Advice for finals and how to start strong in spring 2008

The semester is almost over and finals are approaching! Congratulations to everyone for having a great semester in Aggieland and good luck on all your tests. A few reminders about finals:

1. Remember to attend as many study and review sessions as your time will permit.
2. Do not “cram” the night before the test; study a few chapters every day leading up to your final.
3. Try to get a good night’s sleep before your test; pulling “all-nighters” most of the time does more harm than good!

After all the final exams are over, your grades for the Fall ‘07 semester will be posted on myrecord.tamu.edu. If you have questions or disputes about a grade, contact your academic advisor and they can go over your options with you.

If your grades are not what you expected for the semester, remember that you can do some things to start strong in the Spring! The most important thing is to have a good holiday break! Relax, spend time with friends and family and enjoy the holidays! Go over your schedule for the upcoming semester and plot out when your classes are each day. This will help you gauge how much time you have each day to study, eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner and schedule activities that you’re involved in. Reflect on lessons learned the previous semester. If 15 or 16 hours was too much for you, then try 13 or 14 hours in the Spring. If you aced 15 or 16 hours, stick with that many hours for the Spring or try more.

Always know that your academic advisors are here to answer any questions you might have and to guide you to a successful semester. Advisors are a great source of information on tutoring, class selection and services that TAMU provides students.

Good luck on finals and have a great Spring semester!

Lydia Carrascosa ’93 & ’96
Academic Advisor II
Biomedical Science

November Opinion Poll Winner:

After completing your first round of college midterms, how will you be preparing differently for your final exams?

Crystal Sanchez ’11:

“I have made good scores on all of my tests and essays so far, so I plan to keep my same methods. I read the chapters, went over the suggested homework, and attended help sessions. I guess the main thing I would add to that is to look over previous exams, both from past finals (if available) and tests I just took.”

Congratulations Crystal!
MAKE SURE TO CHECK YOUR AID TO AVOID DELAY!

Happy Holidays, Regents’ Scholars! The majority of student aid will post to fee statements on or shortly after 01/04/07 for the Spring 2008 semester. Please make sure you visit the student web portal at myfinancialaid.tamu.edu to make sure all requirements have been completed so your aid is not delayed. Tuition is due on 01/11/08 for the Spring semester. You may be eligible to apply for an Emergency Tuition and Fee Loan (ETFL) online if you think your aid may be delayed for any reason. If you get one of these loans for the Spring and have not previously received an ETFL, you will need to come by the 2nd floor of the Pavilion to sign a Master Promissory Note. The loans are due back exactly 90 days from the date it posts to your fee statement.

Beginning 01/01/08 you can go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to complete your 2008-2009 FAFSA online using you and your parents’ (if dependent) 2007 income tax information. Remember that the majority of grant funds are first come-first serve so get your FAFSA in early. Our Continuing Student Scholarship application is also available online at scholarships.tamu.edu for all continuing students. This application has a due date of 02/01/08. This is one application that will qualify you for several hundred scholarships, other than the Regents’ Scholarship.

For those of you who would like to attend summer school here at TAMU, our 2008 Summer Supplement form will also be available online around the beginning of March. Remember that many types of aid for the summer are also first come-first serve so get your form in early. If you have any questions on due dates or the status of your aid, please feel free to give us a call at (979) 845-3236 or email us at financialaid@tamu.edu.

DON’T FORGET: There is plenty of FREE help on-campus as well as several individuals who are here to help you succeed.

- Supplemental Instruction (S.I.) schedule: http://www.tamu.edu/cae/silist.shtml
- Department of Multicultural Services FREE tutoring: http://tutor.tamu.edu
- University Writing Center: http://uwc.tamu.edu/
- Mathematics Department Help: http://www.math.tamu.edu/teaching/helpsession/
- Study skills and time management workshops: http://www.scs.tamu.edu/academic/
- Student Learning Center Drop-In Tutoring: http://slc.tamu.edu/tutorschedule.pdf

DID YA KNOW? AN ICE CREAM FLAVOR FOR THE REST OF US!

In the fall of 2000, Ben & Jerry’s introduced a limited-edition flavor called “Festivus,” in honor of the hit TV-show Seinfeld’s alternative end-of-year holiday conceived by George’s father Frank. It consisted of brown sugar cinnamon ice cream loaded with gingerbread cookies and a ginger caramel swirl...YUM!

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Ten Tips for Email Etiquette

Email may be a quick way to communicate, but don’t forget your etiquette when emailing with professors, academic and financial advisors, etc. Make a good impression with these tips.

1. **Do not type in all caps.**
   Writing in caps makes it seem like you are shouting, and some readers find it more difficult to read. If you want to stress a point, opt for underlining or putting it in bold font.

2. **Avoid abbreviations and emoticons.**
   Including an abbreviation like “FYI” or “LOL” or an emoticon like “:)” may be okay in an email to a friend, but they are inappropriate in formal emails. You wouldn’t include smiley faces in an important letter, so don’t put them in your important emails.

3. **Always fill in the subject line.**
   Your email's subject line is the first impression your recipient has of your email. Make your subject line a clear and meaningful reflection of your email.

4. **Use a professional format.**
   You may think using a colored or unusual font, or a formatted background design in your emails makes them stand out, but don’t use them with official emails. They’re not professional and they make your message hard to read.

5. **Avoid sarcasm.**
   It’s difficult to judge tone in an email. Don’t use ironic or sarcastic language that may not come across as you intended in writing.

6. **Make your email clear.**
   Admissions counselors and scholarship sponsors receive a lot of emails. Make it easier for them to get your message by keeping a clear, concise format. Write short paragraphs and include a space between them so your reader can find the information they’re looking for quickly. Put your most important information in the first or second paragraph so your reader doesn’t have to scroll down to find it. Make your email as short and concise and possible; anything longer than half a page is too long.

7. **Know when to pick up the phone or schedule a meeting.**
   Email is convenient, but it shouldn’t completely replace phone calls or meetings. For important or complicated matters, pick up the phone.

8. **Ask before sending a large attachment.**
   Not only do attachments take up a lot of storage space into your recipient’s inbox, but many people won’t open attachments for fear of viruses. When possible, include all information in the body of your email. If you do need to send an attachment, ask the recipient if it’s okay.

9. **Double check before hitting “send.”**
   It only takes a few minutes to take another careful look at your email before you hit send but it could improve the impression your email makes. Use your computer’s spelling and grammar checks, but be aware that these don’t catch all mistakes.

10. **And always...always...IDENTIFY yourself!**


Home for the Holidays!

You are on the way to completing your first semester at Texas A&M University and now it is time to go home for the winter break. Sometimes returning home can be as disruptive to a family as your initial departure to college. Just as you have adjusted to being away from home, your parents and families have adjusted to your departure. They may have started refocusing their attention on your little brothers and sisters, other activities, may have made changes in their own lives and schedules, or may have moved to a new home or city. Just as your family has changed their behaviors, you have grown as an individual. These changes occurred gradually over time. However, when you are away from home, you and your family might have not been aware of these changes until you come home for your winter break. This is a natural phenomenon, so don’t stress it! Before you return home, we want to provide you with a few tips to make your transition back home enjoyable.

1. **Your habits may have changed.**
2. **Your family and friends from home might have changed too; recognize this and talk about it.**
3. **Realize that your family may expect you to follow your old curfew, rules and chores.**
4. **Be flexible when balancing time with family and friends.**
5. **Relax and enjoy the break!**

Information taken from: “Aggie Connection, Fall 2005”