EXAM PREPARATION STRATEGIES
Different Types of Exam Questions

Many exams have a mix of multiple choice, short answer, true/false, and matching questions. While there are certain approaches you can use to prepare for each type of question, it’s not recommended you focus on just one, or even a few. Prepare using several different study approaches to learn the material inside and out. Find more tips prepare on our resource page!

Adapted by the AAC from http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/assistance/learning_services/handouts/essay_exams.cfm

True/False Questions
Most true/false questions require you to recognize the “best” or “right” answer. Try to learn if the items will be general or specific. General questions will require a more thorough learning than specific questions. Either way, you will probably need to spend much of your time on memory work.

- Underline key terms and phrases while studying lecture and textbook notes. These same statements may be listed as true/false questions on the test since both you and your professor are using the same content.
- Go beyond recognition: True/False are situated for evaluating students’ knowledge of specific facts and concepts. This means you must use repetition in your studying to “memorize” specific terms and details.
- Select appropriate studying techniques: Certain study methods are better than others when studying for memory and retention. Try making and practicing flashcards, use lists, charts and create mnemonics to help you remember detailed concepts and facts.
- Practice: Use resources (professor, textbook, Internet, etc.) to locate practice true/false questions. This will help you identify what areas you still need to learn while helping you to practice taking similar questions that will be on your actual test.

Matching Questions
Matching questions typically ask you to join similar items based on two different sets of factual information.

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- Create a list of key items: Review your lecture and textbook notes, and any notes provided online and create a list of important theorists, people, places, events, etc.
- Make connections: Using your notes & the text, identify specific vocabulary, dates, names of theories, etc. that relate to each of the important items you listed from the previous strategy to help you be able to recall similar items, dates/events, etc.
• **Create & study flashcards** by writing one key item (i.e., theorist, historian) and the information they are known for on the back. Do this for each important topic you identified from the text/lecture.

• **Make a timeline:** Drawing a visual timeline is particularly useful in history courses, as well as those that emphasize important dates, decades, and/or eras, etc.

• **Complete a mini practice test:** Divide your paper into 2 columns. One the left, record important vocabulary terms, theories, concepts, events, etc. On the right, expand on each item, as if it were a matching exercise.

• **Study game:** Use small pieces of scrap paper and write down 1 important item on each piece. Include dates, events, theories, concepts, etc. Put them face down on a table and mix them up. Pick them up one by one and say aloud what corresponds to the item listed on the paper.