

## Final Exam "Battle Plan"

It's time to start organizing your resources for the final "Big Push" of the semester. This effort probably will mean making some important decisions about how to divide your time and energies to achieve maximum success.

The suggested steps are:

- 1) Figure out what your present situation is in each class.
- 2) Estimate what catch-up work and new work needs to be done between now and the final exams. Also estimate how much time will be needed to review for each exam.
- 3) Learn all you can about what to expect on your final exams.
- 4) Rank your courses according to importance, and decide on a **REALISTIC** final-grade goal for each course.
- 5) Estimate how many study hours are available to you and divide them among your courses **ACCORDING TO YOUR PRIORITIES**.
- 6) Adjust your grade-goals, if necessary, to fit the realities of how much study time is available.

Not everyone needs to follow such a detailed plan, but this approach is **ESPECIALLY RECOMMENDED IF YOU'VE HAD TROUBLE ORGANIZING YOURSELF IN THE PAST**. This method also may help if you have a heavy load of final exams, final papers, etc.

### Step One: What is your present situation?

Considering the grades that you've received so far and their relative weights, what is your overall grade in each class as you approach final exams?

Course	Estimated Grade Up To Now:	Course	Estimated Grade Up To Now:
1. _____	_____	4. _____	_____
2. _____	_____	5. _____	_____
3. _____	_____	6. _____	_____

### Step Two: What work needs to be done?

Fill in the boxes in TABLE ONE. Include estimates of **HOW MUCH** time will be needed for each part.

### Step Three: Know your "enemies." What will the tests be like?

Answer the questions in TABLE TWO about each final exam. If you don't know an answer, **FIND OUT!**

**Step Four:**

- A. Rank your courses according to how important each one is in terms of the final grade desired, and in terms of the importance of that final grade. For example, courses in your major or possible major might be ranked first; courses that are electives or that you are taking P/F might be ranked last.
- B. Then, keeping in mind that information from the previous steps, write in a REALISTIC grade-goal for each course.

Courses Ranked by Importance	Realistic Grade-Goal
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____

**Step Five:**

Use the attached schedule sheets to plan a TENTATIVE study schedule for the remainder of the semester.

- A. Indicate the week each schedule will cover.
- B. Cross out all hours unavailable to you for studying (class hours, job hours, meals, etc.)
- C. Indicate all your exam times and their locations on the schedule for finals week.
- D. Now start allotting study hours to different courses. You will have to make decisions based on such factors as the information in Table One and the ranking in Step Four. Remember to BE REALISTIC. You cannot study every waking hour; you will burn yourself out. Also, allow time for errands and other necessary jobs. To allot hours, it is suggested that you categorize study hours on your schedule according to course and type of studying: you might, for example, use a two-letter code, with the first letter representing the course and the second letter P-N = Physics-new work; B-R = Biology review.

E. As you work on this step, fill in the spaces below.

Course	Approx. Study Hours
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____

If you've done a careful job on this exercise, you now have a **ROUGH** idea of how you could spend your time during the last precious days of the semester.

**NOTE:** The time schedule sheets are **NOT** intended to be the final word. A "battle plan" is only a rough estimate of how events will occur. No plan can predict every factor perfectly. But this kind of plan gives you a starting point, a way to know roughly what you'll have to do to reach your goals. In short, it may keep you from spinning your wheels. Review your plan as you go along!

**ONE FINAL HINT:** In general, it is better to overestimate how much time you will need than to underestimate. So add a "fudge factor" to your estimate, say approximately 30-50% more than your most optimistic estimate. Usually you will end up using the extra time, and more!

**GOOD STUDYING!**

**TABLE ONE**

Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____
2A. What catch-up work (work assigned and due in the past but not yet finished) do you have to do and approximately how many hours will be needed to do it?					
2B. What new work do you need to do (work assigned between now and the end of the semester) and approximately how many hours will be needed to do it?					
2C. In addition to the above, approximately how many hours will you need to review material for each final exam?					

**TABLE TWO**

Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____
3A. What kind of test is it? Will it be objective (multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank) or subjective (short answer, essay)? If it is a combination of the above, list percentages if possible.					
3B. How many items will be on the test and how much time will you have to complete it?					
3C. How much information will it cover? Is it a unit test or a comprehensive test? If it is a cumulative test (old and new materials), what portion of the test will cover new material?					

**TABLE TWO (CONTINUED)**

Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____	Course_____
3D. What is the relative importance of course requirements? Will the text be covered heavily? Will lecture notes be on the test? Will lab experiments or other outside assignments be covered?					
3E. What is the emphasis on various topics? If all of the lecture information and text readings are to be covered, which topics are most important?					
3F. Who is writing the test (professor, text authors, department) and who will be grading the test? What are their biases or preferences?					

**SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF**

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	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
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9:00							
10:00							
11:00							

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