



# Navigating Midterm Season as a Transfer and/or Mature Student



As a fellow transfer student, the transition to a new school can be daunting. Add in the stress of midterm season, and it can feel overwhelming. But fear not, fellow transfer and mature students! You are not alone in this journey. I've spoken with some experienced mature students, Clifton and Azia, and gathered some valuable insights on how to navigate through midterm season. So take a deep breath and keep reading for some helpful tips on preparing for midterms and managing stress during this busy time.

## **Understanding the Unique Challenges of Midterm Preparation as a Transfer and/or Mature Student**

Midterm preparation as a transfer or mature student can present its own set of challenges. Not only are you adjusting to a new school environment, but you may also have other responsibilities like work or family commitments. This can make finding time to study and staying on top of your coursework even more difficult. Understanding these unique challenges is the first step in developing effective strategies to navigate through midterm season successfully.

When discussing these challenges with Clifton and Azia, they both provided insightful tips on how to balance family, work, and school commitments during midterm seasons:

- **Plan Ahead:** Clifton and Azia emphasized the importance of thinking and planning ahead. Clifton advised, "Always plan for school; don't let school plan you," and Azia adds their own perspective, "One thing I wish I had known about earlier is that first and second-year courses don't carry as much weight – you don't need to get all A's. Don't stress as much and burn yourself out; you'll need that energy for your third and fourth-year courses."
- **Attendance Matters:** Go to class, go to class, go to class (do I have to repeat that a fourth time?) Attending classes is incredibly important, as it provides an opportunity to engage with the material under the guidance of the professor and with the support of your classmates.
- **Time Management:** Divide your day realistically, making sure you have enough time for studying, working, and some time to focus on something you enjoy non-school related. And here's a valuable tip – plan your schedule around your habits. For example, if you're not a morning person, don't schedule early morning study sessions.
- **Confidence:** Confidence is a key ingredient in handling the challenges of midterm season and achieving success, as Clifton says, "You will get there because you always will." So trust in yourself, Clifton, and the wisdom Azia shared about the significance of pacing yourself across your academic journey.

With these tips, you can not only navigate through midterm season but also make the most of your entire academic experience.

### **Practical Strategies for Efficient Midterm Preparation**

Midterm season can be a bit overwhelming, and let's be honest, figuring out how to study and prepare effectively is often the trickiest part. So, here's something I learned from my chat with Clifton that I've never really thought about but definitely plan to use in my next midterm: **Engage with your professors.** It might sound intimidating, but here's why it's so helpful. Your professors want you to succeed; they want you to do well because they're the ones grading your work and teaching you the material. So, attending office hours and building a relationship with your professor is genuinely important. Clifton also mentioned a golden question to ask your professor to better prepare for midterms, and that is, "If you were me, how do you pass the midterm?" Yes, it's that simple, yet incredibly effective. This one question puts your professor in your shoes and gets you the precise guidance you need to ace that midterm.

Now, let's get into some practical steps to ensure your midterm preparation is effective:

- **Read through all your class notes:** Go through your class notes thoroughly, making sure you grasp the key concepts and topics covered in your coursework.
- **Re-write to retain information:** Azia shared a tip when it came to studying and she says, "I like to re-write my notes from class. It helps me to retain the material further and allows me to compile information in a really organized manner. This helps me to really break it down and work through any areas I struggle with more."

- **Try all homework assignments again:** Revisiting your homework assignments is a fantastic way to reinforce your understanding of the material. Do the assignments once more to make sure you've truly grasped the concepts.
- **Look for and complete past tests and exams:** Past tests and exams are like hidden treasures for midterm preparation. Find previous assessments and practice with them to get a sense of the types of questions that might appear.
- **Use cue cards to quiz yourself:** Create cue cards with key terms and definitions. Regularly quiz yourself to reinforce your memory and your understanding of these crucial concepts.

## **Overcoming Self-Doubt and Embracing Growth: Personal Experiences of a Transfer Student**

One of the biggest challenges as a transfer student I have encountered is overcoming self-doubt and embracing personal growth. It's normal to feel overwhelmed and question your abilities, but remember that you have already taken a brave step by pursuing higher education. Embrace the journey of learning and growth, and know that every hurdle you overcome will make you stronger and more confident. Surround yourself with a support system of friends, mentors, and resources on campus, and remember to celebrate your successes along the way.

## **How to Stay Healthy and Maintain Work-Life-Study Balance During Midterms**

Maintaining a healthy balance during midterms is essential for your well-being. Make sure to prioritize self-care by getting enough sleep, eating nutritious meals, and exercising regularly. Set boundaries with your work, personal life, and studying to avoid burnout. Remember to take breaks and do activities that bring you joy and relaxation. Finding this balance may take some trial and error, but it's crucial for your success during midterms and beyond.

When it comes to handling test anxiety and staying calm during exams, Azia has some valuable tips to share. She emphasizes the importance of giving yourself time before the test to engage in deep breathing exercises. This not only helps to calm nerves but also allows you to centre yourself and focus on the task at hand. Azia also suggests bringing to mind the areas you understand the most on the topic being tested. This technique serves as a confidence booster before diving into the exam.

## **Empowering Yourself through Connection: Utilizing On-Campus Resources and Support Networks**

As a mature or transfer student, it's important to remember that you are not alone in your journey. Utilize the on-campus resources and support networks available to you to empower yourself during midterm season. Connecting with fellow students who share your experiences can provide a valuable sense of community. If you ever find yourself in need of extra support and guidance, remember the extensive range of resources and assistance just for you.

You can book an appointment with one of our ACMAPS mature student peer mentors who can help you navigate your academic journey and find the tools you need. Additionally, we offer both virtual and in-person drop-in sessions, providing opportunities to get your questions answered, seek guidance, or simply connect with other students. York offers a number of resources and a supportive community to help you succeed such as Student Counselling, Health & Well-being, so don't hesitate to reach out and take advantage of the incredible support system available.

As we reach the end of this blog, my hope is that you're feeling a bit more empowered and confident about facing midterms. Remember, you're not flying solo on this one. Throughout this post, we've talked about the nitty-gritty of midterms, practical strategies, insights from fellow students, battling self-doubt, and making the most of on-campus resources. With these insights, you're well-prepared to navigate your way to success.

Keep in mind, every hurdle is a chance to grow. Embrace the journey, look after yourself, and find that sweet spot of balance. Trust in your skills; you've got what it takes! Best of luck, and may all that hard work pay off.

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