

DIRECTIONS

PUBLISHED BY THE OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS ROOM 124 CENTRAL SQUARE

Preparing for Exams

James Fitchette of the Counselling and Development Centre offers strategies for surviving the final phase of your academic year. The real key to success in taking and preparing for exams is active studying, and given below are hints on how to study; the following study hints will help you organize your thoughts. Read on:

Hints for Studying

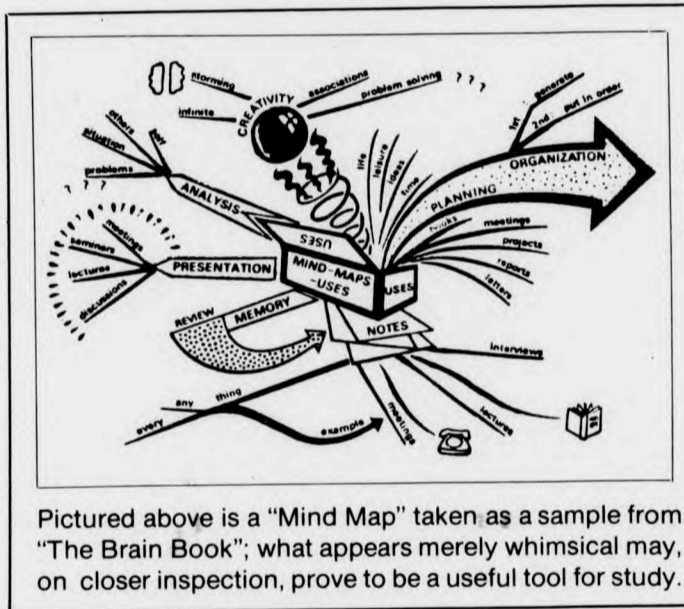
Material is easier to recall if you have reviewed effectively. Effective reviewing entails:

- **Selecting** ideas, concepts, etc., to be reviewed in brief key phrases, as opposed to trying to memorize entire textbooks and all your notes;
- **Reducing** the significant information to key recall words that you associate with the related details (cf., "chunking");
- **Organizing** the material to be remembered into patterns, diagrams, grids, mind-maps, flow-charts, in addition to standard linear outlines. Material that is organized in these ways will be more memorable than material that is reviewed simply by re-reading everything you highlighted in your textbook, for instance. Highlighting can help to make important ideas stand out on the page, but it doesn't give the ideas any real sense of organization.
- **Rehearsing** the information to be recalled in an **active** way. Simply memorizing can be passive, and therefore less useful as a preparation for exams that require analysis, synthesis, evaluation, etc. **Practice remembering** the material on a regular basis. Several comparatively brief reviews are likely to be more effective than one marathon session the night before the test. Cramming is likely to overload you with information, increase anxiety, and leads in most cases to less than satisfactory results.
- **Try studying with a partner or in a small group.** By asking each other questions, you gain practice in formulating your thoughts, explaining terms and concepts, and anticipating possible questions.

Hints for Taking Exams

- Arrive early and practice deep breathing to reduce physical stress and anxiety you may be experiencing;
- Before beginning to write answers to questions, first survey the entire test. See how many questions there are, what kinds of questions are being asked, how much they are worth, etc. Circle key words in the questions as you read them so you will be sure you are answering the question as it has been asked;

- Set some goals for yourself in terms of time. If a question is worth 30% of the total grade, it probably deserves 30% of the total time. Don't get caught short, with only 5 minutes at the end of the exam to write an answer for a question worth half of the total mark;
- Do the questions you know best first. This helps to relieve some anxiety and saves some time for other questions you are less sure of. Then recycle and try the ones you weren't sure of;



Pictured above is a "Mind Map" taken as a sample from "The Brain Book"; what appears merely whimsical may, on closer inspection, prove to be a useful tool for study.

- Plan your answers to essay questions. The following are key words often used in examination questions or essay/paper topics. Keep these definitions in mind, as a guide to organizing your thoughts:
 - COMPARE.** Look for qualities and/or characteristics that resemble each other. Emphasize similarities, but look for differences.
 - CONTRAST.** Stress dissimilarities and differences of things, qualities, events and problems.
 - DEFINE.** Give clear, concise, authoritative meanings.
 - DISCUSS.** Consider various points of view, analyze carefully and offer pro and con reasons.
 - EVALUATE.** Appraise. Offer your opinions. Cite both limitations and advantages and include the opinions of authorities.
 - REVIEW.** Examine a subject critically, analyzing and commenting on it or statements made about it.

For more information on these and other study techniques, contact James Fitchette, Learning Skills Centre, Counselling and Development, 148 Behavioural Sciences Building (736-5297).

Studying with a small group?

Students always need study space. You should know that, in addition to the study halls in your college and study carrels in the library, you as a registered student at York can book classroom space for small group study purposes. *Study groups should consist of at least three persons.*

If you want to book a room, simply call the Room Allocation Centre at 736-2100 (2389), Room C131, West Office Building to determine what space is available. With the exception of the Fine Arts Building and Osgoode Hall, the Centre can reserve a room on campus at no charge. Weekend bookings should be made no later than noon on Thursday of that week. Student identification will be required. For bookings made more than 24 hours in advance of use, you are advised to drop by the Centre to confirm the booking.

To protect your right to use classrooms, we recommend some few courtesies, however: prior booking through the Room Allocation Centre, booking for a group rather than an individual, and consideration for fellow students who use the rooms after you, e.g., cleaning up after yourselves. It can be tempting to find an unoccupied classroom and use it as your private study room. The practice of picking a room and chalking "occupied" on the door is a disservice to other students who may have booked the space officially and to caretakers who have to clean the doors.

Reserve Reading Room Study Room Hours

During the spring '87 Examination period the Scott Library Reserve Reading Room will be open for study only for an EXTRA 6 HOURS on Saturdays and an EXTRA 3 HOURS on Sundays March 28 to May 3, 1987

SATURDAYS

March 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25 and May 2
 Regular Service Hours - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
 Study Room Hours - 6:00 pm to 12:00 midnight

SUNDAYS

March 29, April 5, 12, 19, 26, and May 3
 Study Room Hours - 10:00 am to 1:00 pm
 Regular Service Hours - 1:00 pm to 12:00 midnight

NO ACCESS TO RESERVE MATERIALS DURING THE SPECIAL STUDY ROOM HOURS