

Exam Correction and Analysis

- 1) Go through your exam and enter the number of each question for which you lost points in the “Question” column on the chart. Be sure to separate questions with multiple parts. For example, if question 5 has three parts (a, b, c) and you lost points on parts a and b, then enter 5a and 5b separately on the chart.
- 2) For each question in your chart, compare your answer to the one listed on the key, determine why you lost the points based upon the information below, and enter the NUMBER OF POINTS you lost in the appropriate column. After you have gone through the entire exam, total up the number of points you lost for each of the types of errors and figure out which area you need the most improvement.
- 3) Lastly, determine where you can find this information in the future, i.e. which homework problem, what page of your textbook, what page of your notes. Write this in the column on the far right. This will help you prepare for the final.

Common Types of Exam Errors and Examples (not exhaustive)

Type A: Mechanistic or conceptual errors

- You confused different concepts
- You did not understand the concept well enough to answer a question about it.
- You did not study the concept well enough to answer a question about it.
- Instead of explaining a concept or describing a mechanism, you defined it.
- You missed a multiple-choice question because you missed important key words in the answer choices.
- You answered a question with the answer for another question (i.e. you gave the right answer for the wrong question).

Type B: Recall or detail-oriented errors

- You did not know a key term for a fill in the blank.
- You were unable to define a key term on a short answer question.
- You missed a detail in a short-answer question, but knew it at the time.

Type C: Question-related errors

- You did not understand the wording of the question.
- You could not determine what the question was asking.
- You missed important key words in the question that would have caused you to answer the question in a different way.
- There are any notes that state that you did not answer the question, part of the question is circled, or key words in the question are circled or underlined by the grader.
- You wrote too much and ended up getting points taken off for incorrect statements.

Type D: Time-related errors

- You did not answer the question at the end of the exam because you ran out of time.
- You skipped the question and did not have time to go back to it.
- You hastily wrote something down because you were running out of time.

If there you feel you lost points for any other reason, describe the reason in the “Other” column. Keep in mind, however, that you need to concentrate on the things you can change, not the things you have no control over.



What do I do with all of this????

Determine the types of mistakes you are making or likely to make so that you can work on them for the next exam:

- If you lost points in the Type A or B columns, then you need to modify your study behavior prior to the exam.
 - Put time and effort into studying.
 - Keep up with the material. Review the notes prior to each class meeting and attempt all applicable homework problems prior to your discussion.
 - Write out mechanisms in numbered lists and keep track of how many steps it takes for something to occur. This will prevent you from missing a step when exam time comes.
 - Memorization works well for terms and definitions, but not so well for concepts and mechanisms. To understand a concept or mechanism, you need to understand the “why” and the “how,” not just the “what.” This means you need to study the relationships between topics and attempt to understand why things happen the way they do. Remember, the more ways your brain has to access a concept, the less likely you are to forget it in a stressful situation.
 - Work the homework problems a second time without the help of your notes. Then, compare the second set of your answers with the first set and determine what you’re missing. This will make your studying more efficient because you will concentrate your time and effort on the more difficult material, rather than the material you already know.
 - Make a list of all of the topics/terms you have difficulty with and brainstorm about each. Then, compare your brainstorm with your notes and fill in the blanks. Not only will this help you connect different topics, it will help you figure out what you’re missing.
 - Work through homework and study with other students. Discussing the material with and teaching the material to others will improve your understanding.

- If you lost points in the Type C or D columns, then you need to modify your behavior during the exam:
 - Underline key words given in a question
 - Rephrase the question in the form of a statement and then begin writing the answer.
 - Skip the question and go back to it later. Answering other questions on the exam will likely help you figure out or even remember how to answer the question you skipped.
 - If you are getting anxious, turn your exam over and spend a minute taking deep breaths to relax and refocus your attention.
 - Raise your hand and get help from your instructors.

Use the information you collect from your exam analysis, as well as the correct answers to exam questions to help you study for the final.