

Exam Autopsy

Name: _____

Directions: List the questions for each item missed on the exam. Place a check in the column that best describes the reason you answered the question incorrectly. Total the number of checks in each column to determine what factors most affected you.

Test Item Missed	Insufficient Information					Test Anxiety				Careless mistakes				Lack of Test Wisdom			Other			
	I did not review this information or missed it in the readings or lectures.	I studied the information but could not recall it during test.	I knew main idea but needed more detail.	I knew this concept but could not apply it.	Did not understand vocabulary or key terms.	I experienced a mental block.	I was tired and could not concentrate.	I was hungry and could not concentrate.	I panicked during test.	I made careless mistake; I knew the correct answer but did not write it.	I changed a correct answer to a wrong one.	I misread the directions.	I misread or misunderstood the question.	I wrote in incomplete response.	I did not eliminate obviously incorrect choices.	I did not choose the best answer.	I did not notice limiting words.	I did not make good use of time during test.		
Number of Items Missed																				

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Check what you did **before** the exam:

- Read and annotated readings (textbook)
- Combined notes from text with lecture notes
- Prepared a test study guide
- Studied with other students from class
- Got help from TA or Professor
- Previewed assigned reading before classes
- Attended all classes
- Reviewed previous notes before next lecture
- Got ample sleep the night before test
- Ate a meal before the test
- Other: _____

Check what you did **during** the exam:

- Glanced through whole test before starting
- Read the instructions carefully
- Completed easiest questions first
- Asked for clarification of unclear questions
- Underlined key words in questions
- Budgeted my time based on question weight
- Skipped harder questions & returned later
- Deep breathing if I felt myself getting anxious
- Other: _____

Now what do I do with this information?

Look at where you had the most difficulty from the Exam Autopsy Worksheet. Were most of your missed questions because of insufficient information? Or were they a result of careless mistakes?

Identifying where you struggle the most can help to pinpoint specific tactics for you to use either in preparation for or during the exam. Based on where you struggled the most according to the worksheet, try some of the following approaches to improve before your next exam.

Insufficient Info or Lack of Test Wisdom

- ✓ Attend tutoring, study groups, or visit professor's office hours.
- ✓ Keep up with material- falling behind can make you feel overwhelmed and even less motivated.
- ✓ Clarify concepts by asking questions during lecture and participating in class discussions.
- ✓ Your suggestion: _____

Test Anxiety or Careless Mistakes

- ✓ Underline key words in questions so you can keep track of important information and directions.
- ✓ Skip difficult questions and return to them later – your brain may need more thinking time to process the info before you answer it.
- ✓ Ask for help during exam for clarification.
- ✓ Your suggestion: _____

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Reflection Questions:

1. How did your actual grade on this exam compare with the grade you expected? How do you explain the difference, if there is any?
2. How do you feel about your exam grade? Are you surprised, pleased, relieved, disappointed, or what?
3. How many hours did you spend preparing for this exam? Was this enough time to get the grade you wanted?
4. How did you spend your time preparing for this exam?
5. Based on the Exam Autopsy worksheet, what patterns do you notice in your missed questions?
6. Set a goal to get a certain grade on the next exam. What study strategies and schedule will enable you to earn that score?



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7. Be concrete and specific in describing at least three strategies that you plan to use to study for (or take) the next exam.

1)

2)

3)

8. Why do you think those strategies are the most promising for you?

9. What can I do to help support your learning and your preparation for the next exam?