

Preparing for and Taking Online Exams

Academic Achievement and Access Center (AAAC) – The University of Kansas

The **Academic Achievement and Access Center** is here to support you during what may be your first experience taking online classes. Here are a few tips for **preparing for and taking online exams** based on past students' success:

Preparing for Online Exams

Preparation is the first step to success.

Understand the Exam - Before diving into studying course material, read and understand all exam guidelines. Make sure you know information such as what types of questions will be asked (multiple-choice, fill-in, short answer, or essay), how much the exam counts towards your final grade, and if the exam is comprehensive or covers less material.

Ask for Help - Your instructors are there for you. If after reviewing the syllabus, you still have questions about the final exam, email your instructor.

Know Your Dates and Times - Use a planner or calendar to plot out all Finals Week exams and projects. Also make note of the length of the online exam—Does the exam have a time limit or no time limit? If so, how long? These details and more can be kept in the [Weekly Time Schedule](#)!

Create a Study Schedule - Once you understand the setup of the exam, you can determine how much time you need to prepare. Schedule daily study hours in the week(s) leading up to the exam to avoid cramming.

Test Yourself - Creating and reviewing a study guide or flashcards from lecture notes may work for one exam whereas another exam may call for completing practice problems. Determine which study tactic is best for each particular exam. (Remember to take study breaks as needed!)

Taking Online Exams

You have studied so hard—Time to show off your knowledge!

Check Your Tech - Make sure your computer and internet connection are working properly before beginning the exam.

Be Prepared - Login early and have all necessary materials ready.

Organization is Key - Take your exam in a clean, well-lit workspace.

Minimize Distractions - Turn off notifications on your computer, music, TV, phone, etc. (These distractions would not be at an in-person exam!) Be sure to let your roommates and family members know before your test starts—and don't get distracted by your pets!

Pace Yourself - Limit the amount of time you spend on each question to allow adequate time for the entire exam. Skimming the exam may allow you to preview and plan your time wisely.

Read Directions Carefully. - *All directions!*

Answer All - Leave nothing blank unless told directly that there is a penalty for guessing.

Trust Yourself - Don't change answers without a good reason!

Technical Difficulties? - Don't panic. Note the time the error occurred (a screenshot may be helpful if you need to relay the problem to your instructor) and try to resolve the problem. If you need tech help, contact the KU IT Customer Service Center at itcsc@ku.edu or 785-864-8080.

Review - Before you submit, check to make sure each answer is completed as you intended in terms of content and spelling and grammar.

Submit! - You should only have to click submit once. If the first attempt fails, try once more. If you still have difficulties, save your answers in a document and email your instructor immediately.

After Online Exams

You did it! Now, take a moment to reflect.

Self Check-In - How do you think you did? Did a particular question trip you up? Review your notes and readings if you had doubts on a particular answer.

Look to Improve – Did your test preparation work, or should you try a new approach on your next online exam? Record your reflections and review the notes before your next exam.

Check Your Grade – Allow time for the exams to be graded. Did you receive the score you anticipated?

Celebrate! – Be proud of your accomplishments this semester!
Rock Chalk!

Additional Resources

For more general test taking tips and study skills, check out the Academic Achievement and Access Center's [Academic Success Guides](#) such as [Being Test-Wise: Tips for Taking Exams](#), [Tips for Effecting Studying](#), and more!