

# **Guidelines and Suggestions for Exam**

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Your answers to the exam questions should demonstrate evidence of critical thinking and ability to apply knowledge in new context.

Evidence of critical thinking includes:

Correctly interpreting the question

Be sure to read the questions carefully and do what they ask you to do, and not what you assume they are asking you to do.

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## Offering explanations for your answers

You do not need to write pages and pages per answer, but what you do write needs to contain sufficient information so I can see how you get to the answer.

## Connecting different concepts

Just because the question is about topic A, it does not mean that you only need material from topic A to answer it properly. The ability to identify and correctly utilize information from disparate sources is an indicator of critical thinking.

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## Take-home group exam

Each person will have to fill out an evaluation for each of your other team members to rank them in:

Attendance - did they attend all the meetings? If not, did they have legitimate explanations for the absence?

Participation - when they did show up, did they participate? Or did they just sit and text their friends the whole time?

Contribution - did they do their portion of the work? Was what they did of acceptable quality? The material doesn't have to be correct, but they do need to show that effort has been made.

Attitude - did they work well with others? Were they respectful and polite?

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## Guideline for working as a team:

Define clearly each person's responsibility

Don't just say "I will do question 1". Instead, set goals with tangible and measurable products, e.g. "I will have have a rough draft of answers for question 1 done, including references. I think it will be at least 2 pages."

Write down the assigned duties for reference

Have a written record of each person's assigned duties so that there's no dispute later on about what's said. Then, when it comes time to evaluate each other, go by this list and determine if they have accomplished the tasks that were assigned.

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## Set specific deadlines

Be clear about deadlines, i.e., don't say "let's have it done some time tomorrow." Instead, say "send your stuff to the group via email no later than noon of tomorrow."

## Be cooperative, but assertive

If you have an idea or suggestion, bring them up. Don't become mad later on that the group didn't do something that you never suggested in the first place. But do realize that the group may not think it's a good idea. Act professionally and present your argument, and the group should respond in kind and offer counter-argument, and then reach a consensus.

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## Common mistake #1: Failure to read *critically*

The question asks you to “provide 2 reasons” and you simply provide 1 reason;

The question asks you to “compare and contrast the 5 factors” and you only did 4 of the 5 factors;

The question asks you to “offer an explanation” and you re-stated the question as a way of explaining.

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## Common mistake #2: Unnecessary errors

Your answer is meant to say “ATP hydrolysis will not occur because...” but instead you have a typo and end up with “ATP hydrolysis will occur because”;

Answering the wrong question, where you cut-and-pasted answer from question 2B into the answer of question 2D;

Unforced errors, like calculation errors, missing units, wrong units, etc.



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## Common mistake #3: Failure to cite references

You do not have to cite the textbook or the lecture slides or lab manual UNLESS you use material word for word substantially. In that case, make an indent, put the quoted material in quotations or italics, and then cite it.

Please note that you should not have large chunks of your answers lifted word for word just because I allow you to use block quotes. Quoting something at me does not show your critical thinking skills; digesting the material and re-phrasing it in your own words does.

All other outside sources must be cited. The format of the citing is not important, as long as I can find it (because I check every reference), that means at the minimum you need publication name, author name, title of book or article, publication date, and page number. If it is a web site, cite the URL, as well as the date accessed (make sure the url link is working!).