Subject Specific Study & Test Writing Strategies

Focus: Physics

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Physics Study Strategies

Physics courses, and therefore physics exams involve problem solving. Hence, your approach to studying for your physics exams should stress problem solving.

- Do practice problems from old tests, exams, and quizzes
- Review syllabus – turn each point into a question and write down the answer for each
- Generate a list of themes, principles, and types of problems that you expect to be covered
- Know how to use the formula booklet (if applicable)
- Know and be able to use the vocabulary. If needed, create a vocabulary booklet

Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6dML3pujq8
Physics Exam Writing Strategies

Multiple Choice:
- Do the questions you know first
- Use process of elimination (i.e. eliminate what you know is incorrect and cross them out)

Short Answers:
- Review how many marks is each question worth? (This will give you a clue to how much to write).

Graphs:
- Label the axis and use a ruler

Calculations
- Show all of your work
- Start with the formula
General Tips

• Don't be satisfied with simple recognition of a principle or concept. Aim for actual knowledge that you will be able to recall and to use in a test/exam situation. Try to look at all the possible ways that a principle can be applied. It helps to work with others and to explain things to others (and have them explain things to you).

• Effective examination preparation involves an interaction among homework problems, the classes, your notes and the text. Review actively, including self-tests (you create your own problems/questions). You need to be sure that you can answer problems without referring to your notes or to the textbook. Practice doing problems using both the concrete and the formal approaches, to see which you are more comfortable with.
Resources

- **IB Prepared: Physics Book Series, IBO**
- **How to Study Physics video,** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6dML3pujq8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6dML3pujq8)
- **University of Texas website,** [http://www.ph.utexas.edu/~turner/classes/HowToStudyPhysics.htm#test](http://www.ph.utexas.edu/~turner/classes/HowToStudyPhysics.htm#test)
- **Oberlin College website,** [http://www.oberlin.edu/physics/dstyer/StudyTips.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/physics/dstyer/StudyTips.html)