Successful Transitions

Learning Seminar Program
Week 9: Spring, 2014

Examination Techniques
Today’s seminar will...

- give some tips about how to study for exams
- what to do on the day
- explain types of exam formats
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Assess. 1</th>
<th>Assess. 2</th>
<th>Assess. 3</th>
<th>Assess. 4</th>
<th>Assess. 5</th>
<th>Assess. 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIST111</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Exam Period</td>
<td>Tutorial participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short essay 750 wds.</td>
<td>Long essay 1500 wds.</td>
<td>Final exam 2 hrs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC104</td>
<td>Weeks 4-13</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Week 13 Blog diary 10 x 200 wds.</td>
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<td>Blog &amp; class discussion.</td>
<td>Essay 1500 wds.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>EESC104</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Week 10 Asylum seeker letter 1000wds</td>
<td>Week 12 Poster 1000wds</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report 1000wds</td>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>Prac, 2 or 3 1000wds</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>INDS130</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Week 13 Essay 2000 wds.</td>
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<td>Quiz 2 15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>ENGL131</td>
<td>Ongoing Class participation &amp; presentation</td>
<td>Week 5 In-class quiz 15%</td>
<td>Week 8 Essay 2000wds 35%</td>
<td>Final exam TBA 35%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
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</table>
Common problems …

- Too little revision / time for revision
- Lack of practice at type of exam
- Learnt by rote and unable to apply it to new context
- Examiners change the nature of the question

Couchman 2011
What we’ll cover ...

- Find past exams
- Organise
- Revise
- Keep Sane

Adapted from:
Find past exams
When do I prepare?

- From Day 1 (for next time)
- After the first month
- 3-5 weeks before
- The night before
- The morning before
- After the exam

- Past exam papers at UoW library
ACCESSING PAST EXAM PAPERS

- View released past exam papers from the last 3 years, arranged by session year and subject
  OR

- Search for specific papers using a keyword search on "exam" and a subject code (e.g. exam econ309)

PLEASE NOTE

- Not all past UOW examination papers are released by Faculties
- In most cases, the content of older papers is no longer relevant to the subject

HELP

- Ask us!

Last reviewed: 19 February, 2013
### SUBJECTS (1-7 of 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
<th>Entries</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exams Autumn 2010</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Exams Autumn 2012</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Exams Spring 2009</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Exams Spring 2010</td>
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<td>Exams Spring 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exams Summer 2010/11</td>
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</table>
ORGANISE!
3-5 weeks before ...

PAST PAPERS

- Give time to each subject that has an exam – up to 8-10 hours each/week
- Allow time to complete final assessments
- Organise by the examinable topics
- Give extra time to difficult subjects
- Aim to revise as least twice
Break it down before you do!

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tues</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
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<td>A w1</td>
<td>A w2</td>
<td>A w3</td>
<td>A w4</td>
<td>WORK</td>
<td>A w5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B w2</td>
<td>B w3</td>
<td>B w4</td>
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<td>- - -</td>
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<td>WORK</td>
<td>assignnt</td>
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<td>B w7</td>
<td>- - -</td>
<td>- - -</td>
<td>- -</td>
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<td>- -</td>
<td>assignnt</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 2nd revision</td>
<td>A w1-3</td>
<td>A w4-6</td>
<td>A w7-9</td>
<td>B w10-13</td>
<td>WORK</td>
<td>B o/view</td>
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<td>AU w7-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam difficult</td>
<td>B ?</td>
<td>B ?</td>
<td>B o/view</td>
<td>B EXAM</td>
<td>break/WORK</td>
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<td>A ?</td>
<td>A EXAM</td>
<td>break</td>
<td>WORK</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
REVISE
Set study periods to **PASS** ... 

Work only in 45 min chunks

- **P**lan  ~5 mins
- **A**ct  ~25 mins
- **S**ummarise  ~10 mins
- **S**top!  ~10 mins

Couchman 2011
How can I remember it all long enough?

✓ **Notice**
✓ **Understand**
✓ **Technique**
✓ **Test**
Notice what’s important

✓ Lecturer/tutor hints
✓ Subject Outline
✓ Topics
✓ Readings
✓ Past papers
Understand it

✓ Be ACTIVE!

✓ Definitions in own words

✓ Examples

✓ Diagrams/tables/graphs

✓ What are the parts of this & how do they fit together?

✓ Summaries of summaries

✓ STUDY GROUP
Use a Technique to remember

- Convert to tables, diagrams, mind maps
- Practise exercises/examples
- Memory techniques
  - Chunking
  - Mnemonics
    - Acronyms
    - Acrostics
  - Explaining to your pet – or anything that will listen!
Test yourself

✓ Reproduce revision notes/diagrams
  ✓ Without prompts
✓ Answer past exam questions
  ✓ Note form only for essays
✓ STUDY GROUP
  ✓ Critically discuss answers
✓ Test each other
Active or Passive?

Reading through all your notes

✗ NO Simply reading through your notes does little to transfer them into your long term memory. This is not an active revision technique.

Practising past exam questions

✓ YES Practising questions from past exam papers helps to prepare you for the types of questions that might be asked.
Active or Passive?

Studying for at least 3 hours in 1 session

✘ **NO** Studying without a break is not a good practice. You should have regular breaks and time to review the materials that you have learnt.

Memorising all your notes

✘ **NO** Memorising all your notes is not an active learning strategy. You must make sure they are structured, e.g. into main point and sub points. Memorising these is far more efficient. **Remember U in NUTT**, mindmaps, memory techniques.
KEEP SANE
Study group for exams

- A small number of helpful people who already have some sort of current positive relationship
- Arrange the dates of the meetings well in advance
  - Start and stop at agreed times
- Plan some sort of program
  - Agree on topic/s
  - Set specific topics for each meeting
  - Short talks
  - Q & A sessions/past papers
Reward yourself

✓ After finishing final assignments
✓ After finishing sections of revision

WITH

✓ Movies
✓ Dinner out
✓ ?…
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/ 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** \( X \) **total time for exam**

**total marks for exam**

- **DO NOT EXCEED THIS TIME**
  - You cannot earn more than full marks for a Q
  - BUT you can earn NO marks for not attempting
• 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
OPEN BOOK EXAMS
Trap for young players

✓ 2 sorts of material to learn, not just 1
  • Subject
  • Where it’s found

✓ Your marker expects a higher standard

What are you allowed to bring in?

Marked/unmarked texts

Notes, conditions?

Prepare the same way as you have for other exams

Mark sources for main ideas if permitted
ESSAY QUESTIONS
• **Step 1: Plan your essay ~ 5 minutes**
  – analyse the question, plan, reread

• **Step 2: Write your essay**
  – write introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion using notes

• **Step 3: Check (if you have time)**
How much do I write?

- Depends on the time available
- Single-spaced, medium-sized writing
- 20 minutes ~ 2 pages (x 2 spaced 4 pages)
- 30 minutes ~ 3 pages (x 2 spaced 6 pages)
- 40 minutes ~ 4 pages (x 2 spaced 8 pages)
 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS
How much time for each question?

DON’T EXCEED YOUR TIME!

How short is short?

5 lines (50 words) to 1 page (250 words)

Lecturer/tutor

Analyse the question

Be precise – just answer the question

Diagrams / tables

Bullet points?
MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS
Step 1 ALL
- ✅ those you are sure of - DO NOT LOOK AT THESE AGAIN!
- ☑️ beside those you are not sure of
- ✗ beside those you don’t know

Step 2 ☑️

Step 3 ✗
After the exam ...

- RELAX!
- What did you do well?
- What didn’t work?
- What can you do about it for next time?
If you want more help …

• See Celeste on Mondays

Bring :-
  – Your questions
  – Subject Outline
  – past papers
  – (study you’ve done)
Questions?

Please complete the evaluation forms