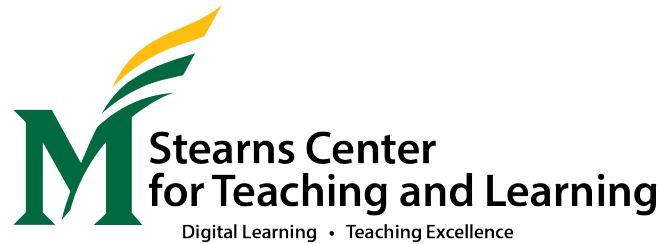


Performing Well

Jane Flinn, Neuroscience



I have two strategies that I have found helpful.

1) I give a graded quiz every week because Mason students have a lot going on in their lives, and I want my classes to be high on the list of activities they focus on. The quizzes have 6 to 10 questions and each question requires a sentence or paragraph to answer. This means they must work continuously in the class, not just the night before the exam. Because the exam questions are similar to the quiz questions they should (and do) do well on the exams, if they do the quizzes.

2) I allow the students to bring a study or "cheat" sheet into the exam. It is one side of a sheet of paper, minimum font 11, 1 inch margins. (Initially people used 7 or 8 font with zero margins and could find nothing during the exam.) They can write down important points based on the study guide I give them, e.g the 3 genes involved in early onset Alzheimer's disease, and the chromosomes they lie on. A good study sheet requires them to review the material and organize their thoughts. I was afraid that this sheet was making things too easy, but studies show this method actually improves learning.

I believe these two activities can help the students prepare for the exams and lessen their anxiety so that they can perform well.



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