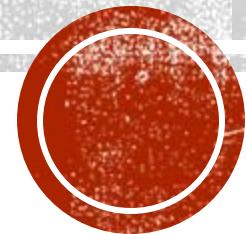


# TEST PREP: HOW TO PREPARE FOR MIDTERMS





**DON'T BE LIKE  
THIS.**



Faculty Counselor Bryce Walb

20+ years working with  
students.

15 in TRIO @ SCC.

Many conversations about  
studying with students over the  
years.

Read some stuff too!

Excited to be here to talk about  
the testing experience and how  
to improve your preparation.





Objective:  
Learning to  
Learn

*Just a little  
taste.*

# WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT TODAY:

## I. Intro

- Hi, we just met
- Why we're here

## II. A bit about studying and learning

- Knowledge in the room
- Pair and Share
- Brain Rules

## III. A bit about the testing experience

- Anxiety and Testing
- Self-care and Strategies

## IV. A bit about practices and skills

- SQ4R
- Cornell
- Mnemonics

# BEING PRESENT

Prior to the pandemic a lot occupied the mental and emotional space and impacted the bodies of learners.

Past and future concerns, current struggles occupy us and often are connected to access to resources and the ability to be secure.

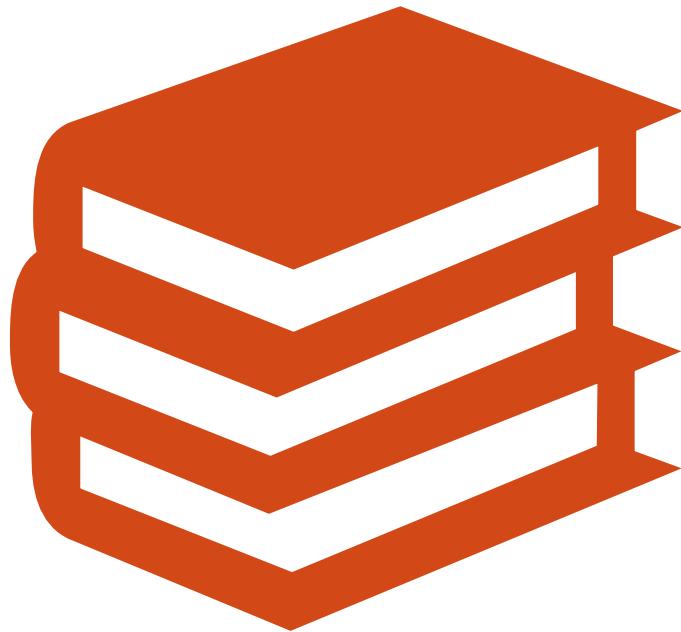
We may be aware of disparities in security, ours or others', yet be uncertain of what to do.

During this workshop we are honoring our interests in learning and supporting our efforts.

We recognize the challenges above so we take care and bring (self)respectful focus to our learning.

- Not too bad but I can feel the pressure/stress building up as midterms get closer.
- Scared, anxious, had a lot of various thoughts and planned to study hard for the exam.
- Feeling confused and curious.
- I was feeling lost. Needed help to do better in my exams.
- I was not sure about what things are different from what I can do, what we can use to better prepare.
- Not feeling overwhelmed yet, but know that I will be once the exam is in about a week – a few days away.
- Terrible: I already skipped my morning class because I was totally burnt out.



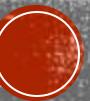


How do you study?

How is that working out?

## STUDYING-KNOWLEDGE IN THE ROOM

- Have you ever learned anything about studying?
- Have you taken a class, workshop, lesson in studying?
- Have you learned about studying from a friend/family member/mentor?
- Have you read a book or learned online about studying?



Rule #1: Exercise boosts brain power.

Rule #2: The human brain evolved, too.

Rule #3: Every brain is wired differently.

Rule #4: We don't pay attention to boring things.

Rule #5: Repeat to remember.

Rule #6: Remember to repeat.

Rule #7: Sleep well, think well.

Rule #8: Stressed brains don't learn the same way.

Rule #9: Stimulate more of the senses.

Rule #10: Vision trumps all other senses.

Rule #11: Male and female brains are different.

Rule #12: We are powerful and natural explorers.

*From Brain Rules by John Medina*

# HOW DO OUR BRAINS WORK?

“Metacognition” or thinking about thinking is part of developing critical thinking, a positive outcome of education particularly on the college level.

We've touched on some of our personal experiences with learning.

We will spend the remaining time on some things we can know about how our brains work, reflect on what that looks like in our learning environments and then consider some strategies.



# TESTING AND ANXIETY

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure.

People with anxiety disorders usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations out of worry. They may also have physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness or a rapid heartbeat.

- Preparation
- Skills
- Attitude
- Focus
- Relaxation
- Health
- Community

[From APA website](#)





# TESTING TECHNIQUES

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**Data Dump**

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**Preview Test**

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**2nd Data Dump**

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**Test Progress Schedule**

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**Answer Easy Questions**

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**Skip Difficult Questions**

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**Review Skipped Questions**

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**Guess at Remaining Questions**

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**Review Entire Test**

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**Use all of Your Time**

# WHAT IS ACTIVE LEARNING?

Analysis of the research literature (Chickering and Gamson 1987), however, suggests that students must do more than just listen: They must read, write, discuss, or be engaged in solving problems. Most important, to be actively involved, students must engage in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Within this context, it is proposed that strategies promoting active learning be defined as instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing.

From “Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom by Charles C. Bonwell and James A. Eison”

Examples:

- class discussion
- small group discussion
- debate
- posing questions to the class
- think-pair-share activities
- short written exercises
- polling the class

How can you activate  
your studying?

(from Bonwell and Eison, 1991.)



# SQ4R

## **S = SCAN**

each page quickly.

## **Q = QUESTION**

as you scan.

## **R = READ**

(does *not* mean reading every word.)

## **R = REFLECT**

– think about what you've just read.

## **R = RECITE**

aloud to yourself as you read;  
talk to yourself.

## **R = REVIEW**

what you've just read.

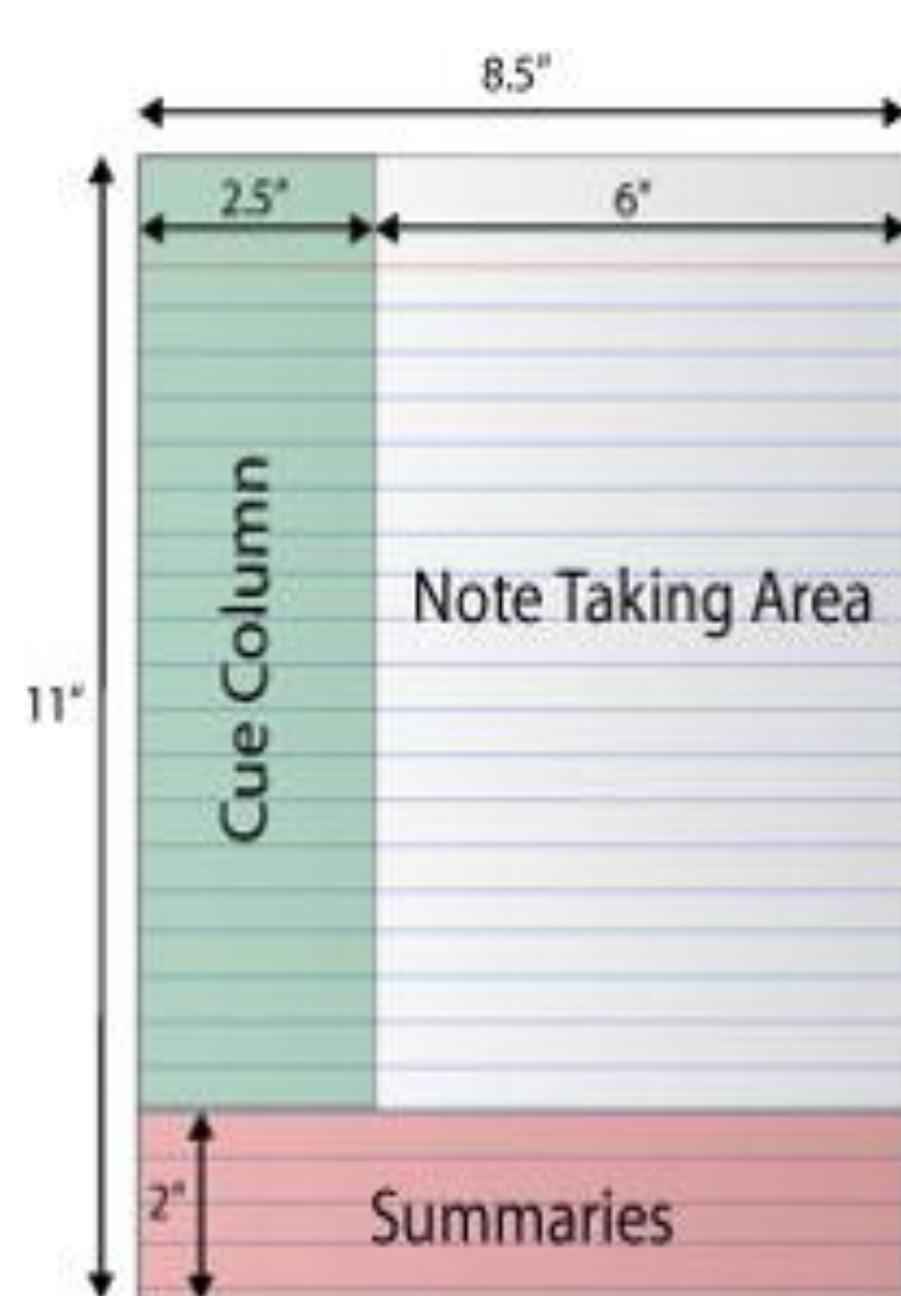
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**Read with  
intention  
for better  
retention.**

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**What are  
you reading  
for?**





# THE CORNELL METHOD OF NOTE-TAKING

- 1. **Record** in the note-taking area as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can.
- 2. **Reduce** these ideas and facts concisely in the cue column. Summarizing clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory.
- 3. **Recite**, using only your jottings in the cue column, facts and ideas as fully as you can, in your own words and with as much appreciation of the meaning as you can.
- 4. **Reflect on material** and academic experiences by finding relationships among them. Label and index experiences and ideas, put them into structures, outlines, summaries, and frames of reference.
- 5. **Review** these notes to retain and to use your knowledge to greater and greater effectiveness.



# MNEMONICS

- Mnemonic techniques are memory aids.
- They can be numbers, words, phrases or visualization techniques that help you organize and recall information.
- Keep in mind that understanding is often the best way to remember. Memorization does not necessarily imply understanding.

- Acronyms - SQ4R
- Sentences - Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally! (order of operations)
- Rhymes and songs - Number of days in a month.
- Visualization- Combine organization, visual memory, and association.



# THANK YOU

And best of luck on your next  
testing experience!