



January

Exams

Mid-January is exam time at Zealand High School. In most classes, exams are cumulative tests of all the material learned the previous semester in a course and are typically worth 15-20% of a student's overall semester grade. Simply put – exams are a big deal and exam time can be stressful. Therefore, it is important for students to organize their materials and their time in advance of studying for exams. Please review the following strategies:

Strategies for Studying for Exams

1. Get a Head Start At Least A Week (if not more) Before the Exam

- a. Find out all that you can about the exam
 - i. In class, listen for teacher's clues and signals as to which material might be included on the tests.
 - ii. Find out which type of format the test will be.
 1. If objective only, review and memorize important details.
 2. If subjective only, learn overall concepts but memorize enough facts to back them up in an essay.
 - iii. Find out if you can bring notes into the exam, and if so, how many you can use (size, type, etc.)
 - iv. Find out if any of the chapters/units/materials that were covered in class will not be on the exam. Unless the teacher tells you exactly what will not be included, it's safer to study every chapter and all materials.
- b. Start the preparation
 - i. Get out your notes, old tests, etc. and organize them.
 - ii. Make sure that you have something from every unit that will be on the test (outlines, lecture notes, etc.). If you are missing anything, see if you can copy a friend's notes for study purposes.
 - iii. Consider creating flashcards. This works great for vocabulary words and their definitions or for asking a question on one side and answering it on the other. There are some free iPad apps that work great for this!
 - iv. Make up a study schedule to follow for the duration of time leading up to the test, trying to begin at least two weeks out.
- c. Organize your study sessions
 - i. Follow the study schedule and pace yourself so that you can study a little each day.
 1. Divide the number of chapters or pages to cover by the number of days you have set aside to study.
 2. Study each subject for a half hour before breaking and beginning the next.
 - ii. As you review the textbook, also review the lecture notes and clues from the teacher.
 - iii. Review old tests since the same questions (possibly worded differently) may show up again. If the material was important enough to test you on once, it may be important enough to show up on a final.

- iv. For each chapter, concentrate on highlighted material (you may need to highlight your notes first) and recall questions (self-created or from a textbook or teacher-generated study guide).
 - v. Focus on what you don't know rather than continually reviewing what you do know.
 - vi. Consider asking a parent, guardian, sibling, or friend to quiz you. Seek a serious study partner.
- d. Remember to use your strongest learning style and preferences.
- i. Auditory learners may want to read study materials aloud or tape record notes or recall questions to listen to later.
 - ii. Visual learners may want to picture the look of a page or make associations. Sometimes it helps to physically draw a picture or symbol to help with recall.
 - iii. Kinesthetic learners may want to rewrite information (ex. brief summary outlines or charts).
 - iv. Study during the times and in the environments that will help you focus best. Only study with a partner if you are really going to study.

2. Cramming

- a. If you have studied leading up to your exam the way you should, you won't have to cram, but just in case...
- b. What is cramming and how can you use it?
 - i. Cramming is really stuffing as much information into your head as possible just before you need to use it, such as the night before or the morning of a test.
 - ii. Unfortunately, cramming only works for very brief periods and for very small amounts of information, so it is not an efficient study strategy.
 - iii. If you find that you absolutely must cram, don't try to read and remember every bit of information from the chapters and notes. Rely upon your highlighted information, vocabulary, and recall questions. This will be the most important information, and you can cram it into your memory in the shortest amount of time.

3. **Final Words About Final Exams** – Successful test takers relax before exams. They go to sleep early, wake up in time to eat a nutritious breakfast, get to school on time without rushing, and pump themselves up with confident attitudes.

It is recommended that parents sit down with students prior to exam week and complete the “**Exam Success Plan**” below. For each of your classes, record the following information:

- Class: The name of the class
 Grade: What your current grade is for that class
 Weight: What your exam is worth (points, percentage of total grade, etc. – this may vary by teacher)
 Priority: Rank your five classes 1-5 with “1” being the class you need to spend the most time studying for
 Study Plan: List what you will need to study in order to do well on your final
 Materials: List the materials you will need in order to study for your final. Circle any items you currently do not have and will need to get in order to study properly.

Class	Grade	Weight	Priority	Study Plan	Materials
1 st :					

2 nd :					
3 rd :					
4 th :					
5 th :					
6 th :					

Playing Sports in College

While the vast majority of high school graduates do not compete at the collegiate level, it is important for those that aspire to do so understand the athletic eligibility requirements involved. Colleges belong to associations, and these associations have specific academic requirements that athletes must meet before they can play a sport in college. Most college athletic programs are regulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which is an organization that has rules on eligibility, recruiting, and financial aid for prospective student-athletes. If a student is interested in playing college sports or receiving an athletic scholarship, here is some info you need to know about NCAA rules.

Divisions

The NCAA has three membership divisions: Division I, Division II, and Division III. Generally, larger schools compete in Division I and smaller schools compete in Divisions II and III. Division I schools (ex. University of Michigan) usually recruit athletes in many different sports, and they also offer athletic scholarships. However, some Division I schools, such as Ivy League schools, do not offer scholarship money due to institutional or league policy. Division II schools (ex. Grand Valley State University) also recruit and offer scholarship money, but Division III schools (ex. Hope College) cannot offer athletic scholarships, although they may or may not recruit actively.

Guidelines for Eligibility

If a student intends to participate in Division I or Division II athletics as a college freshman, he/she must be certified by the **NCAA Eligibility Center**. The NCAA Eligibility Center certifies the academic and amateur credentials of all students who want to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II institution as

freshmen. In order to practice, play and receive an athletics scholarship, students need to meet certain academic benchmarks. Eligibility is determined solely by the NCAA and not by the college or university you wish to attend. Eligibility decisions are different for each division and are based on grade-point averages for core curriculum courses (English, math, science, social studies, foreign language or non-doctrinal/comparative religion or philosophy) and scores on the SAT or ACT. The SAT and ACT are nationally recognized standardized tests that are used for college admissions (all students in the State of Michigan are required to take the SAT as part of the Michigan Merit Exam in the spring of the junior year). Visit <http://www.ncaa.org/playcollegesports> to learn more and to download the “Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete.”. Below is a timeline for steps to take in achieving college athletic eligibility.

9th and 10th Grade

- Work hard to get the best grades possible
- Take classes that match your school’s NCAA list of approved core courses (more information available at <http://www.ncaa.org/playcollegesports>).

11th Grade

- Register to take the SAT or ACT. Students can send their scores to up to 4 colleges/organizations free of charge. Be sure to list the NCAA’s Eligibility Center code (**9999**) as a score recipient, as the NCAA must receive SAT/ACT scores *directly* from the testing agency, NOT the high school. Failure to do so would end up costing you more money.
- Double check to make sure the courses you’ve taken match your school’s NCAA list of approved core courses, found at <http://www.ncaa.org/playcollegesports>.
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at <http://www.ncaa.org/playcollegesports> and complete the amateurism questionnaire.
- Request your official transcript be sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center at the conclusion of the junior year. This is done through an online transcript service called Parchment (see your counselor with questions).
- Prior to registering for classes for the senior year, check with your guidance counselor to determine the amount of core courses that you need to complete your senior year.

12th Grade

- Retake the SAT/ACT if necessary. The Eligibility Center will use the best scores from each section of the SAT/ACT to determine your best cumulative score.
- Continue to take college-prep courses.
- Check to make sure the courses you’ve taken match your school’s NCAA list of approved core courses (available at the Eligibility Center’s website).
- Review your amateurism questionnaire responses and request final amateurism certification on or after April 1 (for fall enrollees) or October 1 (for spring enrollees).
- Continue to work hard to get the best grades possible.
- Graduate on time (in eight academic semesters).
- After graduation, request your final transcript be sent to the Eligibility Center with proof of graduation. Again, this is done through Parchment.

Additionally, feel free to visit www.playnaia.org for information about athletic eligibility/scholarships for colleges in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) (ex. Aquinas, Cornerstone).