Successful Transitions

Learning Seminar Program
Weeks 2-9: Autumn, 2011

Yep! We’re looking at exam preparation again.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Assessment 1</th>
<th>Assessment 2</th>
<th>Assessment 3</th>
<th>Assessment 4</th>
<th>Assessment 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUST101</td>
<td>Week 5 Review essay 1000wds. 20%</td>
<td>Week 9 Research essay 2000wds. 40%</td>
<td>Ongoing Tut. Participation 10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam Period Final exam 2 hrs. 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL182</td>
<td>Week 3 In-class quiz 5%</td>
<td>Week 6* Report 300-500wds. 20%</td>
<td>Week 10* Report 400-600wds. 25%</td>
<td>Week 13 Persuasive text 800wds. 30%</td>
<td>Week 14 Portfolio / Participation 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL120</td>
<td>Week 5 In-class test 10%</td>
<td>Week 9 Close Reading Essay 1200wds. 30%</td>
<td>Week 11 Take-home test 500wds. 10%</td>
<td>Ongoing Tut. Participation 10%</td>
<td>Exam Period Final exam 1500-2000wds. 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDS150</td>
<td>Week 4 Media analysis 1000wds. 20%</td>
<td>TBA in class Group presentation 20%</td>
<td>Week 10 Journal 1400wds. 20%</td>
<td>Week 13 Essay 2000wds. 40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC103</td>
<td>TBA 3 x Tut. Exercises 400wds. e) 10% e)</td>
<td>Week 11 Essay 1500wds. 30%</td>
<td>Ongoing Tut. Participation 10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam Period Final exam 1 hr. 30%</td>
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Today’s seminar will...

✓ introduce some basic techniques for effective exam preparation.
Help! Help! The exams are coming...

Don’t panic - prepare!
Organised the material you need to study:

i. Gathered lecture & tutorial notes?

ii. Made sure they correspond to the course outline?

iii. Divided your notes into topics covered each week during semester?

iv. Written summaries?
Exams test your understanding of the course contents, not your ability to memorise lectures & textbooks
So...

✓ Draw up a study planner (and stick to it!)

✓ Prioritise the hardest subjects:

* More time is needed for the harder subjects
✓ **Set study goals:**

~ I will read chapter 3 &/or work through 5 equations &/or learn main concepts discussed in lectures from weeks 1-3

✓ **Set study periods:**

~ Short focused sessions (50 minutes)
## Note-taking strategies

### Theme 1: The economic conditions/environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference 1</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarke, T. &amp; Clegg, S. (1998) Paradigms. Changing paradigms: The transformation of management knowledge for the 21st century. London: Harper Collins Business pp.9-59</td>
<td>This article discusses changes in management practice in terms of 'paradigms', a notion in management popularised by Kuhn. With regard to the economic influence on such paradigms, some theorists argue that 'long waves' are responsible for changes to management practice - the 'long wave theory' &quot;proposes that the world economy displays a rhythmical pattern, as rapid expansion and stagnation alternate with a periodicity of around fifty years&quot; (p.11)...</td>
<td>I should explore the nature of this theory as it might give me a macro view on the micro-features presented by Robbins above...</td>
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# Note-taking strategies

## Example of the Cornell Method

**Essay Question:**

"Imagination is the basis of all mental life - Discuss Reference: Raskall, P.N. (1997) The Psychology of Imagination, Harper & Row, Sydney"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headings or Themes</th>
<th>Notes or Content</th>
<th>Reactions/ Insights/ Cross-references/ Ideas/ Confusions/ Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition of imagination</td>
<td>&quot;Imagination is defined as that mental faculty which enables us to link sensory impressions and thought&quot; p.23</td>
<td>What does this mean? Perhaps that without imagination the world would appear to be a chaotic jumble??</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-imagination</td>
<td>&quot;Recourse to 'imagination' in explanations of creative thought betray a type of nostalgia for a bygone romantic age which in fact never existed. There is no function of human understanding which, theoretically, cannot be adequately, and non-mysteriously, accounted for in terms of information processing and retrieval&quot; p.39</td>
<td>This is rubbish, surely!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human understanding is largely impoverished without the contributions of imagination. (see Jones &amp; Brown, 1997, p 115)</td>
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</table>
If possible, review old papers...

- **Analyse** the wording of questions

- **Analyse** the **nature** of questions (descriptive, critical, etc)

- **Practise** under exam conditions
Form a group...

- Review past exams together (brainstorm answers)
- Try explaining concepts/ quiz each other
Get to know the terrain: different exam formats...

For *essay* exams:

- If there are 4 questions, study 4 topics in detail + 2 backups.
Get to know the terrain: different exam formats...

For *multiple choice* exams:

- **MC** exams usually only cover material discussed in lectures & tutorials (**NOTE: MC questions** can test your knowledge **AND** your ability to apply that knowledge).
- Look at the main ideas/concepts for each week & create flash cards.
- Write definitions, main ideas & supporting information on one side of the cards with prompts on the reverse side.
Multiple choice exams....

- Be aware of the rules about guessing.
- Make a time plan.
- Read the questions carefully.
- Be alert for words commonly used in MCQs.
- Answer easy questions first - harder ones later.
- Try to think of the answers before reading the choices.
- Make sure to answer in the proper space.
Get to know the terrain: different exam formats...

For **short answer** exams

As for **MC** exams, but also ...

- Practise writing short answers to questions.
- Concentrate on giving the answer in the first sentence and then using details & facts to demonstrate your understanding.
- Keep it short and to the point.
Writing short essay exams...

Carefully & thoroughly analyse the essay question.

➢ Determine the key concepts (the topic/s) in the question.

➢ Determine what the question is asking you to do (i.e. the purpose/s of the question)
Sample essay question...

*How does the concept of culture contribute to our understanding of society?*

~ What is the **TOPIC** of the question?

~ What is the **PURPOSE** of the question?
How does the concept of culture contribute to our understanding of society?
How are Aboriginal worldviews (including the concept of ‘dreaming’) different to those of Western society? Compare your own worldviews to Aboriginal worldviews and philosophy.

- What is the **TOPIC** of the question?
- What is the **PURPOSE** of the question?
- What is the **INSTRUCTIONAL WORD** of the question?
Outline your main points...

1. Aboriginal views of connections between being and land.
2. Aboriginal connections through oral traditions.
3. Aboriginal spirituality.
4. Effects of invasion and colonisation on Aboriginal peoples.
5. Western perceptions of land.
6. Connection of Point 5 to my world views & philosophy?
1. Aboriginal view of connection of being and land:

- Not just physical survival.
- Other connections through culture, language, knowledge systems.
- Rose notes that ‘country’ is multi-dimensional and it consists of the physical, spiritual, geographical throughout past, present and future.
For Indigenous peoples, the relationship with their homelands and territories is a fundamental issue, forming the basis of survival as a people. In this context, survival does not imply only physical sustenance and an ability or right to practice certain livelihoods, but that the very existence of a distinct people with a culture, language, worldview and value and knowledge systems is dependent on the land with which there has been a historical connection and continuity for generations.
Keep regular patterns

- **Sleeping**
  - ~ 8 hrs/day

- **Eating**
  - Mostly healthy

- **Exercise**
  - Walk 30 min/day
  - With a friend

- **Recreation**
  - With friends
The night before ...

- Glance through your summaries/cards
- Gather exam materials - ID, pens ...
- Check transport arrangements
- Use relaxation techniques
- Have adequate sleep
The morning before ...

- Eat a good breakfast/lunch
- Arrive 20-30 minutes early
- Avoid nervous students
- Glance through summaries/cards
- Take deep breaths, think positively
IN YOUR EXAM
Be kind to your marker ...

- Write legibly, bigger is better
- Write in pen
- Double-space your writing
- Begin each question on a new page
  - label it quickly & clearly at the top of the page/bottom of the page box provided e.g. Ques. 1 / Q 1
- Leave line spaces between your paragraphs
- To cross out, draw 1 line through your text
From past papers/lecturer advice:

- Work out time for each question
  - marks for question $\times$ total time for exam
  - total marks for exam

  **DO NOT EXCEED THIS TIME**

  - You cannot earn more than full marks for a Question
  - **BUT you can** earn NO marks for not attempting
Perusal time?

USE IT

• Skim through WHOLE paper first to check format

• Read questions & choose
  – what questions do you know most about?

• If allowed, make notes on exam paper
  – analyse questions: identify keywords
  – plan essays: jot down main points
  – jot down formulae
• Do the questions you know best first
• Plan first in your exam booklet
  – these notes may gain you marks
• Watch the time - **DO NOT EXCEED TIME**
• If you run out of time on the **LAST** question
  – write **Out of time** at the bottom
  – quickly bullet point ideas not covered
Essay Questions: how much do I write?

• Depends on the time available

• Single-spaced, medium-sized writing
  • 20 minutes ~ 2 pages (x2 spaced 4 pages)
  • 30 minutes ~ 3 pages (x2 spaced 6 pages)
  • 40 minutes ~ 4 pages (x2 spaced 8 pages)
General tips...

- Check the time and place of the exam
- Don’t PANIC!!!!!
- Read over the exam paper carefully
- Plan your time wisely
- Plan each answer
- Answer your best questions first
- Don’t run over time on any questions
- Write legibly
Specific tips...

- Decide *which* questions to answer.
- Allocate time evenly to each question.
- Look *carefully* at instructional words.
- Draft a rough essay outline before beginning to write.
- Answer the question *explicitly* in the first sentence.
- Finish questions on time: if you run out of time, use bullet points to complete the answer quickly.
Finally...

The very best of exam luck
Deep breaths
Semester is nearly over...
Questions?