

Lumberjack Link

A weekly newsletter for the newest members of the Lumberjack family

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Test Anxiety

(and how to deal with it effectively):

It's the middle of the semester and mid-terms are looming. It is this time of each semester that students (especially freshmen) start wandering around campus looking like sleep-deprived zombies. To avoid psyching yourself out of a decent grade, read on.....

What is Test Anxiety?

Test anxiety is a learned behavior of nervousness or tension when preparing for or taking tests. It is normal (and arguably beneficial!) to experience some anxiety before a test, but when anxiety begins to negatively interfere with your academic performance, it has become a problem that must be treated.

Does any of this sound familiar?

- "My stomach hurts."
- "I'm sweating."
- "I feel shaky."
- "I studied this stuff yesterday, why can't I remember?"
- "I can't focus!"
- "As soon as I leave the test, I remember everything!"

If these are feelings you have experienced regarding test-taking, then you may suffer from test anxiety.

Good News & Bad News:

- Bad News: You have spent a lot of time learning and practicing how to be anxious about tests so it's going to take some practice to unlearn it.
- Good News: Test anxiety is not genetic--it is something you've learned to do and can be unlearned.

Some anxiety is good for you!

Everyone needs some stress to perform at the peak of their abilities. Without some pressure, we would be bored or disinterested. So in the beginning, as stress increases, so does performance, until you reach that point that athletes call "the zone"—where you feel totally pumped up and ready to take on anything. If the stress keeps increasing, you pass "the zone" and drop into anxiety mode. In the case of school performance, test anxiety often results from too much stress about the exam. So, if you suffer from test anxiety, the goal is to bring your stress level back down to the optimal level. Turn to the next page to read about what makes up stress and learn some strategies for fighting it!

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Study Tips

- Study in chunks: 20-50 minute time periods followed by a brief break (5-10 minutes) is the most effective way to study.
- If you have a lot of reading to do to prepare for a test, try taking notes as you go along.
- Set aside a specific time to study.
- Begin reviewing a week before the test.
- Practice multiple methods of studying, reading, taking notes, making note cards, preparing practice quizzes, having friends quiz you over the information.
- Just do it! Most students spend more time putting off studying than just doing it!
- Use daylight hours: an hour of studying during the day is worth two at night! Do the work that requires the most concentration (typically reading) earliest in the day.
- Review your notes after each class.
- Find a specific place to study which is free from distractions.

Test Anxiety (continued from page 1)

There are several factors that make up stress as we know it:

1. Physical factors

- You have to take care of yourself!
- Get enough sleep- most people need about 8 hours
- Relaxation- take time during the day to slow down. Try yoga, go for a walk, or whatever it is that helps you clear your mind
- Proper nutrition- Make fruits and veggies the biggest components of your diet. Drink lots of water. Avoid alcohol, drugs, and caffeine.

2. Rehearsal

- Practice makes perfect! It's much easier to perform anything if you've rehearsed it enough times.
- Remember to study first! Practice is the best way to reduce anxiety but you have to learn (i.e. STUDY) the material first. This means you have to study far enough ahead to allow yourself the time to practice!
- As you practice, make notes of areas that are weak for you. Review those areas then practice again.
- If you're unsure that you have studied everything you need to know, set up an appointment with your professor a few days before the exam.
- There are 3 basic kinds of tests, each of which require different kinds of practice:
 1. Objective Tests (multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and matching)
 - Asks you to know how discrete bits of information are connected. Ex.: 1492 connects to when Columbus sailed the ocean blue.
 - Best practice= flash cards.
 2. Essay (Compare/contrast, Describe/discuss)
 - Asks you to tell how things are related or unrelated to each other and asks you to demonstrate your knowledge of the content.
 - Best practice= outline and understand main points to see how they are connected.
 3. Concept learning (case studies or math story problems)
 - Asks you to demonstrate you know the concept by being able to use it in a different way than was previously discussed.
 - Best practice= study the concepts from different angles and views to see how they connect to each other.

3. Thoughts

- Ever heard of a self-fulfilling prophecy? If you think you're not going to do well, you probably won't! If you envision yourself doing well, you increase your odds dramatically.
- Reduce and/or eliminate internal negative messages and mental images about how you will do on the test and replace those thoughts with more realistically positive thoughts and images. Try these:
 - "I have studied this material to the best of my ability and will answer the questions as best I can."
 - "Expecting myself to get all the questions correct is not a good strategy. It is likely I may get several questions wrong. But that will not deter me from doing my best."
 - "I will allow myself to relax enough so that I can perform at my peak level."

Source:

Texas Women's University Counseling Center

http://www.twu.edu/o-sl/counseling/TestAnxiety_files/frame.htm



Spotlight on:

Office of International Studies and Programs



Getting an education is more than getting a degree. It is knowing, understanding, and contributing to your world, a world of increasing complexity and interdependence. To succeed in this interdependent world, it is critical that you gain an informed perspective about it. Deciding to study abroad can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your academic career, giving you the opportunity to gain that informed perspective as you live in and come to know another culture rather than just reading about or visiting it. In addition, study abroad provides you with the chance to understand, evaluate, and appreciate your own culture and values while helping you to grow globally.

Studying abroad can be a complicated process, so here to help you is the Office of International Studies and Programs (OISP) which serves as a clearinghouse and facilitator for international activities and exchanges at SFA. OISP serves students, faculty and administrators in disseminating information about study abroad, in

encouraging and facilitating organization of study abroad programs, in administering the Study Abroad Scholarship and in coordinating group study exchanges for students and faculty. Simultaneously, OISP assists other campus offices in the recruitment and support of international students.

While students at SFA are not permitted to study abroad during their freshmen year, you are encouraged to begin planning now if you are even considering a study abroad program. By getting certain courses out of the way, you will have greater freedom when choosing a program in the following years. To begin the process, you first need to visit the Office of International Studies and Programs (OISP) and meet with either the Director or the Study Abroad Coordinator. There is no appointment necessary; simply stop by and meet their friendly staff that is always willing to lend a helping hand! They can help identify the program(s) that suits your needs and interests. By participating in a SFA Faculty-led Study Abroad Program, you can even earn SFA credit while exploring a new country and culture. If you are worried about the cost, there are



many scholarships and other forms of financial aid that can help you finance your study abroad experience.

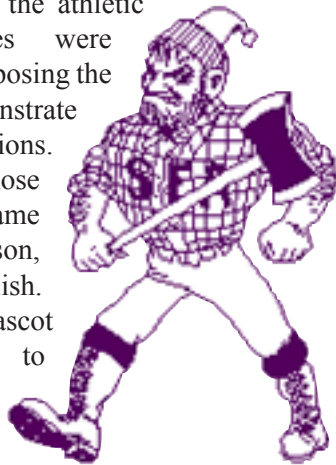


If you are interested in studying abroad, be sure not to miss the Study Abroad Fair, held once per semester. There you will be able to check out some of the various programs offered and talk with staff members. You can contact OISP to find out when the next fair will be held. For more information and helpful FAQs, simply visit the OISP website at <http://www.sfasu.edu/oip/studyabroad/steps.asp> or stop by their office (Liberal Arts North Building in Room 402) which is open weekdays from 8:00-5:00.

The Lumberjack

In 1923 the students and faculty met in assembly to decide upon a name for the athletic teams. Several names were considered, and those proposing the names led yells to demonstrate the fitness of their nominations.

By vote, the assembly chose LUMBERJACKS, the name submitted by T. E. Ferguson, professor of English. Since that time the Mascot of SFA has continued to represent the university and community of Nacogdoches.



The Axe

The Axe is the tool or weapon of choice of the Lumberjack. To the members of the SFA Community it has a dualistic association, in this case representing both destruction and creation. American Indians, the Chinese and even the Celts called axes “thunder stones”. As such, axes became closely associated with power.

The axe is also the official hand symbol of SFA. The symbol can be made by raising your left hand—with your hand facing you, lower the ring and pinky fingers, forming a backwards “L” with your middle and pointer fingers and thumb. You might notice that this forms the shape of the state of Texas (thumb being west Texas, pointer and middle fingers being the panhandle, and ring and pinky fingers pointing to Nacogdoches).



Upcoming Events:

Wednesday, October 12th-Sunday, October 16th

- *Pineywoods Fair*-The Pineywoods Fair features local livestock, vendor exhibits, carnival rides, variety of food vendors and live stage entertainment to round out the perfect fair for the oldest town in Texas! Located at the Nacogdoches Expo Center. For more information call 936-564-0849 or visit www.nacexpo.net.

Thursday, October 13th

- SAA Movie Series, BPSC Theater

Friday, October 14th

- SAA Movie Series, BPSC Theater

Sunday, October 17th

- SAA Movie Series, BPSC Theater