



Academic Advising & Support Office

Strategies for During the Test

Working through the Test

- Read the directions first
 - May establish length of your response
 - May establish the amount of time you have to complete the test
 - May establish the approach you should take (explain, compare, mark the two best, etc.)
- Read the questions and any other text carefully
 - Essay Tests - Read all questions before starting to answer, determine time allotment
- Use your time wisely
 - Plan out how you will answer the questions
 - Answer the easiest questions first
 - Be flexible - If you are running out of time answer the easiest ones first, then outline points in unfinished questions, check your answers if you have extra time
- Make notes
 - Underline or circle important words that give you clues to answer the question
 - Cross off choices you have used, eliminated, or know are not correct
 - Mark questions requiring special attention

Know What Each Question Requires

True-False

- The answer must be 100% true
- Mark qualifiers - *always, no, not, all, some, most, many, usually, never, none*
 - Try reading it without the qualifier or swapping in a different one, this can sometimes make the answer more clear
- Mark "true" if you really do not know

Matching

- Mark off answers to eliminate choices
- Match shorter items to longer items – matching usually has a column of words or shorter phrases and another of longer phrases (vocabulary words and their definitions), go down the list of longer phrases and find the matches in the list of shorter phrases

Multiple Choice

- Treat them as true-false questions
 - Look at each choice as a true-false statement to make it easier to spot the correct answer
- Throw out the trash!
 - Eliminate the options you know are not true and cross them off, the fewer choices you have the better the odds of selecting the right choice
- Choose the middle number
 - Test choices usually include one choice with a higher number and one with a lower number, use this strategy to help eliminate choices
- “All of the Above” options
 - Double-check that at least two options are 100% true

Fill in the Blanks/Sentence Completion

- Clear up any uncertainty
 - Ask the instructor a clarifying question
- Blank length does not matter
 - The length of the blank is not an indicator of the length of the answer
- Treat some sentences as multiple questions
 - If there are multiple blanks in one sentence use the sentence content to help
 - If right next to each other, it could be the name of a person or place
 - If far apart, split the sentence in two and answer each separately

Essay Questions

- Make sure you understand the question, ask the professor for clarification if you do not
- Be well organized, well supported, and neatly written
 - Answer question at start of response
 - Choose an organizational pattern
 - Use clear transitions
 - Wrap up with a summary
 - Do not make it too wordy
- Support Your Answer
 - Use solid evidence to support your answer
 - Stay clear of personal opinions unless asked for
 - Include examples, details, and evidence
 - If possible, try to include details from multiple sources used in class
- Appearance Matters
 - Appearance of your writing has an unconscious effect on how its graded
 - Write legibly and on one side of the page, leave space around the essay, avoid careless errors, and write in pen instead of pencil