GOOD TEST-PREP ADVICE FROM ACTUAL CARLETON STUDENTS

• As good as it may feel to finish a test, hand it in, and bolt out the door to mid-term-break bliss, it helps me if I stay put and check over my answers or read my essays for grammar one last time. Then, I won’t kick myself later for making stupid mistakes. On essay tests, it helps me to jot down a very preliminary outline so that I have some sense of direction.—Mya

• Start reviewing early (if possible), and specifically for chemistry, focus on practice problems instead of the readings, and make sure that you know the concepts. For taking any test, make sure to look at all of the problems/questions instead of getting stuck, and if you do get stuck, write down everything you can/know.—Maraia

• Space out your studying in small parts so your brain can absorb it all.—Pete

• Make sure you look over the information the night before and for a few minutes the next morning so your brain can process it and you’re not just relying on your cramming ability.—Adam

• If your textbook has study questions or review questions, use them. They’re a great way to focus on some of the more relevant topics in the chapter. Relate difficult concepts to something you understand. This will help provide a framework for thinking about the difficult concept.—Greg

• Make a “cheat sheet” as if the professor were going to allow you to have one piece of paper with anything helpful written on it. The act of just summarizing everything and writing it down again puts it really clearly in my mind even if you aren't really allowed to use the sheet.—Sara

• In an Econ test, it’s really important to list what assumptions you’re making. The prof can’t read your mind, so make sure you list the assumption/condition. Also, make sure your answer passes the common sense check. If your calculations give you something that seems really unrealistic, there’s a good chance that it’s wrong.—Jake

• Study everything leading up to the day of the test but then review it again to freshen up the material on the morning of the test, and writing out the problems I have with the material and then focusing on them.—Wil

• Make a study group. It’s really helpful to get together with a couple of friends and brainstorm. Go over any suggested material or practice problems—just because it’s optional does not mean that it is not helpful. Don’t stress out. Cramming often makes you more confused. Be confident in what you do know.—Amanda

• Always read through the entire test before putting pencil or pen to paper!—Cailey

• For Calc— If you think you’ll have trouble finishing the test on time, practice doing problems in your textbook (even ones not assigned!) to get more comfortable and quicker at recognizing and solving problems.—Ryeon

• Do your homework as it is assigned, so you won’t have to hurry to learn everything right before the test. Watch your time as you take the test; make sure you get to as much of it as you can, and then go back and review your answers.—Becca

For more nifty tips like these, visit the Write Place (2nd floor Scoville) or your friendly Prefect. Sponsored by the Academic Support Center.