

How to Succeed at... TAKE-HOME EXAMS

Not all exams take place in a classroom. Sometimes, professors trade closed books and short time frames for open books and longer, assignment-style exams. But just because you have your notes or more time doesn't mean these exams will be easy. On the contrary, take-home exams often have more difficult questions and higher expectations than regular exams. Preparing for a take-home, therefore, will look a little different.



Common Take-Home Time Frames

- **The In-Class Substitute**
 - Similar format to an in-class exam with a precise start and end time.
 - Might be three hours, but often shortened because you have access to your notes.
 - Make sure you login on time and have reliable Internet.
 - Prepare by memorizing key information, making up sample questions, and sorting your notes in an easily accessible way.
- **The Multiday Exam**
 - Appears more like an additional assignment with a due date than a traditional exam.
 - Might last a day or even a week.
 - Characterized by essay(s) and/or a large number of problems to solve.
 - Sometimes requires research beyond your textbooks and lecture notes.
 - Professors will be expecting higher quality answers here, so make sure you outline before you start writing and revise your work after.

General Studying Tips

Even though many take-homes are open book, you still need to study for them if you want to do well. Consider these do's and don'ts:

Do:

- Memorize key course info (vocab, dates, formulas, etc.) for easier recall during your exam.
- Study by preparing sample outlines, questions, answers, translations, etc.
- Look for connections between course topics.
- Confirm in advance your exam time frame, permitted resources, format, etc.
- Study in the same location you intend to write the exam.

Don't:

- Try to relearn course content on the fly. You won't have time to look up everything mid-exam.
- Only study by skimming your notes.
- Study topics independently from one another.
- Wait until the last minute to look up your exam instructions.
- Study in different locations (if you can help it).

How to Prepare for...

- Multiple Choice → -Memorize key definitions, dates, etc. Make up practice questions for significant chapters and lecture topics.
- Short Answer → -As practice, write 5ish-sentence descriptions of key people, events, rules, details, etc. related to the course.
- Essay Questions → -Make up potential essay questions (preferably dealing with 2 or more course topics). Prepare sample, *adaptable* essay outlines that you can build off when writing your exam.
- Translation → -Continue to memorize vocabulary. Find new (or redo) sample translations from textbooks, Scripture, or online.

Make a Study Schedule

Whether your exam season consists of multiple take-homes or just one – whether that exam is in a scheduled 3-hour block or takes place over multiple days – you’re going to want to make a study schedule. This will help you budget time for studying, for writing longer take-home exams, for other life commitments, and even for de-stressing. Here’s a sample:

TIME	Monday	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7:00am	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up
8:00	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	CLAS 1043 EXAM	Wake up	Wake up
9:00	Study		Work on	Study	CLAS 1043 EXAM	Work on	
10:00	Study		CLAS 1033	Study	CLAS 1043 EXAM	CLAS 1023	Church
11:00	Study		Paper	Study		Paper	Church
12:00pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00	Work	Study	CLAS 1013 EXAM	Study		Work	
2:00	Work	Study	CLAS 1013 EXAM	Study	Work on	Work	Work on
3:00	Work	Study	CLAS 1013 EXAM	Study	CLAS 1023	Work	CLAS 1023
4:00	Work	Study	Work on	Study	Paper	Work	Paper
5:00	Work	Dinner	CLAS 1033	Study		Work	
6:00	Work		Paper	Dinner	Dinner	Work	
7:00	Dinner	Work on	Dinner	Edit and	Work Out	Dinner	Dinner
8:00	Work Out	CLAS 1033	Work Out	Finish	De-stress	Work on	
9:00	De-stress	Paper	Bible Study	CLAS 1033	(Movie, Game,	CLAS 1023	
10:00	time		Bible Study	Paper	Chat with friend,	Paper	
11:00				CLAS 1033 EXAM DUE			CLAS 1023 EXAM DUE MON. NIGHT

Just remember... Your schedule has to fit your life. Find the balance of studying and writing that works for you, then run with it.

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