

A Review on the Comprehensive Exam Study Session

This study session was conducted by graduate assistants in collaboration with faculty and Chi Sigma Iota. The study session took place on campus Saturday October 20, 2007 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Two graduate assistants and seven students were present for the session.

Purpose

The purpose of the study session was five fold. Objectives were as follows:

1. Improved student exam participant confidence.
2. Reduce student exam participant test anxiety.
3. Boost student exam participant group cohesion.
4. Provide collaborative study option.
5. Review selected exam content areas.

Process

The session began with participant introductions and an explanation of the session agenda. Coffee, juice and muffins were available throughout the morning portion of the session. Pizza and soda were available at noon; all participants enjoyed food and beverage during the session. The participants were equally divided in to teams for a “Jeopardy” like game involving exam content review questions. The questions presented were short answer and fill in the blank. There was a break from the game play at noon to serve lunch and answer general questions about the testing procedures. After answering general questions the study session facilitators asked for feedback from participants.

Participant Feedback

The game format was noted as effective and enjoyable. Participants stated that they liked preparing for the exam in a new way. Some participants reported that they were pleased by the exclusion of multiple choice questions and others reported that they would have liked multiple choice questions. The group seemed to be in agreement that the questions were challenging and further that this was appropriate for the study session.

In the future students would like to have more than one study session before the exam. They suggested that content areas could be reviewed individually during multiple study sessions. They added that the study session schedule could be posted to listserv and included in the department newsletter. The students also requested that a list of study resources and information on testing format and scheduling be included in the department newsletter.

Expected Outcome

The group provided feedback on the anticipated outcome of the study session. The following comments were made by one or more participants.

1. Improved comprehensive exam scores.
2. Improved National Counseling Exam (NCE) scores.
3. Focused study plans for continued exam preparation.
4. A little more confident about exam performance.
5. Better prepared for mental strain during exams.

At the close of the study session the mood of the group seemed more relaxed and comfortable. The students took notes throughout the session. At the close of the session the game questions were provided via email for continued review. Many of the students

sent thank you notes in response to this email. Students also expressed their gratitude during lunch and at the close of the study session.