

## **Overcoming Test Anxiety**

Most students experience some level of anxiety during an exam. However, when anxiety affects begins to impact exam performance it has become a problem.

**Primary Causes of Test Anxiety:** Fear of failure, lack of preparation, poor test history.

**Cognitive Symptoms of Test Anxiety:** Mental “blank-out,” difficulty concentrating, preoccupation with failure, recalling answers after the test.

## **Prepare for the Test**

- Avoid cramming: Create a study schedule two weeks prior to the exam.
- Use study aids: Convert lecture notes into flashcards or a study guide.
- Take timed practice exams: Simulate exam conditions by taking timed practice exams. Create your own exam if necessary.
- Study on location: Study in the classroom where the exam will be held.

## **Develop Test-Taking Skills**

- Read directions carefully.
- Multiple choice: Incorrect answers can distract you. Cover the choices, read the question and then try to answer it without look at the options.
- Essay questions: Create a quick outline before writing.
- Answer what you know: Save difficult items for last.

## **Physiological Preparation**

- Get 8-10 hours of sleep before the exam.
- Limit caffeine: Caffeine can exacerbate the symptoms of test anxiety!

## **Relaxation Techniques**

- Practice deep breathing: If you feel anxious or begin to panic, slowly take deep breaths through your nose.
- Fidget item: Small items like a stress ball or rubber band can help increase attention and promote relaxation.