PSYC 100 – Exam Study Strategies

EXAM FORMAT

Fall semester
- 60 multiple choice worth 10% of your final grade
  - These will focus on general knowledge from the course and less on application
- 6-8 short answer questions worth 20% of your final grade
  - Short answer questions focus on the larger theories and concepts covered in the course and how to apply them in any context
  - It is okay to write in point form, but ensure your answer is thorough and uses key terms

Length - 3 hours
- The exam is meant to take less than 3 hours, so you have time to take breaks in the middle and to check your answers at the end
- Make sure to pace yourself accordingly!

Winter semester
- Same format as fall semester with:

  2 long answer questions
  - Similar to short answer questions with the expectation of a more comprehensive answer that combines facts, terms and concepts
  - Focus on theories, concepts and course themes, using appropriate facts to support your points
  - Read the question carefully – don’t just write everything you can remember about the topic in general. Including irrelevant information won’t earn you extra marks

HOW TO STUDY

Prioritize
- Memorizing everything in PSYC100 is impossible, so list all the course topics in order of importance (use the syllabus learning objectives and information from lectures)
- Use the textbook as a supplementary resource, not your main guide
- Focus first on areas where you feel weakest

Self-test
- Avoid passive recall! Don’t just read through your notes and assume that you will remember them in the exam – instead, pursue active forms of testing yourself.
- Use flashcards to memorize terms and theories
- Check out www.quizlet.com for flashcards made by other PSYC100 students
- Turn the weekly learning objectives into short answer questions
- Practice answering questions with a timer to mimic exam conditions
- If you haven’t already, practice with the test questions and practice exams available on OnQ!

Study with others
- Teaching the materials to others can help identify your weak areas and solidify the content in your memory
- You may also correct others’ errors, and have your own errors corrected

USEFUL RESOURCES

onQ
- At the end of the semester, a multiple choice bank will become available on OnQ. These questions are a great indicator of what the final exam questions will be like. Use that knowledge to guide how you select what’s useful vs. what’s irrelevant in your revision
- Short answer questions are also released on the OnQ discussion boards by the PSYC100 teaching team; these questions are also similar to final exam questions

TAs
- Post questions on the OnQ discussion boards

Queen’s SAES Resources:
- 3-pass method for multiple choice exams
- Note taking: charts, summary sheets, Cornell notes

OTHER TIPS

- PSYC100 is very content heavy. You will not be able to memorize everything! Instead, focus on key concepts and ideas rather than small details
- If you have questions, don’t be afraid to post on the online discussion boards! TAs check this and answer questions regularly
- When studying concepts, try to think of your own example that exemplifies the topic. This will build stronger links between elements of the course and lead to better retention of factual information
- PSYC100 is often the first exam of the semester for many students. It is important that you’re also studying for your other exams during the few days off before exams start!

PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

- Many second and third year psychology courses overlap with the content learned in PSYC100. The more that you study and understand the content now, the easier future courses will be
- If you feel behind now, don’t panic: use the summer to review and strengthen your knowledge of foundational material. You can ask your prof to guide you