

**ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

Multiple Choice Exam Tips¹

- Adopt a strategy and stick to it.
 - If you choose to read the fact pattern first, then the question and possible answers, or vice versa, follow that strategy throughout this portion of the exam.
 - If you have been reading the facts first as a technique, and you are not satisfied with your grade results, try this strategy instead:
 - Read the call of the question
 - Skim the possible answers
 - Then read the fact pattern, call of the question, and select the “best” answer.

- Once you have your strategy in mind, determine how much time to allot to each question.
 - Make a schedule and stick to it.
 - *E.g.*, if there are 30 questions and you have one hour to answer them, only permit yourself two minutes to each question.
 - If you get stuck on one question, move on to the next one after two minutes.
 - Circle it, to come back to it if you have time.
 - And, select one letter as a default answer for any question you are unable to answer, so that at least, for the time being, you have answered it with something.... If you have time, you can erase that default answer and try again before the total time expires.

- Figure out your answer yourself, and look for it among the options offered at the end of the question. If you know the answer, you won't be misled by answers that merely “look right.”

- If there are overlapping options, dissect the options into individual

choices. Overlapping options occur where the question has more than one answer or combinations of answers, and this is reflected in the options. Typical multiple choice options are:

Which of the following does not violate the statute?

- A. Proposition I
- B. Proposition II
- C. Both A & B
- D. Neither A nor B

- When confronted with overlapping options, divide them into individual options first. Look at each proposition and mark it either True or False, and then look for the right combination from the original options to determine the correct answer.
- If you must guess, eliminate as many wrong answers as you can and look for the most complete answer. Usually, an answer may be wrong because it is incomplete. Perhaps only part of the rule is included, or the rule is stated incorrectly.

Lastly, and this is repeated for emphasis: **never skip an answer**. If you don't know it, mark it with your default answer. That way, you don't waste time, and you don't mess up by mis-numbering your subsequent responses.

¹ Ruta K. Stropus and Charlotte D. Taylor, *Bridging the Gap Between College and Law School: Strategies for Success*, Carolina Academic Press 2001, pp. 112-13.