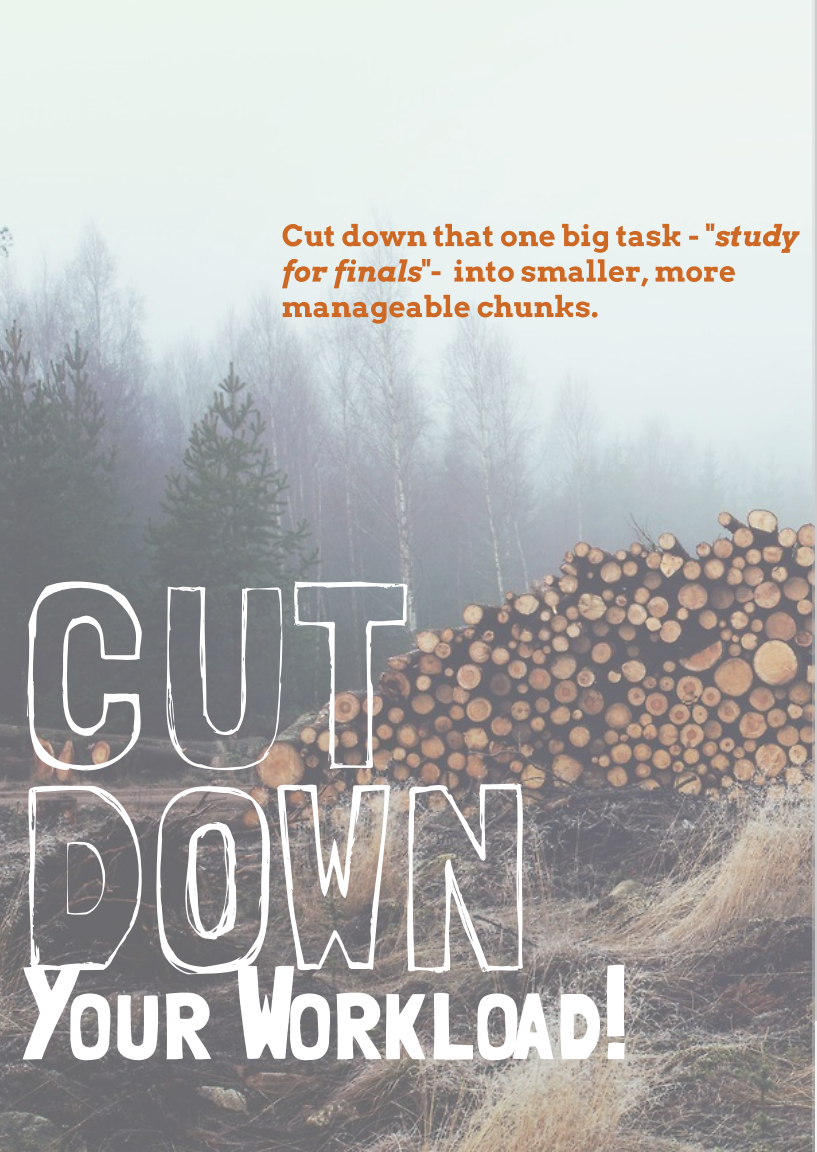


# HOW TO SURVIVE FINALS

## **FEATURING:**

- How to Make A 5-Day Study Plan
- Active Study Strategies to Get Prepared
- How to Beat Procrastination



**Cut down that one big task - "study for finals"- into smaller, more manageable chunks.**

**CUT  
DOWN  
YOUR WORKLOAD!**

Start by getting a **list of every class you need to study for**. Then, using the points below, **create a specific list of material you need to cover** for each class. Put these lists in a place where you feel most comfortable (in a notebook or planner, your laptop, smart phone... etc. ) .

- Some of your classes will have a **study guide** that covers everything you need to know for the final. This might be a list of chapters or topics– it might not contain specific questions or concepts you need to cover, but it'll at least tell you what to review.
- For classes that only tell you the final will be **cumulative**, try to break your notes (course PowerPoint slides) into **manageable sections** that you can put on your giant list of topics.
- Consult with your professors **prior** to exam day.

For now, this list can be non-specific. You could have something like, "*review notes for chapters 1-12.*" **In this first step**, you just want to get a general idea of how much material you actually need to study.

**STARTING YOUR 5-DAY PLAN...**

ONE IMPORTANT KEY TO SUCCESS IS SELF-CONFIDENCE. AND THE KEY TO SELF-CONFIDENCE IS PREPARATION.

—ARTHUR ASHE

# BREAK IT DOWN BY DAY

- 1. Break it Down by Day:** Take the items from your big list and break them into smaller lists. For each day of your **5-Day Plan**, write in the specific material you plan to master that day. This could be something like, *Chapter 2 Vocab* or *Stages of Mitosis*.
- 2. Make it Specific:** Make your study goals specific and timely. Decide which **active study strategies** you plan to use to review each concept and list them in the "study strategies" box.

## Five Day Study Plan

	Exam				
	Course	Exam Date	Exam Time	Exam Location	
	<b>1</b> Date: _____	<b>2</b> Date: _____	<b>3</b> Date: _____	<b>4</b> Date: _____	<b>5</b> Date: _____
Concepts to master					
Study Strategies					



# PICK ACTIVE

## STUDY STRATEGIES

Research shows that students with higher performance scores may not study longer than their counterparts, but they are likely to study differently by using active review and rehearsal.

## ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE STUDYING

You can get information into long term memory more efficiently by choosing strategies that require you to manipulate information and make it more meaningful by using your own words, ideas and symbols.

material to study	passive study strategy	active study strategy
lecture notes	reread notes	identify main points in notes and expand and rewrite in your own words
assigned texts and articles	read	change chapter headings into questions and look for answers as you read
Assigned problems and exercises	try to solve while looking at class examples	try to solve on your own and then look at class examples
power point slides	print out and read	print out, write possible test questions in margin, and quiz yourself on slide info
lab reports	re-read answers	go to lab and quiz yourself while looking at models/materials

**RESEARCH SHOWS THAT STUDENTS WITH HIGHER PERFORMANCE SCORES MAY NOT STUDY LONGER THAN THEIR COUNTERPARTS, BUT THEY ARE LIKELY TO STUDY DIFFERENTLY BY USING ACTIVE REVIEW AND REHEARSAL.**

## HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT STRATEGIES FOR EACH CLASS:

Once you have an idea of the concepts or topics you need to learn, choose methods of studying that will force you to be active with that information. This could include:

- finding ways to put information into your own words
- looking for relationships between ideas
- illustrating concepts with examples

**BELOW ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW TO APPLY ACTIVE STUDY STRATEGIES TO YOUR COURSE MATERIALS.**

**USE THE BLANK SPACES IN THE CHART TO LIST ACTIVE STRATEGIES OF YOUR OWN:**

What I need to learn	How I could study actively
lecture notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ create charts and diagrams that chunk related information</li><li>➤ identify important information from notes and have a study partner quiz me</li><li>➤</li></ul>
assigned texts and articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ before reading, think about what I want to learn from this text and underline key information as I find it</li><li>➤ after reading a few pages, stop and summarize what I learned in three sentences</li><li>➤</li></ul>
assigned problems and exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ try to complete problems on my own and then meet with a classmate to work challenging problems together</li><li>➤</li></ul>
power point slides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ print slides before class (3 per page) and take notes on slide handout</li><li>➤ create flash cards from key terms on slides</li><li>➤</li></ul>
lab reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ recreate diagrams (leaving out labels and terms) and then practice filling in the information.</li><li>➤</li></ul>

Try to use strategies that make you practice in the **same format** of your upcoming tests and assignments. **For example**, to study for essay exams, predict possible test questions and practice outlining your answers.

Some students also find it helpful to work with a **study group** to discuss key concepts and answer questions. Having a conversation about course information is a great way to predict and check answers to practice questions, and it also **forces you to practice active retrieval of information by explaining course concepts to others.**

# TOMORROW

*(noun)*

a mystical land where 99% of all  
human productivity, motivation, and  
achievement is stored

# TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR PROCRASTINATION MONKEY



## WITH THESE TIPS...

### Manage Your Time

Many students find it helpful to schedule their study time each day. Use a fixed commitment calendar to decide how to spend your day .

Start by blocking in fixed commitments like class, work, practices, etc. Then block in set times to study. Some students prefer to keep their study times the same each day while some students like to change it up. The most important thing is that you have planned to use your time wisely for the day.

Many students find they are most productive when they schedule these study times in one hour increments and aim to finish a majority of their study tasks before dinnertime.

### Limit Distractions

Choose a study location that will allow you to get work done. Students often admit that their dorm room is not the best place to work productively because they are more easily distracted there. Other places to study might include the library, an empty hallway on campus, or a nearby coffee shop.

You can also limit distractions by turning off your phone. Students who struggle to stay off of their phones will block websites, texts, and calls by downloading SelfControl; this is a study app that will keep you locked out of your phone until a study timer you've set is expired.

### Plan Rewards

Make plans to do something fun once you've completed your work. Some students will plan ahead and finish homework early on nights they want to relax with friends or watch their favorite show on Netflix. Other students might plan smaller rewards like taking a fifteen-minute break after concentrating for an hour on course material.

### Just Do It

Sometimes the best method to completing a large task is to just get started. Some students find it useful to set a timer for 20 minutes and give their work complete undivided attention until the timer goes off. You may be able to trick yourself into working for a much longer period of time. It's amazing what you can get done once you are past the point of just settling down to get focused.



# BODY & MIND

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

If you want to perform optimally during finals week, it's important to pay attention to nutrition, exercise, sleep, and hydration .

### Nutrition

Contrary to what energy drink marketing may want you to think, food and drinks full of sugar and caffeine won't really help you to focus. All they'll do is give you a short high, followed by a *not so productive* crash. Excessive use of sugar and caffeine can actually **impair** your judgment and have an effect on nerves. **Foods like whole grains, fish, blue berries, tomatoes, broccoli, leafy greens, eggs, pumpkin seeds, and nuts** are suggested to help you **boost brain functioning**.

### Sleep

If you feel like you need to down an energy drink to keep studying, it may be because you aren't sleeping enough and you're trying to cram too much studying into one day. A tired brain won't retain much of what it's trying to study anyway - research has shown that when people get less than 7 hours of sleep, there is a drop in their short-term memory functioning.

### Exercise

Maybe you're not trying to become a body builder or marathon runner, but getting some regular exercise is still a great idea.

**You might ask:** *Why would I waste time at the gym when I still have 6 hours of cramming for this history exam?*

Taking just 30 minutes a day to hit the gym, go for a run, or to play some basketball will not only leave you feeling better, but it'll also help you to study faster and retain more information. Exercising keeps your mind alert and functioning. It can also serve as a great pick-up during the day when you start getting tired.

### Hydration

Many studies have suggested dehydration can actually decrease cognitive performance and executive functioning. In one study, students who brought water bottles to their exam actually scored 5% higher than classmates who didn't. Be sure to drink enough water and stay hydrated throughout finals week!

\*Students may also consult with the campus Health Center or with the Counseling Center for more suggestions related to sleep and anxiety (see page 9).



# CAMPUS RESOURCES

**Office of Academic Advising:**

Administration Building, Garden-level,  
216-397-4211

**Services for Students with Disabilities:**

Administration Building, Garden-level,  
216-397-4967

**Health and Wellness Services:** Murphy  
Hall, ground floor, 216-397-4349

**Counseling Center:** 2567 S. Belvoir  
Blvd., the second house next to the  
campus tennis courts, 216-397-4283

**Career Center:** 2563 S. Belvoir Blvd.,  
the first house next to the campus  
tennis courts, 216-397-4320

**Center for Student Diversity &**

**Inclusion:** DJ Lombardo Student Center,  
Suite 202, 216-397-4185

**Campus Ministry:** DJ Lombardo Student  
Center, first floor, 216-397-4717

**Learning Commons:** Ground floor of  
Grasselli Library, (216) 397-3073

**Writing Center:** O'Malley Center. Rm.  
207, writingcenter@jcu.edu,  
216-397-4529

**YOU CAN DO THIS!**



# STILL LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Check out these websites:

[www.psychologytoday.com/blog/you-illuminated/201010/why-your-brain-needs-water](http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/you-illuminated/201010/why-your-brain-needs-water)

[www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/sleep-deprivation-effects-on-memory](http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/sleep-deprivation-effects-on-memory)

[medicine.utah.edu/learningresources/tools/active.php](http://medicine.utah.edu/learningresources/tools/active.php)

This Text:

Van Blerkom, D. L. (2012). *College study skills: Becoming a strategic learner* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Or Other Resources in JCU's Office of Academic Advising:

- Study Apps for College Students
- Student-Athlete Resources
- Academic Coaching Appointments

**SARA ANKENY**

Office: AD #5 and Library #111

[sankeney18@jcu.edu](mailto:sankeney18@jcu.edu)

[doodle.com/jcuacademicappointments](http://doodle.com/jcuacademicappointments)