

## STRATEGIES FOR TAKING TESTS AND EXAMS

### START RIGHT:

- Be sure you have prepared well and practiced the exam activity (see other handouts in this section on-line)
- Be sure to confirm the day, time and place of the exam ahead of time
- Get to the exam location 10-15 minutes early
- Don't talk to others about the exam
  - listen to music and ignore your classmates
- If possible choose a seat near the front of the room and away from the door or any seat where there are the fewest distractions
- Write down anything you're afraid you'll forget as soon as you get an exam booklet. This is called a *memory dump*.

### PLAN:

- Look through the whole exam quickly as soon as you are allowed to start
- Make brief notes as you skim questions
  - ideas, formulae, etc
- Read exam directions carefully
  - budget time for each required question, depending on the number of marks it is worth
- Start with the "easiest" question

### BE STRATEGIC:

- Use appropriate test taking strategies for multiple choice, essay, or problem solving exams (see other handouts in this section on-line).
- Respect your time schedule
- Think positive thoughts – exams are a chance to show what you know
- Take a few deep breaths from time to time to calm yourself
  - breathing deeply as you focus on inhaling and exhaling reduces anxiety (see other handouts in this section on-line)
- If you draw a blank, don't panic:
  - try to remember something familiar or related
  - go on to another question and then come back
  - brainstorm course themes and ideas until you remember something
- Keep the exam in perspective – no exam is a matter of life or death; just do your best

### FOLLOW-UP:

- Check over your exam when you get it back and learn from your mistakes
  - What didn't you know? (Learn it now!)
  - Why didn't you know it? (Plan how to improve/change your studying for the next exam)