

# ACTIVELY ENGAGE IN LEARNING



## TAKING EXAMS

### Part 1: Studying for Exams

How can you strategically use all parts of the class to help prepare for exams? Preparing is not limited to the few days before you take exams. Instead, use **all** of your work to prepare in the weeks and days leading up to the test.



- **Preview readings** and slides.
- Actively engage in lectures (live or recorded) and required readings by thoughtfully **taking notes**.
- Use **lectures and readings together**. For example, integrate reading notes with lecture notes.
- **Review and debrief** lectures/readings by summarizing in a few sentences, following up on questions and filling in the gaps during office hours, online study groups, or discussion boards.

### ENGAGE IN FOCUSED STUDY SESSIONS:

- Short and intense (about one hour per sitting).
- Spaced out over time (in the few weeks leading up to the exam).
- Interleaved with other courses (e.g., mix up studying for multiple courses).
- Engage with all levels of thinking – memorize, apply, generate or create something new while studying (see Part 2 for example questions).
- Elaborate on the material or explain “**why**” or “**how**” concepts and processes work. Use online study groups to ask questions and teach others.



### TREAT ALL ASSIGNMENTS LEADING UP TO EXAMS AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR “STUDYING” FOR THE EXAM:

#### Homework & Problem Sets:

- Try to do without notes, recalling the information, and then comparing to your book/text.
- Use notes and text to check your answers and to complete what you don't remember.
- Use homework to really *learn* the content. Strive for conceptual understanding *before* you submit it.
- Once graded, read suggestions and apply feedback to your studying.

#### Quizzes:

- Review incorrect answers to focus study. Try the question again and modify your process.



### AS THE EXAM GETS CLOSER:

If studying for a traditional exam, like the ones you take in-class (e.g., multiple-choice, closed-book, timed), you might be accustomed to using study guides and practice tests.

#### Study Guides & Practice Tests:

- If not provided, **create your own** practice from old homework or unused textbook exercises.
- Simulate **testing conditions** (e.g., no notes and time yourself).
- **Explain answers** and justify “**why**” they make sense.

