

Studying for a Math Exam

When to prepare?--The Time Allocation Suggestions

Because the time you have for math exam preparation will be limited, it's good to plan well and allocate the time for preparation. Some tips are:

1. Get back to the course syllabus to check the date of the exam, the amount of time you have until the exam and the amount of chapters that will be included in the exam.
2. Sort out the chapters where you have the most problems from the chapters that you are good at. Allocate more time on the former than the latter.
3. Sort out the chapters where the exam will cover the most materials. Allocate more time on the former than the latter.
4. Keep track of your reviewing pace and the time left for preparation. If you have already spent more time than planned on some chapters, adjust your strategies (e.g. instead of working on the chapters one by one, collect unclear problems and get help on them from SCAA math tutors or your instructor) in order to have adequate time to study.

What to Review? -- Reviewing Materials Suggestions

With limited time for preparation, here's some tips for how to efficiently utilize your time:

1. Use the end of chapter materials provided in the textbook. If there is a glossary or chapter summary (there usually is), carefully read through it and record what you think you may have problems with. Assess and keep track of your weak points and spend more time on practicing similar problems (e.g. from the "practice problems" part of each chapter, or your homework) until you understand them.
2. Understand all the basic terminology, definitions, and properties, which are highlighted in boxes throughout your textbook, that you will be tested over; understand all the formulas based on their utilization in the examples in the textbook.
3. When you read the examples under each chapter, try to work on it before you see the answers. If you get a different answer from the book, carefully conclude the differences between your process and the process in the explanation.
4. If there is a practice test, take it with a time limit you will be given during the exam. Check the answers afterwards. Redo any problems missed based on your understanding on the correct answers, and, if time allows, let your math tutor make up some similar problems for more practice.



(510) 885-3674
www.csueastbay.edu/scaa
scaa@csueastbay.edu

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How to get Help? – Using SCAA Resources and Other School Resources

1. Get help from a math tutor to assess what you need to work on, help you through the problem areas, and make up some similar problems to the ones that you did incorrectly.
2. Use your instructor's office hours and write emails to them inquiring about specific problems on the exam in case there is a misunderstanding on the syllabus and the practice test.
3. Use eTutoring and other online resources for help outside of SCAA's normal operating hours or no instructors available for office hours.
4. Use SCAA handouts for your specific course needs.

And if time allows...

Try to put yourself in the "puzzle setters' shoes": if you were the test or puzzle makers, what problems do you think they will be interested in testing you on?

**Remember: There is no quick and easy way to learn mathematics. All students will need to work hard with diligence and systematic practice. Following these guidelines, however, will make studying mathematics easier and more enjoyable.*

Also, DON'T stay up late studying the night before the exam. A good night's rest will help you feel better prepared and more relaxed. A good night's rest will let your brain function better and your thoughts clearer with less anxiety.

***Last, but not least, you are NOT struggling alone! The SCAA is always here to help you!*



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