

Exam Preparation

Before the Exam

Learn the format (facts vs. concepts; multiple choice; essay) and prepare accordingly.

- Review the course outline. Look for major themes.
- Review previous exams. How are the questions set up?
- Review your notes. Look for themes, repetitions, the big picture, details.
- Make study notes: summarize class/chapter notes on a single sheet; use highlighters to code; make study cards - one per concept/topic/chapter.
- Make concept maps as review, then try to reproduce them - keep trying! Make concept map frames to fill in.
- Make up practice questions.

During the Exam

- Do a “memory dump” to clear your mind.
- Read and follow directions: use highlighter or underline instruction words if possible.
- Skim the exam. Answer easy questions first.
- Look for key content words in each question: highlight or underline.

- Answer questions directly and appropriately; use concept maps or lists for reference. Pay attention to underlying themes. Use the language of the discipline.
- For essay questions, make an outline or concept map. Use essay format (intro/body/conclusion) and provide context, examples and evidence.
- When re-reading your answers, re-read the question as well to be sure that you have answered them appropriately.

Learning From the Exam

Look at each question that you got *right*

- Did you *study* this? *How* did you study it? How did you *know* that it was important?
- Did you know the answer *right away* or was it questionable or not known?

Look at each question that you got *wrong*

- Discover the *distinction* between the correct and incorrect choices.
- Ask *why* the correct answer is correct and the others are not.

Examine the questions in terms of *level of thinking* that is expected.

- Is there a pattern?
- Commit to studying accordingly.