Learn About the Exam

- **Ensure you can answer the following questions before writing your exams.** Contact your professor if you have not been provided with this information in the course syllabus or otherwise.
  1. When will the exam take place? Check and re-check the date and time of the exam!
  2. How much time you’ll have to write the exam? Will you have a few days to write and submit the exam, or will you have a few hours?
  3. What is the format of the exam? Will the exam consist of multiple-choice questions, short and long-answer questions, and/or essay questions?
  4. What material will be covered on the exam? Comprehensive? Or only certain units?
  5. What materials can you use during the exam? Can you use your notes, textbook, or the internet?
  6. What sort of software and hardware will be required for the exam? Will you be using an online testing platform?
  7. What should you do if you have questions during the exam?
  8. What should you do if you run into technology problems?

Study

- **Expect exam questions that require for higher-order thinking.** Rote memorization and recall of information (such as terms, dates, people) is not enough. It is easy to copy & paste definitions, formulas, and other facts from materials you are using during the exam.

- **Exams will ask you to think critically.** In open book exams, you can expect the types of questions that ask you to analyze and apply information, compare and describe how to apply information in new scenarios or contexts.

- **Self-test.** Write practice exam questions that ask you to analyze, compare, contract, and apply knowledge. Consider creating your own questions and trading with your peers.
**Prepare**

- **Study for time-restricted (hrs vs. days) open book and online exams as you would for any other exams.** You won’t have the luxury of learning the material during the exam!
- **Prepare a limited number of books and materials to use during time-restricted exams.** You won’t have the time to extensively search through your material.
- **Prepare your materials for easy access.** Create summary sheets. Make a list of important formulas and/or definitions. Tab and label important information such as tables of contents. Use sticky notes to list key topics within materials.
- **Prepare your technology.** Verify you have the necessary hardware and software. Log into online exam systems prior to your exam when possible for peace of mind. Check your wifi connection. Have your computer charging cable close at hand.
- **Prepare a quiet space to write your exam away from distractions.** Organize the exam materials you’ll use in the exam the night before. While writing, turn off your cell phone. Turn off your notifications and log out of all programs except those you’ll use for your exam. Inform your roommates of your exam-writing schedule to prevent interruptions.

**Perform**

- **Keep track of time** and don’t spend too long on any one question with time-restricted exams. Consider setting an alarm to go off 20 minutes before the end of the exam.
- **If possible, try to estimate how much time you’ll have to answer each question.** Long answer or show your work style questions will likely be worth more but take longer to complete. Consider the total time you have on the exam and what should be done first.
- **When writing the exam, never close the exam page in your browser.** Open a new window if you need to search for information. Or better yet, use an entirely different browser to conduct your search.
- **Accidents happen, for long answer and essay questions prepare and save your answers in a word processor when possible.** Ctrl-Z is the keyboard shortcut to undo! Copy and paste into relevant fields in the exam when done.
- **Be sure to click the submit button when you have finished** writing the exam. If you fail to click on the submit button, your exam answers will not be provided to your instructor.
- **If you run into technical problems,** pause first and take a deep breath. Follow the instructions you’ve been given to deal with a technical problems. If you have not been given instructions, email your instructor immediately and provide a screenshot of any error messages (if possible).
Take time to celebrate having written your exam! You deserve to celebrate by having written the exam, regardless of how you think the outcome may be. Later, reflect on your performance in the exam and how you prepared. Ask yourself .. What can I do differently when preparing to write the next exam?

Which topics did you understand well that were on the exam? Which topics did not understand?

Consider why you answered questions incorrectly. For example, was it because you didn't sufficiently understand the content? Was it because you misread the question? Or, was it because you ran out of time?

Consider how you prepared for the exam? Which study techniques did you use that worked well? How many hours did you spend preparing for the exam? Did you spread your study over a couple of weeks or over a couple of days?

Works Consulted:
- Adjusting to Online Learning and Taking Online Exams. University of Toronto Scarborough. https://utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/adjusting-online-learning-and-taking-online-exam; Accessed July 2020