

# Reducing Test-Taking Anxiety

Test anxiety is the result of excessive worry by a student about doing well on a test. This can become a major hindrance on test performance and cause extreme nervousness and memory lapses among other symptoms. The following are tips on reducing test-taking anxiety:

- ❖ Being well-prepared for the test is the best way to minimize test-taking anxiety.
- ❖ Space out studying over a few days or weeks and continually review class material. Do not wait until the night before to learn and/or review test materials.
- ❖ Try to maintain a positive attitude while preparing for and while taking the test.
- ❖ Exercising for a few days before the test date can help reduce stress.
- ❖ Get a good night's sleep before the test and eat a light, healthy meal before testing.
- ❖ Show up in class early to lessen worry about being late. Also, be prepared with blue book, Scantron, or any other required testing materials.
- ❖ Stay relaxed. Taking a few slow, deep breaths can reduce anxiety.
- ❖ Read the test directions slowly and carefully. Don't hesitate to ask for clarification from the instructor.
- ❖ Skim through the test to estimate time needed and pace the speed of answering questions accordingly.
- ❖ Write down important formulas, facts, definitions and/or keywords in the margin first to reduce worry about forgetting them.
- ❖ Answer simple questions first to build confidence and allow needed time for the more difficult questions.
- ❖ Do not worry about how fast other people finish their test. Speed is not an indicator of testing success.
- ❖ If unable to answer a question, skip it and come back to it later as time allows. Remember that it is not necessary to answer every question correctly to do well.
- ❖ Stay focused on each question and concentrate on successfully completing the test.
- ❖ If you still experience extreme test anxiety after following these tips, seek help from Kim Perry Walter in the Gordon Kelley Academic Success Center (479.788.7675).