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# [Blog: 5 Final Exam Study Tips to Help You Through that Dreaded Week](#)

December 2, 2019

by *Victoria L., MAcc student*



Final Exams. It's either a final hurrah or a make or break moment. Regardless of how the actual exam goes, it's the week leading up to it that really defines how you feel going into that classroom. We've all heard those "standard" tips: Manage your time, get enough sleep, eat a hearty breakfast, etc. But I would like to share some specific things that I do to help me get through finals week; and after nearly five years of college, I've learned a thing or two. Whether you're a veteran finals taker or a freshmen new to the college schedule, here are my top five tips to help get you through the week.

5. If you are having trouble understanding an important concept, take the time to find someone who can help. Your professor would be the obvious first choice, and they are more than willing to help you out, just don't wait until the last minute. If scheduling is a problem, then the next best place is tutoring. Georgia Southern has campus-wide tutoring in most of the core subjects but if you are looking for help for your business classes, the Parker College of Business has tutors located in the lab on the third floor (room 3337). Schedules are posted outside the door and most of the tutors are there at least 2-3 times a week.

4. Know your study time requirements. This is one of the most important things to keep in mind. How long is it going to take you to review and understand the concepts on the final exam? A day, a whole week? You need to know your limits. Some people just need to review their notes, others need to work through every problem completed in class or on homework. Once you know your limits, you know how much time you need to devote to studying. That is much more efficient than going in with the mindset of, "Oh I'll just study until I feel good about it." Without at least some sort of goal in mind, you're either going to overwork and stress yourself out, or you're not going to get enough studying in. This is also helpful because you won't feel guilty about taking breaks, going out with friends, going to bed early, etc., when you know that you have time for it.

3. Get that sleep. Seriously. All nighters might help you work through that last problem, but is that really helpful? Only if you waited until literally the day before your exam. Some people are blessed with a photographic memory, or just do really well under a huge amount of pressure (which in this case they put on themselves). But, if you don't fall into one of those two categories, then I have found it far better to get sleep and wake up early rather than staying up late at night. And I'm not a morning person. Review your notes before bed, go to sleep, then wake up with a fresh mind and review again if you must.

2. Do not be frantically reviewing notes before class. At that point you need to face the truth. You either know it or you don't. Reviewing notes before class will only make you nervous and stressed. You might find something you forgot to review or a problem that all of a sudden doesn't make sense, and then you freak out. Don't do that to yourself. Get to the classroom early and settle down by doing something "fun." Chat with the people around you, read the news, heck, play on your phone. But don't sit there and start worrying because that's when your mind will play tricks on you, which brings me to my last and most important tip.

1. Positive mental/self talk. Your mind's focus going into an exam, as well as during the exam, is extremely important. One of the hardest things I had to learn was how to keep my mind focused on the right things before *and* during an exam. Before the exam, I would be worried about finishing in time, worried I missed an important concept, worried I'd forget a formula, wishing I wasn't there, the list goes on. What did I do to myself? I mentally slaughtered any confidence and focus I might have had and replaced it with stress. I go in feeling defeated, and just like in sports, that affected my performance. During the exam, I'd come upon a problem and realize that I didn't have a clue how to solve it. At that point, my mind completely shut down and gave in to panic as I frantically scribbled something down, anything, to get at least some sort of credit because it *might* be kind-of right...right? If you find yourself thinking along those lines, then here is what you should do. First, stop yourself right then and there. This takes a bit of self-regulation and determination. If you try to stop yourself timidly or half-heartedly, it's probably not going to work. Once you recognize that you're thinking negatively, replace it with something positive. One effective technique is to think of three things that you are grateful for right at that moment. It could be that it's your last exam, what you're doing for the holidays, your pets, the food you're going to treat yourself to afterwards, anything. Think of three things, smile, then move on. You may think you're wasting precious time, but trust me, it will take less than a minute and your mind will be out of the hole it was digging itself into.

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