



EXAM PERIOD

How to survive the Exam Period

THE DEAN'S OFFICE

Your home on the way to success

Students are welcome to contact the Dean's Office at 02-5882355
or visit the Dean's office website <http://studean.huji.ac.il>



TABLE OF CONTENTS

•.....	<u>Prepari</u>
<u>ng for exams</u>	3
<u>Prepare several weeks before the exams</u>	3
<u>Managing your time during the exam period</u>	3
<u>Recommended learning strategies for exams</u>	4
<u>Techniques for improving your memory skills</u>	5
<u>Tips for the night before the exam</u>	6
<u>Tips for the actual exam</u>	7
<u>Tips for specific types of exams</u>	7
•.....	<u>Followi</u>
<u>ng the exam</u>	8
•.....	<u>Coping</u>
<u>with exam anxiety</u>	9
<u>What is exam anxiety?</u>	9
<u>How can it be dealt with?</u>	9
•.....	<u>Who</u>
<u>should you contact in case of a problem?</u>	11
•.....	<u>The</u>
<u>Dean's Office and Handling Special Cases</u>	12
•.....	<u>Contact</u>
<u> information for the Divisions of the Dean of students' Office</u>	13
•.....	<u>The</u>
<u>Student Advocate Office</u>	16

PREPARING FOR EXAMS

Recommended for all students

Prepare several weeks before the exams

Check the following:

- Do you have all of the necessary material? Did you miss classes? Were you unable to write down notes during classes? Is your handwriting legible? Make sure you obtain the material you're missing with the help of your classmates and other resources.
- Do you understand all of the material? Do you have any unsolved questions? Are there any terms or concepts that remain unclear? Approach your teacher / teacher's assistant during reception hours for clarifications.
- Assess your overall situation in each of your courses – are there any missing pieces? Did you complete all of the assignments and homework?
- Prepare a list of priorities for making up any missing material based on your situation in each one of the courses, as well as the level of difficulty you experience in each of the courses.
- Make certain you know which materials you will be tested on, the types of questions that will appear on the exam, the level of fluency required etc. Make sure you have samples of tests that are similar to this year's exam (the types of questions, if you have the option of selecting questions, the duration of the exam etc.).

Managing your time during the exam period

- Prepare an exam timetable leading up to the exams. The timetable should note the dates of your upcoming exams, and display the amount of time you plan on studying for each one of them. Make sure the amount of time you designated for studying for each exam is indeed realistic and sufficient in order to cover all of the material, as well as practice sample tests. Refer to the list of topics and materials that the course covered (classes, assignments, sample tests, books).

- In order to create your own timetable, you can use a calendar, an electronic palm, outlook or any other tool to help organize your time.
- Make a conscious effort to schedule in breaks for refreshment. There are those who require a break every 15 minutes, and there are those who can concentrate for an hour or more. Be aware of the limits to your concentration and adjust your studying patterns accordingly.
- We recommend activating your body muscles during breaks, doing simple exercises, taking a short walk/run or any other type of preferred activity. Exercise increases the blood circulation to different parts of your body and brain.
- Divide up your learning assignments into smaller tasks and test yourself after completing a certain area of study.
- Don't tell yourself 'I'm going to sit and study today'. Decide exactly what you intend on studying at any given point in time. Which subject, exercise, class and so on. The more focused you are and the more you define your own goals, the easier it will be for you to sit down and remain focused over time.

Recommended learning strategies for exams

1. Decide how you plan on **organizing your material**, so that you have a full grasp of the course (the main topics, subtitles, formulas that match each topic etc.) A visual display in the form of a chart, graph, table, headlines or any other means, will help you make connections between various topics. The more you organize your material, the easier it will be to understand, remember and recall the necessary information during the exam.
2. Create a **checklist** for the exams: write down all of the material you will be tested on (classes, assignments, sample tests, references) and prepare a list. This checklist will enable you to divide up the time you plan on studying for the exam into clearly organized study units.
3. Begin studying and going over the various topics. **Studying includes processing the material in your mind.** In other words, the more your mind processes information in various forms, the better you will remember it.

Following is a list of examples to help you process information:

1. Charts that compare terms/concepts/approaches etc.
2. Visual mapping - draw a map that includes important ideas/subjects/terms and the relationship between them. The map should be visually clear. Preparing the map will help you see how well you understand the material.
3. Flash cards – prepare flash cards for definitions, formulas, lists that you need to memorize by heart. You can write questions on one side of the card and write

answers on the other. The cards will help you test yourself once you are done going over the material.

4. A list of possible questions – think about what you might be asked on the exam.
5. Write down a general outline of the material covered throughout the course on a piece of paper.
6. Prepare a list of formulas.
7. Figure out which way you prefer studying –with friends, alone, through reading, listening - everyone has their own preferred style, which works best for them.
8. Try to diversify your learning methods and use as many senses as possible – read the material, solve exercises, study with friends – offering explanations to others often leads to a better understanding and grasp of the material.
9. Practice exam simulations – practice exams that are timed the same way as the actual exam.
10. Check your answers and identify mistakes. It is important to tie up any loose ends.
11. When practicing exercises and answering exams, focus on working out the questions actively and independently, rather than memorizing the material in a passive way. Do not give up when the going gets rough. Make sure you understand everything and know how to solve all of the exercises. Make notes on the sidelines of any difficulties you come across and return to those sections again.

Techniques for improving your memory skills

Going over material helps to embed it further in our memory. Going over the material shortly after learning it helps to maintain it. Another way to improve your memory is to convey the material to someone else or repeat it to yourself out loud. That is why we recommend incorporating group study sessions into your learning, as it is a platform for discussing the material.

Multiple encoding methods – We increase our ability to recall information the more we encode it in various forms (verbal, visual, and auditory). We highly recommend using every "channel" possible in order to remember material. The more you activate your senses during the learning process, the greater your chances are to remember. This includes reading, discussing the material with friends, preparing visual charts, voicing the material, writing and more.

Memorizing versus understanding – Memorizing the material without understanding it is an insufficient learning method. The more connections we make between new information and information that already exists in our minds, the better chances we have of recalling the information during the exam.

Learning and remembering material for the exams – According to researchers, when we revise material with longer and greater intervals, it dramatically improves our ability to remember and retain information. As a result, (if possible) we recommend dispersing the number of hours you plan on studying over the course of approximately two weeks, as opposed to concentrating your studies to the final three days leading up to the exam.

Personal associations and consistency: Linking new information to other information that is already deeply embedded in our memory, as well as providing new meaning to newly acquired information, which is, supposedly, meaningless, can help increase your ability to remember. You can make the material meaningful by connecting to it personally, such as using personal associations, comparing it to prior knowledge, forming a personal opinion, using humor and more.

Creating acronyms: Creating a word/new words from the first letter of each key word from the material you want to remember. We can remember the words or sentence with the help of visual images and personal associations.

Using humor: Humor helps us remember things. As opposed to things that are neutral, we are better at remembering funny visual images or stories.

Attaching a familiar tune to a new text: Music has the power to organize and create a pattern (for example, the English alphabet, the months of the year etc.), and can be used to improve our ability to remember key words or certain events.

Tips for the night before the exam

- Organize the following items before the exam – clothing, necessary equipment for the exam (pen, pencil, eraser, etc.) food and drink etc.
- Make sure you know when and where the exam is taking place, and whether you need to bring any additional material or equipment with you.
- Prepare yourself mentally – imagine yourself during the exam, recall previous successes, and relax.
- It is important to have a good night's sleep the night before the exam – We recommend you avoid studying past 20:00 pm, and certainly avoid staying up all night studying for the exam. If you cram the night before the exam you will forget the information you accumulated over time. People who do end up cramming this way usually only remember the last thing they studied.

Tips for the actual exam

Upon receiving the examination form we recommend you do the following:

- Scan the form. Read the instructions. Note the division into sections and the weight each sections carries.



- Read the questions.
- Pay attention to the instructions. You can highlight or underline the different parts of the question and the instruction words.
- For example, highlight the verbs (compare, describe) and the words that note numbers (two examples, three phenomena).
- Allocate your time according to the different sections.
- Plan the order in which you wish to answer the questions.
- Avoid getting "stuck" on a particular question. Note the time that is passing.
- Check your answers – ensure that what you wrote was accurate, that your calculations are correct, and that you related to all of the data provided in the question.
- Try to focus on the exam itself, as opposed to thoughts about succeeding or failing, and do not compare your pace to others.
- You are permitted and encouraged to ask teachers or teaching assistants for help.
- Beware of the tendency to "know" the solution, thereby overlooking other possible solutions.

Tips for specific types of exams

Multiple choice exams:

- Begin with the easiest questions.
- Mark important words, such as "every", "no", "is not", "always". These words should be marked in the question as well as the answers.
- Read the question without looking at the possible answers. Give yourself the answer and then check which of the answers is similar to the one you gave.
- After you have finished, review the questions and return to the difficult questions you have not yet answered.

Written exam with open questions:

- Carefully read the instructions and mark important words.
- Scan the entire exam.
- Plan how much time you have for each question/section. We recommend devoting the most time to the questions that receive the highest marking. We recommend beginning with the simpler questions.
- Complicated questions should be divided into clear sections to help you organize your answer.

- Organize the answer before you actually begin answering it. Write down points and headlines, terms etc.
- Write clearly, coherently and in an organized manner.

Open book exam:

- Do not take this lightly!
- The key here is to properly organize the material so that it will be easier for you to find your way around it during the exam when necessary.
- Prepare short and concise summaries.

Following the exam

- It is very important to go over the exam, to note where you succeeded, where you lost points, why this happened, and what needs to be improved. View the exam as an opportunity to learn and improve the next time around.
- Check to see what was most beneficial about your chosen studying methods, as well as things that held you back and were ineffective. Draw conclusions for upcoming exams.

COPING WITH EXAM ANXIETY

What is exam anxiety?

Exam anxiety is a widespread phenomenon, which is common in educational systems. It is an anxiety that rises when someone feels he or she is being tested or judged by others. When it is kept at an optimal level it contributes to the learning process. However, when anxiety surpasses a certain threshold, a problem arises, which significantly harms academic achievement. As a result, the anxiety increases and negative cycles begin to repeat themselves. Anxiety includes three main components: **physiological reactions**, such as increased heart rates, heavy breathing, sweating and more; **involuntary thoughts**, mostly negative, regarding the chances of succeeding in the exam, and the implications of failure on the student's life; **different behaviors**, which attempt to lower the level of anxiety, such as avoiding studies, avoiding taking the exam, or over studying.

In order to deal with exam anxiety, it is important to understand that there is a strong connection between our feelings, thoughts and behaviors.

Often, when we study (especially if we find our studies to be difficult) we think negative thoughts (for example: There's no chance I'm going to pass the exams, I am not good enough for the "Mechina" preparatory program).

These negative thoughts lead to unpleasant feelings such as: stress, anxiety, discomfort, impatience, and even despair.

This combination of thoughts and feelings usually makes it harder for us to concentrate, causes us to behave in ways that are counterproductive (for example: getting up and leaving the desk, studying things we already know and more).

How can it be dealt with?

Below is a technique to help us cope with our feelings and thoughts, which includes the following three steps:

Step 1: Identify our negative thoughts:

Negative thoughts often rise involuntarily. We barely notice when we think them. All we know is that we are suddenly stressed and unable to study. It is important to start paying attention to these thoughts and writing them down.

Don't be afraid of these thoughts –they are usually inaccurate and inflated. But they must be acknowledged in order to deal with them.

Step 2: Find contradicting thoughts:

After acknowledging the thoughts that impede our studies, begin examining them: Are they true? Are they exaggerations? Do we have proof to show otherwise?

Usually, when examining these thoughts, we discover that we focus on the negative while ignoring the positive.

For example: If my negative thought is – "I never understand the material, which is why I'm stupid".

At this point, I will examine this thought and ask myself if I am truly never capable of understanding anything? Or perhaps I don't understand certain situations, or perhaps only certain material? What can I do in order to improve my understanding?

After giving the negative thoughts a closer look – we phrase "a contradicting sentence", which is meant to counter the negative thought and weaken it. A contradicting sentence undermines the negative thought, so that it reduces stress, or negative feelings, as well as our desire to run away from facing the material. In the example we brought above the sentence could be: "I usually understand the material, but when I'm pressured it's harder for me to understand. I am not stupid. It's just that when I'm put under pressure it's hard for me to understand. Now I need to think about what I should do when I feel pressured..."

Step three: Dealing with pressure

After we identified the negative thought and found its contradicting sentence, we write both sentences beside each other.

Then we use the sentences when we feel stressed, for example, when learning difficult material or during the exam itself. The sentences that are written on the note remind us why we feel stressed, while at the same time they remind us that the stress has no real basis and that we have something to do to counter it.

In the example we brought above: when I sit down to study and don't understand something, I whip out the note with the sentences, and remind myself that I am not stupid and that if I only calm down a little, take a few deep breaths, I will realize that I am actually capable of understanding.

It is important to remember that there are often several negative sentences or statements that make us feel stressed, **and the more we practice this technique the greater an impact it will have.**



If you have an academic problem or a problem related to the exams, please feel free to approach the following personnel, in the following order:

The Department's Office

The department's office provides useful information. We recommend contacting the office as the first step in order to solve the problem.

The Academic Advisor

The academic advisor (for both undergraduate and graduate students) is an academic staff member, usually a teacher in the department, who advises students. The list of advisors and their reception hours can be found at the department's office.

The Head of the Department

The Head of the Department is involved in decisions made regarding the department, as implied by his/her title. The latter should be addressed in order to consult or deal with various academic issues.

Supporting Counselor

The counselor provides personal, academic and social support, while utilizing various services provided by the Dean of Students' Office. The counselor offers various solutions to different challenges, which you may come across throughout the academic year, and more specifically during the exam period.

Faculty Teaching Secretaries

The offices for academic inquiries are responsible for academic and faculty issues. We recommend consulting with the relevant office before referring to the Dean of the faculty.

Chairperson of the Teaching Committee/Vice Dean for Teaching

The Chairperson/Vice Dean has the authority to grant permission to take exams at a postponed date ("moed gimel"), to submit seminar papers after the deadline, and other academic matters. You can fill out a formal request (forms can be found at the student offices/the academic offices). Please note that it may take time to process your request.

The Faculty Dean

The Dean is the highest authority in the faculty. In the event that problems remain unsolved at the department level, we recommend contacting him/her.



The Dean of Students and Handling Special Cases

The Dean of Students and the Dean's Office are an important address to turn to in order to obtain answers to various questions concerning your studies. The Dean's Office serves all students, and it has an inherently different purpose than the Faculty Deans mentioned earlier.

The Dean's Office is responsible for operating services that address and tend to students' welfare as members of the University community. The members of staff at the office are well prepared to lend a helping hand in solving personal, social, learning and financial problems concerning student life.

There are various divisions within the Dean's Office, including the division for financial aid, psychological services, the center for diagnosing and supporting students with learning disabilities, the division for social involvement, which offers a range of fascinating activities in the community, along with scholarships, the division for accessibility, which offers assistance and support to students with physical and mental disabilities, the coordinator of Arab students' affairs, which guides and assists in various matters, the coordinator for advancing equal opportunity for students from the periphery, new immigrants and members of the Ethiopian community, the gender and parenthood coordinator, who assists in finding solutions concerning parenting and academic challenges.

Please visit the Dean's Office site for further information: <http://studean.huji.ac.il>

Contact Information for the Divisions of the Dean of Students' Office



	Telephone	Fax	E-mail
The Dean of Students' Office	02-5882355	02-5812738	studean@savion.huji.ac.il
Center for the diagnosis and support of students with learning disabilities	02-5881183		ldsupport@savion.huji.ac.il
Psychological services	02-5882685	02-5817212	psyserv@mail.huji.ac.il
The division of equal opportunity:			
The coordinator of Arab students' affairs	02-5880263	02-5812738	asep@savion.huji.ac.il
The coordinator for students from the periphery, new immigrants and graduates of the ultra-orthodox education system	02-5880067 02-5880421	02-5812738	equalod@savion.huji.ac.il
The coordinators for the 'Feuerstein' program	02-5880059 052-6091408	02-5880059	feuerstein.huji@gmail.com
The division for accessibility	02-5880118/78 02-5494982	02-5812738	negishut@savion.huji.ac.il
Academic guidance for students with mental disabilities	050-6822234		nathan.huji@gmail.com
Learning center for blind and visually impaired	02-5882155	02-5826166	lcb@savion.huji.ac.il
The gender and parenthood coordinator	02-5880262	02-5812738	png@savion.huji.ac.il



The Reserves Duty (Miluim) Coordinator	02-5881833	02-5812738	mayasc@savion.huji.ac.il
The Religion and Tradition Coordinator	02-5883886	02-5813204	aries@savion.huji.ac.il
The Coordinator of student groups and public programs	054-8820576 02-5881578	02-5812738	studentcells@savion.huji.ac.il
Social involvement	02-5882364/6	02-5880174	sociali@savion.huji.ac.il
Student Dorms	02-5882358 02-5882549	02-5882992	hujidorms@savion.huji.ac.il
Shuttle – Transportation services between campuses	02-6758784	02-6429019	
Commissioners for prevention of sexual harassment	02-5881043		hatrada@savion.huji.ac.il
The student advocate office (Tuesdays)	02-5882911		kvilot@savion.huji.ac.il
The scholarship and financial aid division	02-5882881/4		http://pnyot.huji.ac.il/mador_siua
Security			
Mount Scopus Security	02-5883000	02-5882993	itahonms@savion.huji.ac.il
Edmond J. Safra Security	02-6585000	02-6586990	bitahongr@savion.huji.ac.il
Ein Kerem Security	02-6757000	02-6784010	bitahonek@savion.huji.ac.il
Rehovot Security	08-9489290	08-9489320	bitahonagri@savion.huji.ac.il



The Student Advocate Office

The Student Advocate Office is an independent authority.

He deals with complaints of University students and candidates, concerning academic affairs or personal administrative affairs within the framework of their studies. He is authorized, among other things, to examine whether decisions were made in accordance with the University's protocol, without any prejudice or arbitrariness.

The Student Advocate provides thorough answers to each complaint she receives within a reasonable amount of time.

In the event that the Student Advocate finds the complaint to be justifiable, he has the authority to recommend altering the decision that concerns the claimant.

The Student Advocate has the right to draw the attention of any University authority to decisions or conduct that he deems inappropriate.

The Student Advocate is permitted to recommend that relevant University authorities change protocols or rules, which, after examining the complaint, were found to be mistaken, lacking, or conflicting with the natural principles of justice.

For the Student Advocate's complete regulations guide, please visit the following site:
<http://academic-secretary.huji.ac.il/?cmd=regulations.638>

The Student Advocate can be reached via the following e-mail address:
kvilot@savion.huji.ac.il
Receiving the public by appointment

