

## Finals fantasy

### End-of-the-semester exams don't have to be the hardest part of school

By Kelcey Rieger  
THE BATTALION

Angela Mitchell, a sophomore general studies major, said she thought she was ready for finals last semester, but sometimes the slightest mishap can cause finals chaos.

"I wrote down the wrong classroom my final was scheduled to take place (in)," Mitchell said. "I sat in the wrong room for about 15 minutes when I finally realized I knew none of the people around me, nor did I know the professor. I was about 20 minutes late to my real final and I had to apologize repeatedly to my professor in order to be able to take the final."

Aggies are busting out their books, gathering up their notes, and stretching their brain muscles for the most dreaded four days of the semester, known as finals.

Mitchell said she is not going to wait until the last minute to study for finals this semester and knows just the place she plans to start studying early.

"The best place for me to study for finals is either on the second floor of the West Campus Library or at my friend Amanda's apartment," Mitchell said. "Both places are quiet and allow me to focus easier than if I were at home."

James McKendree, a sophomore political science major, said he finds studying at home more comfortable than hitting the books somewhere else.

"My house is not necessarily the best place to get studying done, but it is my favorite," McKendree said. "Everything I need is right there. It is a great place to relax and I don't have to worry about disturbing anyone else. I have food, music, and the occasional distraction that keeps me from stressing out too much."

McKendree said study breaks are what keep him from going crazy and suffering from studying burnout.

"After I get to the point where I've read the same sentences about six times, I quit and pick up my guitar," McKendree said. "I crank up my

amplifier, plug in and jam for about 30 minutes. It is an awesome release and it takes my mind off the books and everything else. When I'm done I can go back to full concentration."

McKendree experienced a finals nightmare when he found himself running late to one of his finals last semester. He got nervous about the exam at the last minute and studied until four a.m. the morning of the final.

"I woke up late and got there pretty late," McKendree said. "The final ended up being 24 pages long. So, after about three cups of coffee and about three and a half hours of dozing off and answering questions in between, I was the last one to finish, but luckily I got a B."

Ricky Allegretto, a junior international studies major, had a similar experience taking a chemistry final.

"I stayed up all night studying," Allegretto said. "The final was at eight and I had about no sleep from the night before. I barely stayed awake, but I think pulling an all-nighter was well worth it once I found out my grade."

Allegretto said when he was a freshman he would sleep in the library around major test time.

"I would study, and then sleep, study then sleep, but it worked," Allegretto said. "Now my study habits are a little different because I don't study as much."

Allegretto said he has several places he likes to study.

"On campus I like studying in the Browsing Library where I can listen to music on my headphones with little distraction," Allegretto said. "Off campus I

really like Sweet Eugene's and Barnes and Noble. They both have a good atmosphere and normally there are very few people, which means less distraction."

Katie Hizen, a junior journalism major, said she likes Sweet Eugene's because it is a relaxed atmosphere with other students studying.

"Pretty much any coffeehouse is a good place to kick back," Hizen said. "I like coffee, so I think studying in a coffeehouse allows me the best of both worlds."

Hizen said she makes it a point to exercise during finals time because it relieves the stress studying for finals creates.

"When I have a really hard final coming up, like finance, I tend to freak out the night before the exam," Hizen said. "But this semester I really want to start early because there is so much information I have to remember."

Dr. Andy Smith, associate director of counseling for the A&M Student Counseling Services Center, said students need to take several things into consideration when getting ready for the finals.

"Every student deals with procrastination when it comes time to study," Smith said. "But the reality is pulling all-nighters usually does not produce significant improvement in test scores. Students need to study early and plan ahead."

Smith also said students need to take good care of themselves during test time.

"If you take good care of yourself, eat well, and get plenty of sleep, you will have the energy to concentrate and be more clear-headed," Smith said.

Student Counseling Services will be sponsoring Beat the Hell Outta Finals beginning Dec. 13.

"Beat the Hell Outta Finals is based on the idea of staying physically and mentally healthy during finals time," Smith said. "Students can drop by and engage in the low key and relaxing activities that can help them survive the stress of finals week."



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