

# SURVIVING EXAM WEEK

*Don't Panic... even if you have several exams to take!*

## DEAL WITH YOUR TENSION

- **Take some time to relax.** Take a short walk, do some meditation, or get some exercise. All of these will allow you to release any nervous energy you have and actually help you to focus better. Your brain needs oxygen to think!
- **Adopt a positive attitude.** Look at the test as a way of applying all of your knowledge. Exams are opportunities to show what you've learned and see how far you've come through your hard work. See exams as challenges, not threats!
- **Don't catch an anxiety "bug."** Being around other people that are "flipping out" is likely to make you more nervous as well. Surround yourself with hard-working, focused students (like those you find in the library or study centers).
- **Plan for a reward.** Schedule something pleasant to do when it is all over...a movie, a visit with a friend, or a special meal. But, don't forget to treat yourself with small rewards along the way too...even if it's just a 10 minute break, a coffee, or your favorite television show! Your brain needs a break every once in a while to process all that you are studying.



## GET STARTED NOW

- **Make a plan.** Sit down and make a schedule of when you can do focused preparation for your exams. Keep it realistic and make sure to start as soon as possible.
- **Break it up.** Don't try to cram or stay up all night. There is less chance that you will remember what you studied if your brain is fatigued. Allot a certain amount of time for review of everything, and then condense it down into something manageable. Make sure to leave time right before to do a final review and check of what you can recall.
- **Use little blocks of time.** Use a wait for a friend, a bus ride, moments in the shower to reread, rethink, and review material. The more frequently you expose yourself to information, the more likely you are to remember it.
- **Mix it up.** Don't try to do marathon sessions of calculus problems. Your brain needs variety! Try to break up your studying with different topics or study approaches.

## DON'T GET OFF TRACK

- **Get some sleep.** Even if you haven't studied much before now, don't throw away your sleeping and eating routine in order to cram. Chances are you won't retain much more than you would have by studying just a reasonable amount. Your brain won't be able to absorb as much information without proper sleep and nutrition.
- **Take it down the "home stretch."** Often students get off track at the end because they either give up or try to do too much right before the test. Don't tackle new information right before the exam, but don't give up just because you don't know everything. Remember that most teachers give partial credit and **NO ONE KNOWS IT ALL.**
- **Stay the course and stay calm.** Mentally rehearse walking into the room, looking over the test, and answering the questions. Rehearse and visualize how you will respond if you come to something you don't know. Tell yourself that you can only do your best.