



● [Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center](#)

● [Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center FAQs](#)

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Academic Support Programs
Campus Center 1-1300
UMass Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125-3393
617-287-6550

Reading, Writing, and Study Center Resources (RWSSC)

Below is a list of resource documents that can be viewed in the Microsoft Word or Adobe format by clicking on the appropriate choice. If you choose the Adobe format you will need the Adobe Reader program, which you can download for free by going to the [Adobe web site](#).

Reading:

- Reading Strategies - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Critical Reading Questions - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Patterns of Organization - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))

Writing:

- Writing Process - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Reader-Friendly Essay - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Signal Words & Expressions - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Signal & Transition Words - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Verbs to Introduce Quotes - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))

Time Management:

- Time Management Goals - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Thinking Work Load - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Weekly Planner - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))

Note Taking:

- Active Listening - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Note Taking - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Note Taking Tips - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))

Exam Prep and Test Taking:

- Exam Preparation - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Multiple Choice Questions - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Important Words in Essay Questions - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Organizing Essay Answers - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Test taking Analysis - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))

Academic Work Habits:

- Academic Work Habits Assessment - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))
- Habits Assessment Analysis - ([Adobe Format](#) | [Word Format](#))



Academic Programs

- Critical Reading and Writing Courses and First Year Seminars
- English as a Second Language Center
- Mathematics Skills
- EDCG 671
- Sociology 444

Pre-Admission Program

- Directions for Student Potential Program

Tutoring Programs

- Graduate Writing Center
- Math Resource Center
- Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center
- Subject Tutoring Program

Academic Support Programs Staff

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Academic Support Programs

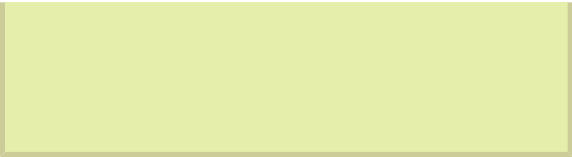
Overview:

The mission of the Office of Academic Support Programs is to offer comprehensive coursework and services to both native and non-native speakers of English with the goal of helping students to succeed in their studies. The focus of the program is on academic instruction and tutoring, following careful assessment of student writing, critical thinking and mathematics capabilities. Program faculty and staff collaborate with departments across the University with the aim of strengthening the undergraduate experience.

Academic programs include: General Education courses in Critical Analysis, Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning, and academic courses for non-native speakers of English; a Graduate College of Education course in teaching reading and writing across the curriculum for secondary teacher candidates, and field placement in the Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center; and a cooperative education field experience course in mentoring first year seminar students. Academic Support Programs faculty conduct assessments of writing and critical thinking for placement of all new students in Critical Analysis general education and ESL courses. Academic Support Programs staff also offer consulting for faculty seeking assistance in curriculum in undergraduate and graduate programs in the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Science and Mathematics, and the College of Nursing.

Instruction in verbal skills, English for non-native speakers, and mathematics is offered through the alternative admissions program, Directions for Student Potential.

Tutorial programs include: individual and group tutoring in course content across all disciplines through the Subject Tutoring Program; tutoring in quantitative reasoning, mathematics and computer science through the Math Resource Center; tutoring in general education capabilities of writing and critical analysis through the Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center; tutoring for ESL courses; and consultations for graduate students, both native and non-native speakers, in critical analysis, research and scholarly writing through the Graduate Writing Center.





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Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center FAQs

Q: How do I sign up for a Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies tutor?

A: Fill out an application at Academic Support Programs (Campus Center-1-1300).

Q: How do I find out if I have been assigned a RWSSC tutor?

A: Stop by or call the Center at 617-287-6567, or 617-287-6550.

Q: Do I have to come for tutoring every week? If I don't have any assignments or papers due, do I still have to come?

A: Yes. There is always something to work on, to plan for and/or discuss.

Q: How many cancellations are allowed?

A: You can cancel one appointment per semester if you call ahead (617-287-6550) to cancel.

Q: What happens if I don't show up?

A: If you don't let your tutor know ahead of time that you are canceling, your time will be reassigned to another student. You can reactivate your request for tutorial help but you will be placed at the end of the queue and will have to wait for a time slot to open up.

Q: Do you do proofreading? Will you edit my papers?

A: No, but we will help you to learn how to revise your papers on your own.

Q: What kinds of tutoring do you do at the Center?

A: Graduate students and faculty help students with assignments for their courses; for example, they help with paper writing, paper revision, reading techniques, and with strategies for note-taking, studying, and test-taking. The specific type of tutoring an individual student receives depends on the type of assignments with which s/he needs help.

Q: Who goes to the Center to get tutored?

A: Students who want to improve their reading, writing, and study strategies.

Q: Where do I meet my tutor and what should I bring?

A: Meet your tutor at the Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center, Academic Support Programs (Campus Center-1-1300). Bring your syllabi, instructions, paper drafts, and/or anything else that you need to work on your assignments.

Q: Can I get more than one hour of tutoring per week?

A: You can get only one hour of individual tutoring, but you can also attend one of our workshops.

Q: What kinds of workshops do you offer?

A: Usually, we offer writing workshops and time-management/study strategies workshops weekly.

Q: How much does it cost to get tutoring?

A: Nothing. Tutoring is free to actively enrolled students.

Q: Can a tutor in the Center help me prepare for the WPR exam or portfolio?

A: No, but Center tutors will help you develop your writing process while working on your course work. Also, course papers that you work on with a Center tutor may fit the guidelines for a supporting paper for the WPR portfolio.

Reading Strategies for College Study

Activate prior knowledge by asking

- Why am I reading this?
- What is the text about?
- What do I already know about this topic (brainstorm)?
- What do I already know about the reliability/credibility of the author and/or source?
- What do I predict that the author will say?

Determine purpose by asking

- How does this section/topic fit into the syllabus, lecture, and other sources of prior information?
- How can I connect the topic with my prior knowledge and life experience?

Prioritize by asking

- What will be expected of me for discussion, tests, labs, etc.?
- What do I need to read and understand first?
- Can I practice flexible reading, and choose what to read closely, and what to skim (at least for now)?
- Can I use study questions and make my own that will help focus my reading?

Preview by asking

- How can I make use of the table of contents, boldface terms, subheadings, graphics, etc.?
- What are some of the main ideas stated in the first and last chapters and/or paragraphs?
- How do subheadings and subtopics fit into ideas stated in the first and last sections?
- How does the author organize the text: compare/contrast? problem/solution? cause/effect, etc.?
- Are there vocabulary lists and/or review questions at the end of the section? Has the instructor provided review questions? Can I use these to determine what is important?

Read interactively

- Predict: Form the "big picture" by anticipating the text's organization.
- Visualize: Picture the information (make a "movie" of the text).
- Annotate: Write marks, notes, questions, and connections in the margins of the text or on the text itself.
- Associate by asking: How does this new information fit with previous information? What details support main ideas? Is there overlap between lectures and the reading?
- Monitor by asking: Am I aware of my reading process? For example, how do I deal with new words (by continuing to read? by looking for contextual clues? by listing words to be looked up later?)? Do I need to switch strategies or reading rate?

Respond during and after reading by asking

- What is my reaction to the reading?
- What do I remember from the reading? How would I summarize the author's ideas?
- What do I need to make note of now, before I move on to something else?
- Now that I've read the reading, do I need to revise my knowledge and/or my judgments about other texts?

CRITICAL READING: Posing Questions and Examining Language

By asking questions of yourself and of the text, you will develop both your reading efficiency and analytic ability.

Goals:

To analyze a text instead of taking it at face value
To assess the accuracy and relevance of a text
To clarify hidden assumptions
To identify propaganda and rhetorical techniques
To distinguish between facts and opinions

Questions:

Who is the author? What do you know about the author? What is the author's status: expert? politician? someone with vested interest?

What is the author's purpose? To share information? To persuade? To advocate? To develop an argument? To propagandize?

What connotations are triggered by the author's word choice? Are there "buzz" or "shock" words (value-laden terms) that indicate biases?

Who is the author's intended audience? (For example, members of the same group as the author? critics? opponents?)

What reactions do words and statements evoke in you? Why?

Was the author successful in reaching the intended audience? How? To what extent? At which points in the reading?

What kind of information does the author use as "evidence": reasoning? statistics? quotations? government documents? studies? material from websites? interviews? personal observations? What are the sources of the evidence?

What ideas or information are excluded or minimized by the author? How do these omissions present clues about the author's value system?

"Patterns of Organization" (from Quinn and Irvings's Active Reading)

According to Shirley Quinn's and Susan Irvings's Active Reading, authors construct their works by following a "**pattern of organization**" (179, emphasis in the original). The patterns identified by Quinn and Irvings include "the **list** pattern, the **order** pattern, the **compare/contrast** pattern, the **cause-and-effect** pattern, and the **problem-solution** pattern" (179, emphasis in the original). When they discuss four different types of reading earlier in Active Reading, Quinn and Irvings claim that readers can perform better analysis of readings by identifying the types of organization authors use (5).

EXAMPLES

list:

Bring something to write with, your notes, and all your readings to the midterm.

order (Quinn and Irvings identify several different order patterns (183-189)):

chronological:

They studied academic, then social and cultural, and finally technological literacy.

process:

First they read Atwan's Convergences and constructed an assignment based on it, and then they addressed the assignment.

size or place:

The class will usually meet in the classroom, but on Wednesdays it will meet in the library; once or twice during the semester, it will meet at an alternate location.

importance:

To do well on the test, it is paramount that you be able to apply techniques covered in the course (in addition, you should be familiar with the course vocabulary).

compare/contrast:

The students all passed the quiz; however, some of them passed minimally while others received a "perfect" (100%) grade.

cause-and-effect:

Some students were able to refer to quotes from classmates effectively in their papers because they took notes well during class.

problem-solution:

If you are not performing well on the quizzes, you should attend a test taking workshop.

WRITING PROCESS

Depending on your individual writing process and the type of paper that you are writing, you may need to reorder, combine, skip, and/or add steps.

PREWRITING, TOPIC DEVELOPMENT

- brainstorming: talking or freewriting
- reading
- gathering data: observing, taking notes, interviewing

WRITING DRAFT #1

- form thesis or purpose based on prewriting data and on instructions
- develop argument to support thesis

GETTING FEEDBACK ON DRAFT #1

- focus on content issues
- identify the main point, thesis, or purpose
- establish direction—this may mean narrowing topic down, or expanding more

REWRITING/DRAFT #2

- consider feedback and comments
- make sure you have included elaboration and analysis
- cut unnecessary summary
- include necessary references and attribution to sources
- incorporate appropriate quotes effectively

GETTING FEEDBACK ON DRAFT #2

- focus on reorganizing entire draft
- make an outline, chart, or map if necessary
- meet with a tutor, peer, or instructor, if you have not done so already
- reorganize paragraphs
- determine if the writing conveys the intended meaning
- consider intended audience—i.e., are syntax and diction appropriate?

REWRITING/DRAFT#3

- enter the draft on a computer and save the file, if earlier versions were handwritten
- determine whether or not the introduction and conclusion correspond to the body of the paper
- consider structure of individual paragraphs

GETTING FEEDBACK ON DRAFT #3

- focus on syntax and punctuation
- reread, with someone else if possible, and note where changes need to be made to unify the paper

REWRITING/EDITING/DRAFT #4

- read paper aloud and carefully check and correct structure, punctuation, and spelling
- double check format, title, and documentation pages

PROOFREADING/FINAL CHECK

- print a new copy and read carefully one last time
- make necessary changes

FINAL VERSION

- print out the final version and make an electronic or paper copy for your own records

DEVELOPING A READER-FRIENDLY ESSAY: REVISION STRATEGIES

Revising is an important component of the writing process. Flexible revising strategies allow you to have more control over your writing process because strategizing involves making choices about what you say and how you say it; develop a "to do" list and/or plan that reflects the purpose of the essay. There is no "correct" order in which to use these strategies; choose a sequence to fit your needs as you write.

Objective	Strategies
check organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• outline your draft by labelling the topic of each paragraph• then compare to your plan and the assignment's requirements• decide what stays, what goes, what moves, and what needs to be added
clarify your views	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• freewrite on the theme/topic• review your freewrite and draft to compare them and integrate where necessary• reread the instructions to see how the assignment calls for your views
get important descriptive details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• freewrite or brainstorm your observations• skim, looking for most precise examples• choose the best locations to place additions in the draft
check clarity and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ask yourself the function of specific sentences in relation to the theme, purpose and demands of the assignment
develop the argument by grasping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• review course materials for contrary positions• discuss with a peer who has a different viewpoint

THE READING, WRITING AND STUDY STRATEGIES CENTER

SIGNAL WORDS & EXPRESSIONS

Continuation of/ in same direction	moreover, also, too, in addition, likewise, besides, furthermore
Emphasis	add to this, even more, above all, more important
Sequence	first, second, finally, last, next, then, after, from now on, formerly, before, later, previously, subsequently, thereafter
Time	begins, soon, shortly, since then, from now on
Cause & Effect	because, thus, since, accordingly, consequently, for this reason, if...then, hence, therefore, on that account, as a result, so, leading to, due to
Comparison	like, in the same way, similar, also, likewise, all comparative forms of adjectives and adverbs (e.g. better, worse, faster, etc.)
Contrast or Change	but, however, nevertheless, yet, still, though, former, rather, latter, different, on the other hand
Concession or Opposing View	certainly, naturally, it is true, accepting the data, granted that, of course
Continuation with argument after concession	nonetheless, all the same, even though, still, nevertheless, notwithstanding, whereas, in spite of
Summary	for this reason, in brief, in conclusion, to sum up, finally, thus, in summary, all superlative forms of adjectives & adverbs (e.g. most, best, worst)

Signal and Transition Words

Addition/list forming

a few
 additionally
 again
 along with
 also
 and
 and then
 another
 at the same time
 besides
 equally
 finally
 first of all
 further
 furthermore
 important(ly)
 in addition
 in like manner
 in the first place
 in the same way
 lastly
 likewise
 many
 more
 moreover
 next
 not only... but also
 one
 several
 similarly
 too

Comparison

as
 at the same time
 correspondingly
 in like manner
 in the same way
 just as
 just like
 likewise
 similarly

Concession/agreement

albeit
 granted
 it is true that
 of course
 there is no question that
 to an extent
 to be sure
 true (ly)
 while
 without doubt

Contrast

after all

although
 and yet
 anyhow
 better
 but
 conversely
 despite
 differently
 even though
 for all that
 former... latter
 however
 in contrast
 in spite of
 instead (of)
 just the same
 nevertheless
 nonetheless
 on the contrary
 on the other hand
 other
 otherwise
 still
 whereas
 worse
 yet

Frequency

always
 commonly
 consistently
 frequently
 infrequently
 never
 normally
 now and then
 often
 sometimes
 usually

Intensity

best
 certainly
 in any event
 in fact
 indeed
 least
 most
 naturally
 of course
 surely
 the point is
 truly
 worst

Examples

a case in point
 as proof

consider the following
 for example
 for instance
 specifically
 such as
 to cite a case
 to illustrate

Order/Time

after
 afterwards
 and then
 as soon as
 at length
 at that time
 before
 begins
 by and by
 concurrently
 consequently
 directly
 earlier
 end
 eventually
 finally first
 henceforth
 immediately
 importantly
 in conclusion
 in the meantime
 late (on)
 meanwhile
 more
 next
 now
 presently
 second
 shortly
 since
 soon
 subsequently
 then
 thereafter
 whereupon

Placement

above
 adjacent
 alongside
 below
 beside
 beyond
 contiguous
 for
 here
 included in
 inside
 juxtaposed

near
 nearby
 next to
 on the/to the right/left
 opposite
 outside
 surrounding

Purpose

deliberately
 for the end
 in order that
 in order to
 purposely
 to achieve
 with this in mind
 with this objective

Repetition

again
 as above
 as mentioned
 as noted
 in other words
 that is
 then too

Result

accordingly
 all in all
 altogether
 as a result
 because
 clearly
 consequently
 due to
 finally
 for this reason
 hence
 it follows that
 namely
 so that
 then
 therefore
 thereupon
 thus

Synthesis/summary

in brief
 in short
 in summary
 on the whole
 to conclude
 to reassess
 to reexamine
 to review
 to simplify

Verbs that can be used to introduce quotes and other evidence

acknowledge	identifies
adds	illustrates
admits	inquires
alerts	lists
allows	makes clear
analyzes	makes the case
announces	measures
argues	notes
ascertains	observes
asks	points out
assesses	postulates
asserts	presents
begins	proposes
cites	proves
claims	qualifies
compares	questions
concludes	rationalizes
concur	reduces
condemns	refers to
considers	refutes
contends	rejects
contrasts	remarks
conveys	replies
critiques	reports
defines	reviews
delineates	says
demonstrates	shows
denies	simplifies
describes	speaks
determines	stipulates
discovers	stresses
echoes	substantiates
emphasizes	suggests
envision	summarizes
evaluates	surveys
examines	synthesizes
explores	traces
expounds on	views
figures	warns
finds	writes
finishes	

Time Management:

Goals:

To organize your schedule and find more time for relaxation

To set both short term and long term goals

To set priorities

To avoid procrastination

Questions and Suggestions:

What is most important to you? What must you accomplish today? Tomorrow? Next week? Next month? This year? Be realistic about what you need to accomplish, and when.

What is your peak efficiency time during the day? Are you more focused in the morning, afternoon, or at night?

When do you work on your most difficult assignment? For instance, writing a paper for a history class, reading a difficult article, and/or studying for a biochemistry exam? Do you try to work on the most difficult assignment during your peak study periods?

When do you do housework? When do you type a lab report? When do you check your e-mail? When do you do your laundry?

Make a long-term schedule. Write down major due dates. Write reminders of when you need to start working on a project.

Make a schedule for each week. Make a specific schedule for study times. When estimating time, consider how much time you need, the number of assignments, how fast you read, how difficult the subject is for you, and how much time you need to just think about readings and writings.

Reevaluate your schedule after every week.

-Did you overestimate or underestimate the time needed for each type of assignment?

-Did you find conflicts invading your schedule? What did you do?

-Could you have prevented the conflict?

-What will you do next week if a conflict or an over- or underestimate occurs again?

Schedule leisure time. As a transition, think positively: Concentrate on what you accomplished and look forward to what you will accomplish.

-List a few big time wasters and describe how you might change them.

-List at least three time-savings strategies you have used before.

-Decide how you will use short breaks.

THINKING THROUGH YOUR WORK LOAD

Instructions: Listed below are a number of the activities to which you give time each week. Think about each one carefully and figure out how much time you need to spend on each item **per week**. There are additional lines for any other activities that take your time each week. After you have totaled up all the items you can think of, see how much “free” time you have. See if you can remember what you did with that amount of time last week.

1. Dress and breakfast _____hrs.
2. Travel
 To and from school _____hrs.
 To and from work _____ hrs.
3. Regularly scheduled class time _____ hrs.
4. Hours for outside employment _____hrs.
5. Time for study--preparation _____ hrs.
6. Time for study -- review _____ hrs.
7. Time for meals _____hrs.
8. Outside physical activity _____hrs.
9. Planned recreation -- movies, TV, etc. _____hrs.
10. Social activities, responsibilities _____hrs.
11. Home responsibilities _____hrs.
12. Sleep _____ hrs.
13. _____ hrs.
14. _____ hrs.
15. _____ hrs.
- Total _____ hrs.
- Number of hrs. in a week _____ hrs.

Subtract total number of hrs. above _____ hrs.

Total free hours _____ hrs.

WEEKLY PLANNER		Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center			CC-1-1300s	Academic Support Programs		Roberta/RWSSC/weekly planner
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
7:30								
8:00								
8:30								
9:00								
9:30								
10:00								
10:30								
11:00								
11:30								
12:00								
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6:00								
6:30								
7:00								

7:30							
8:00							

ACTIVE LISTENING AND NOTE TAKING

Active listening involves a process and strategies similar to effective reading: predicting, associating, and using contextual cues. A lecture, like a test, can be better understood by asking questions such as those below. Developing the habit of asking questions helps you to listen more effectively and take better notes.

1. PREDICTING: Formulating and following the 'big picture' by trying to **predict**

- What's next
- What major point will be elaborated on
- The sequence of the lecture

2. ASSOCIATING: Connecting different pieces of **related** information

- What has already been said, and how does it fit with new information?
- Which details support which main ideas?
- How does lecture material relate to the textbook and other readings?
- How does the material relate to other course information/ideas?
- How do the syllabus topics relate to each other?

3. FINDING CUES

Listen for words and phrases that signify **importance**

- "A vital point is ..."
- "An important concept.."
- "The significance of.."

Look for numbered/unnumbered **series**:

- "The steps are.."
- "Five causes are.."
- "There are several reasons..."

Listen for **concluding/summarizing** phrases

- "Finally..."
- "In conclusion..."
- "In summary..."

4. GETTING BACK ON TRACK

If you find yourself mentally wandering, try asking some focusing questions

- What was the last statement made?
- What are the main points recently mentioned?
- How does the current statement fit in with previous comments?
- Try to think of your own focusing questions.

5. FOLLOW UP

Ask yourself:

- Are my notes legible?
- Do they make sense?
- Are there any gaps that can be filled by course reading?
- Do I have any questions for the instructor?

NOTE TAKING

I. Note Taking: Central to Being a Good Student

- A. Can't remember all information from class
- B. Taking several classes – unconnected subjects
- C. Importance of being organized!
 - 1. Buy notebook and folder for each class
 - 2. If possible, buy matching colors for each class (easier to bring correct notebook to class)

II. What to Write Down: Be an ACTIVE Student

- A. Understand themes of the course and how professor is organizing information
 - 1. Predict topics of lecture before class begins (pay attention to syllabus)
 - 2. Read notes after each class and get any missing information
 - a. Are notes legible?
 - b. Do they make sense?
 - c. Are there any gaps?
 - 3. Read entire notebook once a week
 - a. Establish regular study schedule for reviewing notes
 - b. Helps to prepare for exams
 - c. Makes picture of class information by connecting themes
- B. Learn how to evaluating information
 - 1. Decide what is important and needs to be written down
 - a. Better to write too much than not enough
 - b. If it's on the board, it's important (but don't limit notes to information on the board)
 - c. Pay attention to body language – professors signal important information (voice emphasis, repetition, hand movements, numbers, raised eyebrows, etc.)
 - d. use note taking skills to speed recording of information

NTTKG (Note Taking)

SUGGESTED SYMBOLS		GENERAL NOTE TAKING TIPS
+	plus/positive/and	OMIT VOWELS <i>bkgd, gvt, ppl</i> ABBREVIATE by writing only the first syllable of the word, or enough to recognize it . <i>assoc; intro; subj</i>
+++	more/very much	
-	minus/negative	
- - -	less/much lower/less	
*	important	INITIALIZE names and phrases (after writing them out in full the first time) <i>JFK (John F. Kennedy)</i> <i>WW2 (World War II)</i> <i>UMB (U. Mass Boston)</i>
	and	
@	at	
??	question/why/reason because	
0	nothing/no/none	Use APOSTROPHE to cut out unnecessary syllables <i>gov't; dep't</i>
	increase/rise	
	decrease/lower	
	less than	
	greater than/more than	MAKE A NOTE to yourself (like a map legend) whenever you invent a new abbreviation = <i>constitution</i>
=	equal/same/similar	
=	is different/does not equal	
	therefore/consequently becomes/leads to	
	change/effect	REREAD YOUR NOTES after class: a. fill in more info b. hi-light important points c. add page #'s from textbook where info from book and teacher overlap d. prepare questions for clarification
e.g.	for example	
i.e.	that is/that means	
vs.	against	
incl.	including	
w/	with	
w/o	without	
w/in	within	
4	for	
2	to or, too/also	
	woman	
	man	
#	number	

EXAM PREPARATION STRATEGIES SELF-INVENTORY

1. Do I have and use a study schedule specifically made for tests? _____
2. Do I know what material will be on the test or quiz? _____
3. Do I ask instructors questions during or outside of class for clarification?
Yes _____ No _____ Depends on the instructor _____
4. Do I work with a tutor to help me prepare for an exam? _____
5. How do I figure out what to do to learn the material? _____

6. Do I study with classmates, even if only by phone or email? Yes _____ No _____
7. Do I prioritize test material, especially if I am behind in my work? _____

(Please choose all items that are true for you.)

8. Which textbook aids do I use throughout the semester?
_____ boldface terms
_____ introductions
_____ vocabulary lists
_____ chapter review questions
_____ charts, maps, diagrams, etc.
_____ glossary
_____ summaries
9. How do I usually prepare for exams?
_____ make a study schedule
_____ predict what will be on the test/quiz
_____ write summaries of material
_____ review lecture/textbook notes
_____ review texts
_____ make notes and outlines that integrate lecture and text material
_____ make charts, diagrams lists, etc.
_____ use flash cards
_____ construct and answer study questions
_____ answer instructor's review questions
_____ use my old tests and quizzes
_____ use old exams from the course
Other _____
10. How do I manage pre-exam anxiety?
_____ stay up studying the night before
_____ cram until the test begins
_____ get a good night's sleep
_____ pace my workload
_____ practice deep breathing exercises a few minutes before the exam
Other _____

Sample Multiple Choice Questions

1. a pre-requisite is
 - a. taken before enrollment in a course
 - b. a requirement successfully completed before enrollment in a course
 - c. a requirement taken along with one or more courses
 - d. an advanced course taken before a basic course
 - e. a test of writing proficiency
2. The Beacons is the name of
 - a. the hockey team
 - b. the student-run cafe on campus
 - c. all the sports teams at UMass Boston
 - d. the basketball team
 - e. the UMass Boston radio station
3. The Quinn Administration building houses
 - a. the bookstore and library
 - b. a cafeteria
 - c. the Financial Aid Office
 - d. a. and c.
 - e. b. and e.
4. The Writing Proficiency Requirement
 - a. must be passed in order to graduate
 - b. is offered in two forms: portfolio and three hour written examination
 - c. is comprised of essays to read and relate to one another
 - d. all of the above
 - e. none of the above
5. The Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center
 - a. is a proofreading service
 - b. offers free tutoring to any student enrolled in any qualifying College of Liberal Arts course
 - c. offers free tutoring to any student enrolled in any qualifying College of Science and Mathematics course
 - d. is freezing cold in the winter and summer
 - e. b and c
6. Which of the following are Core Courses?
 - a. Oral Histories C120: "The Lore of the Core"
 - b. Embalming C100: "The Gore of the Core"
 - c. Socio-Economics C140: "The Core and the Poor"
 - d. Narcolepsy C200: "Snore for the Core"
 - e. all of the above

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS

Here are some of the words that provide critical and essential instructions in essay questions. Many of these words have overlapping meanings.

ANALYZE

Break down a topic into all its parts. Be sure to include all the parts and to tell what makes each part different from the others.

Analyze the role that computers play in simplifying registrations procedure at UMass Boston.

APPLY

Show the extent to which a theory or framework works with a specific example.

Apply Postman's and Powers's theory about connotative language and pictures to CNN's coverage of 9-11.

COMPARE

Show how two subjects are both alike and different. Be sure to discuss each subject and give both likenesses and differences. (Check with your instructor to be sure that differences are to be included.)

Compare the sculpture of Renaissance Italy with classical Greek sculpture.

CONTRAST

Point out the differences between two subjects. Be sure to talk about each subject.

Contrast the nervous system of a flatworm with the nervous system of a frog.

DEFINE

Give the meaning of a word, phrase, or concept appropriate to the context. Show how what you are defining is different from everything else of its type.

Define the word table as it is used in mathematics.

DESCRIBE

Mention the chief characteristics of a situation or retell the essential features of a story.

Describe the conditions on the ships that brought slaves to America.

DISCUSS

Examine and give reasons. Be complete. Give examples.

Discuss one of the rebellions that occurred on a slave ship.

EVALUATE

Carefully appraise an idea or theory, citing both advantages and limitations. Emphasize the appraisal of authorities and, if instructed to, include your personal evaluation.

Evaluate the following: The first six weeks of life are the most important period in a child's emotional development.

EXPLAIN

Give the main reasons why and/or how an event mentioned happened or happens.

Explain why ocean tides are not high at the same time every night. Explain how the phenomenon occurs.

IDENTIFY

Select a definition, example, theory, or argument and explain how it is distinct from the others provided or associated with it. When necessary, show why the item you selected is the appropriate choice.

Identify the best example of Stanley Kubrick's use of music to reinforce visual symbols in his film 2001.

ILLUSTRATE

Give one or more examples to support a general statement. Be sure to relate each example to the general statement. Where appropriate, provide a diagram or figure.

Illustrate the impact China's Cultural Revolution had upon Chinese theater.

INTERPRET

Translate, solve, or comment on a subject or problem, usually giving your judgment. Be sure to go beyond just repeating facts. The questions may specify a method of interpretation to use.

In 1910, Beantown, Kansas, had 502 farm workers, 37 blue collar workers, and 13 white collar workers. Interpret these statistics in terms of Beantown's social composition for that year.

JUSTIFY

Provide reasons for decisions or conclusions.

Justify Henry Clay's interpretation of the Constitution.

LIST

Itemize important points.

List the parts of the body's immune system.

OUTLINE

Organize your answer into main points and subordinate points. It is not necessary that your answer be in outline form.

Outline the contributions that immigrants made to the quality of American life in the years 1865-1925.

PROVE

Establish that something is true by providing factual evidence or, where appropriate, a logical or mathematical proof.

The Industrial Revolution allowed some people to accumulate great wealth. Prove this statement using material that you studied this semester.

REFLECT

Reexamine a situation or experience to determine what can be learned from it.

Reflect on your semester's work as a volunteer tutor for elementary students who need help in arithmetic.

RELATE

Show the connection between the things mentioned in the question. (Note: This does not mean to compare, so if you are asked to relate the American and the French revolutions, you are not to compare them, but to show how one influences the other.)

Relate the evolution of the horse to the changes in its environment.

REVIEW

Examine a subject critically, analyzing and commenting on the important statements to be made about it.

Review Durkheim's theory of anomie.

STATE

Present the main points in a brief, clear sequence, usually omitting details, examples, or illustrations.

State the economic factors leading to World War II.

SUMMARIZE

Give the main points in condensed form, omitting details and examples.

Summarize Comte's principles of sociology.

SYNTHESIZE

Bring together and/or combine various arguments and examples, and show how they work as part of a larger whole or framework.

Synthesize the contributions that Einstein, Penrose, and Hawking have made to cosmology in a way that shows why the Big Bang Theory has gained wide acceptance.

TRACE

List a series of important events, steps, or stages leading up to a final item or point.

Trace the process of cell division.

Organizing Essay Answers

Here are two examples of brief answers to the following essay question:

What were the important results of the (English) Revolution of 1688?

What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of each essay? Overall, which essay seems better?

Example One

The revolution of 1688 was very important. It was so important that it is sometimes called the "glorious revolution." Parliament won, and it passed a lot of acts which were against the king, and it invited William and Mary to rule jointly in England. William and Mary still had to fight though, especially in Ireland where James II was finally defeated. William and Mary cooperated with Parliament so there wasn't so much trouble between the King and Parliament. James II was very unpopular because he was a Catholic, and Parliament made it so no Catholic could ever become king again, although parliament made things easier for the Dissenters. This was the end of the Divine Right of the Kings in England, though at first the country was ruled mostly by the aristocracy and the rich merchants. Real democracy didn't come until much later, so the revolution of 1688 wasn't a completely democratic revolution.

Example Two

I will summarize the most important results of the revolution under three headings:

1. Parliament's victory. The most direct result of the revolution of 1688 was the final victory of Parliament in the conflict between it and the crown that had gone on all during the 17th century. Parliament, by declaring the throne vacant because of James II's desertion to France, finally established that the king ruled by choice of the people and Parliament and not by divine right. Parliament established a Bill of Rights, which said that the king was not above the law but was himself subject to the law. In the early years of the reign of William and Mary, many additional acts were passed which curtailed the powers of the crown.
2. The end of religious conflict. The revolution itself did not entirely end the religious troubles of the 17th century, but Parliament passed a Toleration Act which brought an end to many of the difficulties of the Dissenters. The Catholics, however, were still subjected to many infringements of civil liberties.
3. A new political class. The important general result of the revolution and the victory of Parliament was the beginning of a long era during which political power in England was divided between the landed gentry and the merchant class.

READING, WRITING, AND STUDY STRATEGIES CENTER

TEST TAKING ANALYSIS

The purpose of these statements is to help you become more aware of your successful study strategies and to identify areas for new ways of studying more effectively. The last points ask you to specify new ways of studying and test-taking you will work on for future exams. Becoming more aware of your process allows you to make more effective decisions about how you study.

1. Starting to study the night before the exam was insufficient because _____.
2. The test did not match my expectations because _____.
3. During the exam I was unable to effectively budget my time because _____.
4. I was nervous and could not remember the material I studied.
5. I was confused and had trouble understanding what the question was asking.
6. My first choice was correct, but I doubted myself and changed the answer.
7. During the exam I got distracted and _____.
8. I memorized definitions, but on the test was asked to apply concepts to problems.
9. Because I failed to consider key words such as “except”, “least”, “mostly” and “compare and contrast”, I _____.
10. By taking this exam I learned, for example, that I need to set specific goals for my study time and that reading over my notes is not enough to do well.
11. I will prepare for the next exam or quiz by _____.
12. Other thoughts: _____.

ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC WORK HABITS

Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center
University of Massachusetts, Boston

QUESTIONS:

1 - 06	Time Management
7 - 11	Concentration
12 - 17	Motivation
18 - 19	Selecting Key Ideas
20 - 22	Notetaking
23 - 32	Reading Strategies
33 - 36	Exam Preparation
37 - 40	Exam Taking
41 - 43	Writing Process

Roberta/RWSC/assess of work habits.2 9/14/05

A L W A Y S	U S U A L L Y	S O M E T I M E S	R A R E L Y	N E V E R
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ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC WORK HABITS

Name _____ Date _____

Please put a check mark in the appropriate box for each question.

- 1) I plan a schedule of when to study.
- 2) I follow my study plan.
- 3) I use a calendar to keep track of when tests are scheduled and papers are due.
- 4) I plan in advance to work on long-term assignments by breaking them down into manageable parts.
- 5) When I have too much to do I know how to determine what work I should do 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.
- 6) When planning my study schedule I take into consideration my non-academic responsibilities.
- 7) I study in a place with minimal distractions for me, organized with necessary materials – books, handouts, assignments, papers, pens, etc.
- 8) I listen actively to lectures and do not think about other things.
- 9) I can concentrate on my school work even when I have distractions outside of school – being in love, financial difficulties, relationship conflicts, etc.
- 10) I study without the television on.
- 11) I study without a radio, tape, or CD playing.
- 12) I am up-to-date in my class assignments.
- 13) I talk to the teacher in class or during office hours when I do not understand the material or assignment.

- 14) I feel I will be successful while I am in school.
- 15) I feel like I have control over what happens to me in school
- 16) I know where to go when I have a question.
- 17) I plan my semester schedule so I have time during the day to get my questions answered.
- 18) I am able to distinguish between more important and less important information during lectures.
- 19) I look for patterns of organization in information when I am listening and reading.
- 20) I take notes during classes.
- 21) I take notes while reading textbooks.
- 22) My textbook notes are understandable and useful.
- 23) I am able to identify the important ideas in my reading.
- 24) I use the chapter headings as a guide to identify important ideas I my reading.
- 25) I vary my reading speed according to the type of material and purpose.
- 26) I feel confident about my reading ability.
- 27) I use special study aids, such as *italics* and headings, that are in my textbook.
- 28) I stop periodically while reading and review what I have read.
- 29) When I study I can figure out what to do to learn the material.

A L W A Y S	U S U A L L Y	S O M E T I M E S	R A R E L Y	N E V E R

- 30) I try to think through a topic and decide what I supposed to learn from it, rather than just read it over when I am studying.
- 31) I translate what I am reading into my own words.
- 32) I try to find relationships between what I am learning and what I already know.
- 33) I predict and answer questions that I think will be on a test.
- 34) I keep old quizzes and notes to refer to when I study
- 35) I use review sheets and study questions provided by the teacher when I am studying for a test.
- 36) I study for tests with people who are in my class.
- 37) I understand what test questions are asking.
- 38) Before I begin taking a test, I look over the entire test.
- 39) Before I begin taking a test, I plan how much time I will spend on each question or section.
- 40) I make an outline of an essay exam answer before I begin writing the essay.
- 41) When writing a paper, I try to focus on one aspect of the process at a time.
- 42) I brainstorm and/or freewrite to generate ideas for an essay or paper.
- 43) I write more than one draft of a paper.
- 44) I edit or proofread papers before submitting them.

A L W A Y S	U S U A L L Y	S O M E T I M E S	R A R E L Y	N E V E R

