

# THE TUTORING CENTER AT CASA

## Six Strategies for Essay Exams

### **1. Give the type of answer called for in the directions**

Very rarely do college essays ask you to repeat information that you have read. Most often you are asked to synthesize the information you have learned and make a statement about it, supporting that statement with examples from what you have learned in class and through outside reading.

### **2. Answer all parts of the question**

Failure to answer all parts of the question is a major reason students get lower grades. When you first read the questions, number the items. Before you begin to write create a brief outline incorporating those numbers to ensure that you don't forget.

### **3. Write well-organized answers**

Before you write, plan your major points. Be sure to include all parts of the question. Write an introduction that summarizes the answer. Throughout the body of the essay make sure your major points stand out. Your instructor is reading many the essays of the entire class (or even several different classes so make sure he/she doesn't have to search for your points. Finally, write a conclusion that reveals your mastery of subject matter.

### **4. Write complete answers**

Include all information that is relevant to the answer. Write as if you are explaining to an individual who is not as informed on the topic (as your instructor surely is.)

### **5. Your writing should be easy to read.**

Not all of us are blessed with the gift of good handwriting but it is important that you make an effort on an essay exam. Write on only one side of the page in the blue book. Keep your mistakes to a minimum by thinking before you commit it to paper. but if you have to correct do it neatly. Indent each paragraph and leave margins.

### **6. Proofread your work before you turn it in!**

Plan to leave some time at the end to read over what you have written and check your outline to make sure you have not left out any important information.