

STRATEGY

Think about the techniques that worked for you in undergrad during exam period, and what worked for you or didn't last exam period. You've gotten through many exam periods before – use what you've learned from the past.

Spend time going through your notes early; compare to the syllabus to see if you are missing any content, and figure out how to fill in the gaps; go to your professor with questions or bring them to review Q&A sessions.

Issue spot past exams, and use the information that you glean to edit your outline and create a road map to help you work through a problem efficiently.

Don't forget to attempt practice questions: Half the battle in exams is efficiently spotting the correct issues and identifying the appropriate law for them. Practicing this is important so that you feel confident going into exams.

If the exam has a fact pattern, be sure to engage with the *specificity* of the facts at issue. Explain relevant law but take the time to engage with the facts and analyze what the law means for the parties in the fact pattern.

Also, remember if you don't get every single issue a fact pattern presents that is normal and you can still do quite well.

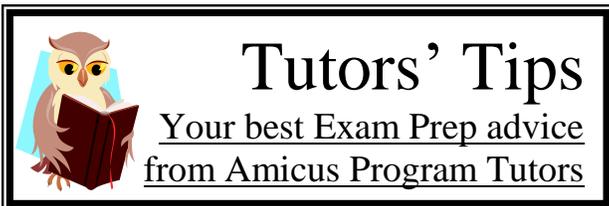
Think about the order in which you want to study for and prep for each exam. By the end of exam period, you will probably have some burnout – it tends to get progressively harder to study. It can be really helpful to have your outline already sorted for your last exam early on. First years actually have a really spread out schedule this year, so you might be even more tired by the end of it. Look at how much time you'll have in between each exam and think honestly about how much effort/time you're going to be able to make yourself put in before the later exams.

TACTICS

Outlines:

Print your outline at least one day before the exam, and tab it/label it how you would like. Get familiar with where the material is. Flipping through your outline during the exam, madly looking for something you know is in there somewhere only increases anxiety. If you know where to look for the answer, it will be easier. Along those same lines, if you can use your printed and tabbed outline to answer a practice problem the day before it will reduce anxiety of 'hunting' for the information even more!

For every legal problem or 'issue', organize your outline or answer key into the smallest possible, bite sized steps in the exact order you would answer a question on an exam. That way, when writing the exam, instead of getting overwhelmed by all the issues and all the things you have to think about, you can just focus on one tiny step at a time. Follow your outline down the page, answering each issue that you have laid out for yourself or ruling out things that may not apply to the fact pattern. You will be sure that you have included all necessary information, and you can stay calmer.



Exams:

Find a pre-exam routine that keeps you as calm as possible when the exam starts. For some people this entails coming to school early and closely reviewing their outlines. For others this means coming to school right before the exam and avoiding the pre-exam tension in the Fraser building.

Don't take the very last bus you can take and still get there on time. The bus system is generally fairly reliable, but it is not reliable when everything depends on it. Make sure that if the first bus you want to catch doesn't show up for whatever reason, you have allowed enough time to get another one and still get to school on time.



BRING EAR PLUGS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! All the typing and pencil scratching can be very distracting.

If you're not ready to write something down yet, then you don't have to. You save more time by planning out your answer than just spewing information onto the page.

Drink water during the exam to avoid a dehydration headache. Going to the bathroom is less annoying than feeling bad during the whole exam.

There is no "right way" to approach which exam question first. The most important thing is to go with the approach you are most comfortable with. Here are two different approaches. You may need to try it each way once to find YOUR style.

1) Identify all issues, choose which are the most important to answer, answer those. Time permitting, answer others. Or, leave the others and come back at the end if you find you have more time.

2) If doing things in order helps you stay calm, you can also answer in order! Nothing wrong with that.

Use physical aids to slow yourself down when reading if you're doing that thing that happens in exams where you're like "*I can't read! This language doesn't make sense!*"— breathe, **use a highlighter or a pen** to try to pick stuff out to make it stick in your head, and remember that you have been reading for a really long time and it is English.



Aim to finish five minutes before suggested time limits. That way you will have time to go back and add more detail to harder questions, and you may have time to spell check!

SELF CARE

Take care of yourself; exams are a long haul and you will be able to do better work if you are well rested, well fed and as centered as possible (under the circumstances!)

Get sleep and find times to relax: It's just as important to be in a good mental state for these exams as it is to know the substantive content.

Exercise! You have time. 10-20 minutes is enough to feel a difference. I know you don't want to, but you'll be happy you did later.

Immediately hide anyone on your Facebook news feed who says anything that remotely stresses you out about exams. Hide, not defriend! You can unhide them later.

Don't post anything on Facebook that brags about how much you've done or expresses serious fear about how much you haven't done. If you talk about how much you've done, others will compare themselves to you and feel scared/inadequate/stressed, and if you post about how much there is to go, people will think about that too and feel scared/inadequate/stressed. Don't do it.