

DECEMBER

Congratulations on making it through your first semester at UW! Get ready for an intense several weeks -- December is a whirlwind of studying for finals and preparing to head home for a much-needed break. Don't forget to make use of as many resources as you can this month as finals week approaches and your stress rises! And keep your foot on the pedal as you speed through the last weeks. You've worked so hard to this point; make these last projects and tests as solid as possible.



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PREPARING *for* FINALS WEEK

Including advice from Brian Witte/Varsity Tutors (Time.com)

1. Study for each course in small bursts.

If you have more than one final, you might be planning to study for each individually, in chronological order. Interestingly, research has shown that human brains are not designed to focus narrowly for long stretches of time. So, plan to work on an individual subject for an hour or two, and then switch. You do not have to split your time equally. If you have a biology exam soon, review for it during more than one block of time (and never in back-to-back blocks). You will find that your recall of material increases, and the repetition that comes from revisiting material more frequently will help your class content “set” in your memory. Be sure to take short breaks each hour to refresh your mind.

2. Take care of yourself leading up to exams.

Remember that going into a final without enough sleep could hurt you as much as a poor study plan. Get a good night’s sleep, and take a few small exercise breaks during the week before (and during) final exams.

Before a final, be sure to eat a meal that is high in protein. Most final exams are more than an hour in length, and a sugar rush simply will not see you through. Likewise, taking an important test while hungry can be a recipe for disaster.

3. Visit resources to help you prepare.

If you need some expert help studying for exams, writing essays, or getting ready for big presentations, be sure to visit some of the help centers. STEP Tutoring offers a Finals-Stravanza event, typically held on the Sunday before Finals Week from 1-10pm in Coe Library. Prepare and plan ahead – STEP is closed during Finals Week! Other good resources include the Writing Center, the Center for Statistics and Math, and the Oral Communication Center). Also, visit your professor’s office hours to ask about tips for studying and succeeding on the final.

4. Silence your social media accounts.

The reverse of focusing too intensely is not being able to focus at all. While it is true that devoting too much time to studying can lead to fatigue, dividing your review sessions into too many parts can lead to scattered and ineffectual learning. Turning off your social media for an entire week may not be realistic or achievable for every student; instead, try turning off the Wi-Fi on your phone or tablet. This will decrease the number of notifications that pop up and steal your attention. Do, however, use social media and text-time as a reward. Check in on your favorite platforms or websites for 10 to 15 minutes during study breaks. However, be aware of the “just for a moment” syndrome. As most people know all too well, checking news headlines can lead to an entire afternoon of watching hilarious cat videos and reading celebrity gossip.

A strong finals week performance may seem impossible, but it is anything but. Set your worries and nerves aside, and remember to stay on task, work hard, eat well, and make time to rest. Soon, finals week will be over, and you can begin your long-awaited holiday!

Mapping your STUDY & EXAM TIMES

CHECK YOUR COURSE SYLLABI TO DETERMINE YOUR FINALS WEEK SCHEDULE
 (Or access all finals here: www.uwyo.edu/registrar/final_exam_schedule)

Complete this table:

| CLASS | FINAL EXAM DAY/TIME/LOCATION |
|-------|------------------------------|
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FINALS PREP *Calendar*

Using the calendar from the Registrar’s website (above) or the calendar link on WyoWeb, fill in the date of your last day of class and your study days for each of your final exams, papers, or projects. Include the time and location of each of your exams.

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | |
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT |
| | | | | | | |

Tip: Write sideways.

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COURSE OPTIONS *over the* BREAK

If you would like to take a class over the winter holiday (or J-term), there are several options each year offered by a variety of departments. You can see the full list of courses on the Summer Session page (www.uwyo.edu/summer). On the homepage, click on “Explore the current/previous J-term course offerings!”

Past terms have included courses from Communication & Journalism, African American Studies, Latino/a Studies, Sociology, Environment & Natural Resources, Religious Studies – and more!

**Before enrolling in a J-term course, touch base with your advisor about the option -- make sure a J-term course works with your financial aid and academic/degree progress.*



TIPS *for the* HOLIDAY BREAK

Register for spring courses (before you leave!)

If you have lingering questions about spring registration, or other holds that are preventing you from enrolling, make some time to clear up these issues before you depart for the break. Spring classes will keep filling more each week (and day) – and new spring students will be eating up course availability as they come in. Talk to your ACES advisor and instructor if you need some help completing your spring registration.

Check your UW email over the break

It might be tempting to detach from UW email over the holiday break, but be sure to check your email at least once or twice a week over the holiday. It's possible you may receive notes about your spring courses, financial issues, or important deadlines to stay on top of.

Review your final grades in early January

Grades are due early in January, so you should be able to check shortly after the new year and see all (or at least most) of your final semester grades. If you have questions about any final grade, reach out to the instructor over email and be specific about your concern or question!

Academic Probation: If you have one (or more) problematic grades, it's possible your semester GPA will drop below 2.0 and you will receive academic probation for spring semester. You will receive an email from the Registrar's Office with information about academic probation if this occurs. Know that you are not alone (many students fall below a 2.0 GPA in their first college semester), but it is important to make a plan for academic recovery in the spring!

If you receive academic probation, your advisor and/or Makayla Stewart will be in touch with you in the first week or two of January to help you enroll in a 2-credit Academic Success course. This course will help you learn key strategies, information, and resources to get back on your feet in the spring.

Complete EPIC Milestones over the holiday

Make the EPIC milestones a goal for your spare time over the holiday break. Some modules will help you learn more about your major, plan for courses/internships moving forward, and discover new information about possible careers. For undeclared students, check out EPIC modules for exploring majors and getting to know more about how your own strengths fit with different options. Find EPIC on the ACES website: www.uwyo.edu/ACES/epic.

FALL FINAL Reflection

Write a brief note to incoming students in the spring (or next fall) semester. Include 2-3 pieces of advice you would give them after completing a semester of college. What tips do you wish you'd been given when you started college? What would you like to see included in "Student Voices" in the next booklet?

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