**Tips for Successful Writing: Taking Tests and Quizzes That Require Essay Responses**

Some of the tests or quizzes you take will require you to write a short essay or several short essays. Some tests or quizzes are essay-only tests. You should approach writing the answers to an essay test in much the same way that you would prepare to write a longer essay.

Here are some guidelines for writing answers to essay test questions:

1. Approach essay questions just as you would prepare to write an out-of-class essay.
2. First, read the question carefully and make sure that you understand it. Look for keywords or concepts that will help you to understand what is being asked.
3. Then think about what you know about the topic. Consider everything you have read and learned in class about the question before you write the answer.
4. Pre-write for your essay. Use the kind of pre-writing that works best for you. You might list everything you can think of about the question being asked. You may prefer to use clustering or outlining. Freewriting also works for many students. No matter what your preferred method of prewriting is, the key is to use it to prepare yourself to write your answer to the essay question.
5. Use complete sentences and paragraphs. Write clearly and organize your essay so that you have a thesis statement that tells your reader what the essay will do and so that you can write the essay in an orderly way.
6. Make sure that your sentences are easy to read and add substance to your essay. Strong sentences that clearly relate to the question you have been asked will ensure that you are communicating well with your reader.
7. Write paragraphs that are organized and that work together to adequately answer the question you have been asked to respond to.
8. Be sure to revise.
   1. Read over your essay to make sure that it is the best answer to the question.
   2. When you revise, you should read over the question again to make sure that you have addressed all parts of the question in your answer.
   3. After you have finished, read over the answer one last time.