1. Find the time
   If exams are within the next two weeks, clear the decks.
   Cancel any plans that you can put off till after exams and make any travel or other arrangements now. Get your study area cleaned and make sure you have all supplies on hand for the exam period. Cramming and pulling all-nighters does not yield optimal results! If you must cram at the last minute, continue to cram information you already know and build your confidence that way.

   To prevent high-pressure exam study, begin reviewing your notes and reading as soon as two weeks following the presentation of the material in class. Reviewing often is more effective than one big review just before the exam.

   Use your planner to guide your work:
   • Put the following in your planner: deadlines and due dates for projects and papers, final exams, scheduled classes and study sessions, and important personal events.
   • Identify blocks of study time and write in subjects for each block. Make sure you have breaks every hour. One hour each day for four days is better than four hours in one day.
   • Separate similar subjects. If you are taking two overlapping courses, schedule study of a different course between the two similar courses.

2. Identify the content
   • Ask your instructors what will be on the test. Take note of topics that have been repeated or added to syllabus.
   • Talk to subject/content tutors—they have taken the course already.
   • Take a sheet of paper for each course and write a course name at the top.
   Using your syllabus and the above research, make a list of the topics you feel confident you know well. Then make a list of the topics you do not feel confident about. Do this for each course.

3. Begin your review.
   After you have relearned the topics you were not confident about, begin to review each course lecture notes and text notes from the beginning. You can use chapter review questions and web resources; you may not have time to reread the text. Try to recite out loud to yourself the important information on each topic as you move through your review. If you have a long commute, try recording your recitation about each topic and listen to the recordings while you drive. Repetition increases retention, and recitation increases it more.

4. Use some of the following study aids to improve retention:
   • flash cards, mnemonics or other associations
   • charts comparing and summarizing information about related topics
   • topic writing (writing what you know about a topic on a piece of paper)
   • recorded lectures or recitation—use an iPod for review

5. Use some of the following study aids to improve understanding:
   • review sessions with instructors, study groups and team-based learning
   • Peer Tutors, Peer Academic Coaches
   • internet resources, concept mapping

   Exercise regularly and eat well—replace high carbohydrate foods with high protein snacks. Make sure you take regular breaks: 50 minutes of study, followed by ten minutes of break, works for most people.