

EXAMS—TESTS TAKING TIPS

It is most important to build up your knowledge and understanding of the subject through systematic study, reviewing and classwork. The following tips are designed to help you do your best with what you know.

ESSAY TESTS:

- **Schedule your time and your work.** Outline important parts. Get the core and supporting examples and facts. Be direct
- **Look for clue words** such as “contrast, compare, criticize, define, describe, discuss and list.”
- **Omit or postpone the difficult questions.** Do the easy questions first.
- **Read instructions carefully.** Find out what the instructor wants. Read the questions carefully.
- **Estimate your answers.** Don’t guess on long essay questions. Make educated guesses on short-answer questions. Don’t pad. Relate the questions to the core of important ideas.
- **Review your work.** Check spelling, grammar and your name. Did you use examples? Where you direct?

OBJECTIVE TESTS:

- **Schedule your time.** Look over the entire test and make a rough estimate of the time you should spend on each part. Pace yourself.
- **Find the clue words** such as “some, every, usually, always, and never.” They are used to make the question or statement clearly true or false.
- **Omit the difficult questions.** Postpone the difficult questions on the first pass through the test. Do the easy ones first and mark the others with a check in the margin so that you return to them later.
- **Read carefully.** Read the directions. Read the questions completely and with care. Look for the instructor’s intention. It may even help to circle or underline words which will help you understand what the instructor is asking.
- **Estimate.** If there is no penalty for incorrect answers, then be certain you answer all questions. Guess at those you do not know.
- **Review.** Reread and examine the most difficult questions and then the easier ones. Review all question if time permits. But don’t change your answers unless you have good reason to (i.e. something in the test provided a clue).