

How to Ace your First Finals

By Emily Ott, Study Mentor, WS '17

What to do right now:

- ✓ Re-read all of your syllabi and highlight all assignments, essays and tests due before the end of the semester. Write them down in your planner, on a monthly calendar, or on the “End of Semester Planner” from the CTL.
- ✓ You may also have a final exam outside of regular class time: ask your professor, and check the exam schedule on the Registrar’s page:
http://www.hws.edu/offices/registrar/exam_sched.aspx
- ✓ Review descriptions of final tests or exams. Take note of words like “short answer,” “definitions,” “essay” within the description of an exam. Also check to see whether the exam will be cumulative or just based on one portion of the semester.
- ✓ During class, listen up for comments by the professor such as “this would be a really good topic for the exam.” Make a note for future reference!

Over Thanksgiving Break:

- ✓ Organize everything in your folder for each class.
- ✓ Take all papers/reading out and make categories of topics, themes, etc. These will serve as helpful packets for studying.
- ✓ Start to review material for the exam.

After Thanksgiving Break

- ✓ Go to Teaching Fellows or Study Table hours just to sit and study and ask questions .
- ✓ Once you have reviewed your material at least once, visit your professor’s office hours to clarify any questions or to fill in any missing material.

Reading Days

- ✓ Once classes are done, you have three days to study before finals begin. This is not a weekend! Make really good use of these days to review your study guides. Meet with other students to review material together.
- ✓ Try to alternate between subjects; don’t spend all day on one subject unless you only have one exam!

Day before/day of the exam

- ✓ This should be a quick review day. Work from a list of key concepts, pick one and explain to yourself everything you know about that concept.
- ✓ Try to get some sleep, eat something and stay hydrated!
- ✓ Good luck!

For more support study skills, visit the Study Mentors. See the CTL website for more information www.hws.edu/academics/ctl/, call us at 3351 or stop in to visit us on the second floor of the library.