and graphics to notes provide visual cues. Try to visualize how information appears on a page.

Visual learners are more shape and form-oriented. Formal text-oriented people depend more on words or numbers in their images.

Listening/Verbal/Aural:

Auditory learners prefer spoken messages. Some auditory learners need to hear their own voice to process the information, but others process information through listening to others speak in lectures and small groups or discussions. They can attend aurally to details, translate the spoken word easily into the written word, and are not easily distracted in their listening ability.

Auditory learners will benefit from converting written lecture notes to audio tapes. To do so, you first review and edit your notes to identify the main ideas and important details. Then read your notes aloud into a tape recorder, leaving brief amounts of time between main ideas and questions. This gives you time to think and study. Auditory learners will benefit from regularly attendance in classes and participation in study groups and class discussions.

Kinesthetic/Interactive/Tactile Learning:

Kinesthetic learners want to sense the position and movement of what they are working on. Tactile learners want to touch. "Enough talking and looking," they may say. "Let's work with this stuff. Let's get our hands dirty already."

Those preferring hands-on, kinesthetic learning gravitate toward active, sensory-motor learning. They tend to prefer "learning by doing," and may find theoretical and abstract thinking a challenge. Kinesthetic learners tend to have good motor memory and motor coordination.

When you learn from direct experience, you learn by touch or by physical movement. The more you do, the more you learn. Most college teaching relies more on traditional formal text learning. But kinesthetic learners can integrate more interaction by highlighting, underlining, and labeling information. Try mapping, charting, or creating other graphics along with using role-playing, models, and experiments to help you learn actively. When using flash cards place them on the ground and organize them in meaningful groups. Buy a roll of large "butcher paper" and hang it on your walls for processing/mapping and drawing out information you are trying to learn. Place it in different areas of your room for different topics. Participation in study groups or tutoring others provide additional ways to become an active learner.

Formal Text Processing (Reading and Writing)

Most college courses use this as the dominant mode of learning. You are required to do a significant amount of reading and writing in order to be successful in most college classes. If this is your dominant style you find it natural to process material by reading, taking notes, and organizing your material on paper (or on a computer) through traditional formats such as outlines and written or typed text.

To maximize your learning experience, continue with the basics: preview, then read all assignments, focus on headings and subheadings to help you find the author's organization of information. Use flashcards, lists, and charts to study. In addition, be sure to challenge yourself to integrate other modes of processing (mapping, study groups, etc.) to enhance and balance your learning experience.

Sensory Preference Comparison

	In Class	While Studying	During Exams
Visual/Sight (prefers pictures, charts, diagrams, graphs, etc.)	-Underline important points -Highlight with different colors -Use symbols, charts and graphs	-Underline notes and text -Highlight notes and text (colors) -Summarize with images	-Recall pictures -Draw concept map of essay -“Dump” formulas and diagrams
Listening/Aural (prefers hearing information)	-Attend lectures, discussions and tutorials -Tape lecture for later	-Discuss material in study group -Summarize notes, then read out loud -Read onto tape, then listen back	-Listen to your inner voice to recall information -Talk out question under breath
Reading/Writing (prefers reading or writing about information)	-Create lists and headings -Take complete lecture notes	-ID key words and associate them with details -Reread notes and text and summarize them in writing -Reread and summarize old tests -Answer (in writing) the review questions	-Use key words to trigger more complete answers -At the beginning of the exam, write out important lists -Essay-write thesis, then outline -Use Information Matrix to help organize
Interactive/Kinesthetic (prefers moving, touching, visualizing movement or hands-on activities to learn information)	-Use all senses in class -Labs-field trips	-Trial and error is important-can learn from mistakes -Create personal examples -Use pictures to illustrate notes -Stand, move, walk -Study in an exam-like environment	-Remember examples -Stretch or move to jog memory

3 - Effective Note-Taking

The 5 C's of Note-Taking

- 1) Take Charge of Your Lectures
- 2) Concentrate and Focus on the Material
- 3) Listen Critically
- 4) Connect and Capture Key Ideas

Take Charge of Your Lectures

- 1) Commit to Class
- 2) Pre-read material to be covered before class
- 3) Identify areas that are difficult to understand
- 4) Arrive to class early and review notes from the previous class period

Pre-reading Questionnaire

Directions: Circle the number that best describes your actual behavior during an academic term. (N=never, R=rarely, S=sometimes, O=often, A=always)

N	R	S	O	A	
0	1	2	3	4	1. I prepare in advance for lectures by pre-reading textual materials on the upcoming lecture topic.
0	1	2	3	4	2. Before a lecture, I have identified the main ideas related to the lecture topic.
0	1	2	3	4	3. Before a lecture, I know the name and spelling of key details of the lecture topic.
0	1	2	3	4	4. Before a lecture, I have some idea of the relationship between main ideas and their key details; for example, I would know in advance if the topic involves a time sequence, cause and effect, or contrasting and comparing subtopics.
0	1	2	3	4	5. My previewing of textual material prior to a lecture is accomplished rapidly (at a rate of 10-15 minutes per hour of lecture).
0	1	2	3	4	6. Before a lecture, I have a general idea of the format my condensed notes will take (diagrams, flowcharts, category charts, cards, outlines, or some combination of the above).
4	3	2	1	0	7. I fall asleep during lecture.
4	3	2	1	0	8. After a lecture, I spend too much time making a set of condensed notes for review.
4	3	2	1	0	9. I find it hard to follow what the lecturer is saying.
4	3	2	1	0	10. I find it hard to concentrate during a lecture.
4	3	2	1	0	11. The vocabulary in a lecture is new to me.
0	1	2	3	4	12. I spend 10 to 15 minutes looking over what will be covered in a lecture that day or the next day.

_____ Total score (sum of circled items)

If your score was 36 or above, you are doing well. If your score was 35 or below, pre-reading can help you learn more during the hours of lecture you hear every week.

Pre-reading should not take more than 10 to 15 minutes per hour of lecture material. Look for the “big picture” or main points in the text. Get a sense of the vocabulary. Spot the patterns of relationships between subtopics and main topics. Analyze causes and effects, comparisons and contrasts, the time sequencing, and so on. Studies show that pre-reading increases later reading rate an average of 25% at the same time that comprehension of the topic increases by 10%!

CONCENTRATE and focus on the material!!!

Beware of Distractions

- 1) Talking
- 2) Daydreaming & Doodling
- 3) Worrying

Listen Critically

- 1) Be Ready for the Message
- 2) Listen to Main Concepts
- 3) Listen for New Ideas
- 4) Ask Questions

Connect and Capture Key Ideas

- 1) Identify key words, themes and main points
- 2) Relate Details to the Main Point
- 3) Listen for Clues
 - A. Note when a topic comes up more than once
 - B. Transition words signal the change in topics or new key points:
 - “In contrast to”
 - “Let’s move on”
 - “This will be on the next exam”

Choose the Note-Taking Style that’s Just Right for You

Use any strategy that will help the key ideas stand out to you!

Note-Taking Questionnaire

Directions: Circle the number that best describes your actual behavior during an academic term. (N=never, R=rarely, S=sometimes, O=often, A=always)

N	R	S	O	A		
4	3	2	1	0	1.	I highlight and/or underline as much as a third of each page of my textbooks.
0	1	2	3	4	2.	I rewrite/organize my notes immediately (within one or two days) following the lecture.
4	3	2	1	0	3.	I don't understand some parts of what I am studying.
0	1	2	3	4	4.	I make notes on a separate sheet of paper or in a notebook as I read my textbooks.
0	1	2	3	4	5.	I condense my notes into outlines, tables, charts, diagrams, or cards to facilitate review.
0	1	2	3	4	6.	I organize my condensed notes so that supporting details are placed into the context of main ideas covered in the lecture or text.
0	1	2	3	4	7.	I write condensed notes in a format that I can review easily and quickly.
0	1	2	3	4	8.	I design condensed notes so that I can use them later to test myself over the information.
0	1	2	3	4	9.	I use flash cards to memorize important details that my self-test reveals I do not recall easily.
4	3	2	1	0	10.	I get lost in the details of the subject I'm studying and "can't see the forest for the trees."
4	3	2	1	0	11.	I find it hard to distinguish the more important information from less important details.
0	1	2	3	4	12.	I note relationships among themes or topics as I study.
0	1	2	3	4	13.	I see how details fit into the "big picture" of the topic I'm studying.
0	1	2	3	4	14.	I organize my notes so that relationships among details "jump up" at me as I review them.
4	3	2	1	0	15.	When I am studying, I am not sure how to organize the material so that I will see and remember meaningful associations on the test.

_____ Total score (sum of circled items)

If your score was between:

53-60 = You take very good notes.

45-52 = You take good notes, but could use improvement

35-44 = You need help!

Below 34 = You are in desperate need of help!

A good set of study notes will provide you with:

- 1) Clues to all essential information on the topic.
- 2) Highly organized information, in a format that reflects organically the logical relationships among the pieces of information to be remembered.
- 3) Visual interest so that ideas jump up from the page and are therefore more memorable.
- 4) Material condensed enough so that it is possible to review it repeatedly.
- 5) A format that permits self-testing because you can't be sure you know the material until you have successfully tested yourself on it.

Note-Taking Styles:

- 1) Outline Method
- 2) The Cornell Method
- 3) Paragraph (Summarizing) Method
- 4) Fishbone Diagram (Listing) Method

The Outline Method-

- 1) Use headings and subheadings followed by course material.

Example of a Formal outline:

- I. Primary main point
 - A. Supporting detail
 - B. Next supporting detail
 - a. Aspect of the detail
 - b. Another aspect
- II. Second main point

Example of an Informal Outline:

- Main point
- detail
- aspect

The Cornell Method-

- 1) Divide your notepaper by drawing a vertical line 2 inches from the left margin.
- 2) On the right side, take your notes from class.
- 3) On the left side, write:
 - a. key words
 - b. questions
 - c. comments
 - d. examples
- 5) On the bottom, write a summary

This will make your work easier to review later. Test yourself by identifying the lecture material on the right, prompted by your comments on the left.

The Paragraph Method (summarizing)-

- 1) Often works best when a lot of notes are given in a short period of time and the instructor is a fast talker or the lecture is disorganized.
- 2) Listen critically for important facts.
- 3) Create your own summary of what has been presented.
- 4) Write down summary in your own words.

The Fishbone Diagram (listing)-

- 1) The Problem or outcome is printed in the “head” of the fish.
- 2) Identify the primary factors and connect as ribs to the backbone.
- 3) Elaborate each rib with the details related to the primary factor.

Other Note-Taking Tips

- 1) Always date your notes.
- 2) Paraphrase your notes.
- 3) Don't Erase Mistakes.
- 4) For Lectures with fast talkers, consider writing in cursive or tape recording.
- 5) Use Abbreviations.
- 6) Be Organized.
- 7) Evaluate your note-taking style strategy regularly.

4 - Surviving Test Anxiety

Signs of Anxiety:

Headaches	Rapid Heart Beat
Anger	Pacing
Pacing	Nausea
Sweating	Depression
Fainting	Negative Self-Talk

Test or performance anxiety typically occurs:

- 1) In the presence of a difficult or challenging situation,
- 2) When you believe you are inadequate or incapable of meeting the challenge, and,
- 3) You fear the consequence of possible failure.

When psyched out and anxiety takes over, you may experience:

- 1) Distracting thoughts of failure
- 2) An inability to pick out important cues
- 3) Becoming distracted by irrelevant cues
- 4) Interpreting the results of physical arousal (muscle tension, heart rate, respiration) as signs of fear
- 5) Attempting to avoid or escape the situation
- 6) Giving up

Test Anxiety is common among college students!

Test Anxiety Questionnaire

Directions: Please indicate the extent to which each of the following **physical** symptoms affects you just before or during an exam. **Circle the appropriate number preceding each symptom.**

() =never/not at all 1=rarely/slightly 2=sometime/a fair amount 3=often/much 4=very much/always

N R S O A

0	1	2	3	4	1.	Nausea
0	1	2	3	4	2.	Constipation
4	3	2	1	0	3.	Chills
4	3	2	1	0	4.	Feeling dizzy/faint
0	1	2	3	4	5.	Rapid heart rate
0	1	2	3	4	6.	Muscular tension
4	3	2	1	0	7.	Clammy hands
0	1	2	3	4	8.	Headache
0	1	2	3	4	9.	Dry Mouth
4	3	2	1	0	10.	Stomach cramps
0	1	2	3	4	11.	Trembling
0	1	2	3	4	12.	Diarrhea
0	1	2	3	4	13.	Itching
0	1	2	3	4	14.	Unsteady legs
0	1	2	3	4	15.	Rash
4	3	2	1	0	16.	Flushing
4	3	2	1	0	17.	Perspiration
4	3	2	1	0	18.	Chest Pain
4	3	2	1	0	19.	Difficulty Swallowing
4	3	2	1	0	20.	Ragged Breathing

_____ **Total of circled numbers**

If your score is less than 10 (and you did not circle any 3s or 4s, you do not appear to suffer from physical symptoms of test anxiety. If your score is in the 11 to 29 range, you could benefit from information on relief of physical tensions. If your score exceeds 30, or if you marked 3 or 4 in any two categories, you should inquire about professional assistance in learning to relax in stressful situations.

Directions: Please indicate how often you might have the following **negative thoughts** just before or during an exam. **Circle the appropriate number preceding each symptom.**
0=never 1=rarely 2=sometimes 3=often 4=always

N R S O A

0	1	2	3	4	1.	I think, "I must get a good grade on the test or at least be above the class average."
0	1	2	3	4	2.	I think, "If I get a low grade on the exam, I am stupid and worthless."
4	3	2	1	0	3.	I think, "I'll never remember all this information; it's too much."
4	3	2	1	0	4.	I think, "I'm going to fail."
0	1	2	3	4	5.	I think, "If I fail this test, there'll be nothing to do with my life."
0	1	2	3	4	6.	I think about how many questions I am not answering correctly.
4	3	2	1	0	7.	I worry about how much time I have left.
0	1	2	3	4	8.	I look around the room and think about how well others are doing.
0	1	2	3	4	9.	I think "I can't answer this!" when I encounter a difficult item.
4	3	2	1	0	10.	I sometimes think about things completely unrelated to the test questions.
0	1	2	3	4	11.	I wonder what people, especially the faculty, will think of me when they see my test score.
0	1	2	3	4	12.	I worry about my ability to pass the test.

_____ Total of circled numbers

If you have 12 or few points you do not appear to hurt your test taking with a lot of dysfunctional thoughts just before and during tests. If you had 13 to 24 points, you could benefit from some anti-anxiety test taking tips. If you have more than 25 points, you may want to seek out some help with your anxiety from a professional counselor.

There are several ways to make test anxiety more manageable:

- 1) Preparation
- 2) Keep a positive attitude
- 3) Relaxation techniques
- 4) Learn good test-taking skills

ADDITIONAL COPING STRATEGIES:

The techniques for dealing with test or performance anxiety can be divided into five basic principles:

- 1) Be healthy
- 2) Be prepared
- 3) Practice the performance
- 4) Regulate your arousal level:
 - A. Deep breathing
 - B. Progressive muscle relaxation
 - C. Reduce distractions
 - D. Rituals
- 5) Control the fear:

- A. Positive self-talk
- B. On-task self-talk
- C. Gaining perspective

The day of the test:

- 1) Begin your day with a moderate breakfast and avoid coffee,
- 2) Try to do something relaxing the hour before the test,
- 3) Plan to arrive at the test location early, and
- 4) Avoid classmates who generate anxiety.

During the test:

- 1) Tell yourself “I can be anxious later, now is the time to take the exam.”
- 2) Focus on answering the question, not on your grade!
- 3) Counter negative thoughts with more valid thoughts like, “I don’t have to be perfect.”
- 4) Take deep slow breaths and try to maintain a positive attitude.

Remember, it is perfectly natural to experience test anxiety while in college. The main thing is not to let it get out of hand.

Anxiety can serve as a motivator that prompts us to work toward our full potential. When the focus of our energy turns to the anxiety rather than the task at hand, then it becomes detrimental to our efforts.

To overcome test anxiety:

- 1) Develop good study habits.
- 2) Avoid cramming at the last minute.
- 3) Eat a moderate meal before the test.
- 4) Learn to relax.
- 5) STOP those negative thoughts!

5 -Test-Taking Skills

Test-Taking Questionnaire

Indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false in describing your test-taking behavior.

T	F	1.	During a test, I am disturbed by other students in the room.
T	F	2.	As soon as I am handed my test, I start answering the questions and work straight through the test, taking each one in numerical order.
T	F	3.	I usually leave the testing room early, before the full test time has elapsed.
T	F	4.	I answer every question if there is no penalty for guessing.
T	F	5.	I read each option on a multiple-choice question and consider each option as a separate question.
T	F	6.	I think about how many questions I have already missed as I work my way through a test.
T	F	7.	I sometimes return to test questions I've already answered and change them on the hunch I was wrong the first time.
T	F	8.	In considering whether a multiple-choice option is true or false, I try to think of unusual exceptions or special cases.
T	F	9.	I often "pull an all-nighter" before an exam.
T	F	10.	I arrive early for exams and quiz my classmates, or have them quiz me, until the exam starts.
T	F	11.	I underline key words in the stem of the question before choosing an answer.
T	F	12.	Before starting to answer any questions, I calculate how much time is available for each test item.
T	F	13.	I make a special note when a test item is negatively worded.
T	F	14.	If I don't see the correct answer immediately, I write what I do know about the topic on the test margin to look for a possible hidden relationship between the information I can recall and the response options available.
T	F	15.	If I have to guess, I look for clues in the stem and options to indicate a possible best guess.
T	F	16.	When the test time is up, I fill in answers on test items I don't have time to even read.
T	F	17.	When I get back a scored test, I check it over to see the reasons I did not give correct answers.
T	F	18.	I use all the time allowed for a test.
T	F	19.	I know when it's a good idea to guess at answers I don't know from knowledge of content.
T	F	20.	I answer all the easy questions first.
T	F	21.	If the test lasts 60 minutes, and there are 40 questions, I spend a full 1 ½ minutes on each question.
T	F	22.	My eating habits change greatly on the day or two before a major test.
T	F	23.	I live on caffeine for the day or so before a major test.
T	F	24.	I get stuck on one question and spend a long time trying to figure out the answer to it.
T	F	25.	I sometimes run out of time on tests.

Compare your answers with the following correct answers. Give yourself 1 point for each answer you answered correctly.

- 1) False. If you are disturbed by others in the room during a test, you need to work on your concentration.
- 2) False. Answer all the easy questions first.
- 3) False. Use extra time to double-check your coding of responses on the answer sheet.
- 4) True. Guess when all else fails.
- 5) True. Each option is a true-false question by itself and should be so considered.
- 6) False. Thinking about how many questions you may have already missed makes you overanxious and interferes with your concentration.
- 7) False. Research on changing answers indicates that first responses tend to be correct.
- 8) False. You want to give the “best” answer, not the “perfect” answer.
- 9) False. You won’t be in optimal physical condition to take the test, if you stay up all night.
- 10) False. You are not likely to learn anything important at this stage.
- 11) True. Many a multiple-choice question has been missed by overlooking one key word in either the stem or a response option.
- 12) True. Know where you want to be at one quarter, one half, and three quarters of the time allowed to complete the test.
- 13) True. Circle or double underline the word in the stem that makes the item negative or reversed so that you won’t forget it.
- 14) True. List, chart, or draw a diagram in the test margin. This sometimes reveals connections not previously noticed.
- 15) True. There may be clues that indicate a better guess.
- 16) True. The best strategy, from a statistical point of view, is to select one column and fill in the dots straight down that column.
- 17) True. It’s a good idea to review returned exams to discover the types of errors you made.
- 18) True. You should use all the time allowed.
- 19) True. Guess whenever there is no penalty for guessing.
- 20) True. Go quickly through a test and answer the easy questions first. This will leave more time for the harder ones.
- 21) False. Your calculation for the amount of time to give for each question should include a few minutes for review at the end.
- 22) False. It’s not a good idea to drastically change your eating habits prior to an exam.
- 23) False. Students have been known to be too sick to take a test because of overdosing on caffeine and not eating properly prior to a test.
- 24) False. It is better to make a mark in the margin next to a difficult question and come back to it after you have answered all the easier questions.
- 25) False. If you glance over the whole test before you start answering any questions and calculate how much time you have to spend on each one, this shouldn’t happen.

Total Answers Correct:

20-25 = Good test-taking skills.

15-19 = You are probably losing points on tests due to test taking errors.

Below 15 = Read on!

First & Foremost-

Put the test in perspective.

Of course, you want to do your best, but remember:

- 1) This test is not the end of the world, all you are doing is putting marks on a piece of paper or on a computer screen.
- 2) Be prepared. Relax.
- 3) Know that you will pass the test with flying colors.

Planning Your Approach

- 1) Prepare physically for the exam.
- 2) Prepare mentally for the exam.
- 3) Find out about the test.
- 4) Know what is expected of you.
- 5) Design an exam plan.
- 6) Join a study group.
- 7) Use tutoring and other campus support resources.

Strategies for Various Tests

One strategy that works for almost all tests:

- 1) If an answer comes quickly, go with it!
- 2) If you're really not sure, come back to it later.

Otherwise, different tests have different strategies:

- 1) Objective tests
- 2) Subjective tests

Objective & Subjective Tests

Objective tests include:

- 1) Multiple choice
- 2) Matching
- 3) True-false
- 4) Fill in the blank

Subjective tests include:

- 1) Short answer
- 2) Essay questions

Good study strategies include:

- 1) Using flash cards
- 2) Making a concept vocabulary list
- 3) Reviewing your text's study guide
- 4) Reviewing your notes
- 5) Work with a tutor
- 6) Join a study group

Multiple Choice Strategies

- 1) Read the question carefully and try to answer it before you read the choices.
- 2) Strike out wrong answers.
- 3) Mark answers clearly and consistently.
- 4) Change answers cautiously. Beware of second-guessing yourself.
- 5) Read all the options before making a choice.
- 6) If you don't know an answer, move on.
- 7) If all else fails, make an educated guess!!

True-False Strategies

- 1) Read the question carefully.
- 2) Go with your hunch.
- 3) Watch for key words:
 - A. Absolutes (never, etc.) are probably false
 - B. Relatives (some, etc.) are probably true
 - C. Double negatives – not untruthful, etc.
- 4) If a part of it is false, all of it is false.
- 5) Answer all questions unless there is a penalty for guessing.

Fill-in-the-Blank Strategies

- 1) Read thoroughly to be sure what is being asked.
- 2) Be brief and specific.
- 3) Give an answer for every blank.
- 4) Short blanks may have long answers and vice versa. Don't assume anything.
- 5) Remember an "a" before a blank wants a consonant word and "an" a vowel word.
- 6) Watch for key "trigger" words.

Essay Question Strategies

- 1) Read the question carefully.
- 2) What is the question asking for?
- 3) Outline the key ideas.
- 4) Refer specifically to the question in your opening sentence.
- 5) Make a clear, coherent thesis statement.
- 6) Develop the main body of the essay to support your thesis statement.
- 7) Conclude by summarizing how your thesis is supported.
- 8) Watch grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- 9) Use humor if it fits in.
- 10) Be sure you have completely answered the question.
- 11) Write legibly.
- 12) Proofread your work.

Okay, you flunked it!

Now recover your balance.

- 1) Don't let yourself become undone by one failure.
- 2) Use the disappointment to critically think about
 - A. The causes of the poor performance
 - B. Crafting new strategies to improve your situation.
- 3) Begin by reviewing your test results.
- 4) Talk to your instructor or a tutor.

Finally, one more time:

The Big Three

Be prepared!

Relax!

Know you can do it!

**Student Counseling and Psychological Services
University Hospital Clinic Building
6th Floor**

**For Appointments Please Call:
409-747-9508
Monday-Friday 8am -4pm**

**For More Information Visit:
<http://www.utmb.edu/CAPS/>**