

# Making use of the Returned Exam



## Put your score into an appropriate context.

- Check the letter grade.
- Consider the average score of the class.
- Consider the range of scores.

## Use the test items to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

- Study the items missed.
  - Identify areas needing further studying.
  - Analyze the types of mistakes you make.
  - Ask the instructor for clarification and suggestion for improvement.
- Study the items you guessed on.
- Survey the items answered correctly.

## Analyze your errors.

- Most common errors in essay exams:
  - Students don't follow directions or answer the question that was asked.
  - Essays are not well organized.
  - Essays are too general; students give few examples of specific persons, groups or places.
  - Facts are incorrect or mixed up.
  - Students don't state a viewpoint or thesis. They mention facts, but don't tell why those facts are important, or what the facts prove.
  - Students write illegibly and don't proofread.
- Most common errors in objective exams:
  - Students misinterpret the question.
  - Students choose first correct choice instead of reading all the options.
  - Students misread directions.
  - Students don't use clues to help them choose.

## Ask yourself the question: How did I produce that error?

- Studying:
  - not enough
  - not the important material
  - not effectively; no outlines, flashcards, etc.
- Read questions wrong or partially.
- Didn't think before writing — wrote incoherently.
- Ran out of time.

## How do you plan to improve?

- Identify instructor expectations.
  - Note the kind and/or type of questions asked.
  - Analyze the content of test questions:
    - from text or lecture.
    - expected or unexpected material.
- Examine studying strategies.
  - Amount: spaced vs. crammed
  - Content: stressed in book, lecture, syllabus, old tests, repetition
- Time management.
  - Organize study time before exam
  - Budget time during test