Strategy for taking the FE Exam

This is the Federal Engineering Exam administered and governed by the Utah State Licensing Agency and the Federal FE Exam Board. It may be given by USU personnel from the testing center, but it is not a USU test.

It is a national test and you must treat it seriously. Ethics and honesty are absolute requirements. You will be monitored and possibly video taped. Any misconduct is an automatic dismal, with the possibility of being disbarred from ever taking the test again.

Review
- All review sessions are important.
- Focus on understanding / learning the easiest material and applications for sections that you haven’t had as a class.
- 2 or 3 extra correct answers could make all the difference.
- Review all of the equations, figures, and tables
- Know what each variable and symbol means in all of the equations, figures, and tables.
- Different variables or symbols may be used in the exam questions than in the handbook.
- Know the units used by each variable and symbol in all of the equations, figures, and tables.
- Don’t review material that isn’t in the equations, tables, or figures.
- Practice, practice, practice.

Preparation
- Plenty of rest / sleep / food / good breakfast.
- Carefully and legibly mark up the handbook.
- Keep reviewing the handbook while solving problems.
- Don’t trust your memory for the day of the test.
- Practice doing some problems in EC-101, in the morning.
- Make up your own problems for the equations in the handbook.
- Plan ahead about which calculator you are going to use.
- Make sure calculator is on approved list.
- Practice with your calculator, especially problems using the handbook.
- Practice using Metric units.
- Know where the unit conversions are in the handbook.
- Know the order of the sections and where to quickly find them in the handbook.
- Ask someone that took the test last year about the test, i.e. how many problems, what you were and were not allowed to do, what the morning and afternoon tests were like.
**Test Day**

- Eat breakfast.
- Stay away from energy drinks, you will crash.
- The test is in two parts, a 4 hour test in the morning and another 4 hour test in the afternoon.
- The morning test is a general test with questions on all the subjects covered in the handbook.
- The afternoon test can either be another general test (with harder questions) or a major specific test with questions all in one area of engineering, i.e., Civil or Mechanical, etc.
- Last year and at the start of the afternoon test, those taking the test were allowed to look at all the tests and questions and then decide which test to take.
- Many of those who took the test last year said it was better to take the test in a specific engineering major, especially if you are not familiar with the subject material in some of the subject areas.
- However, a Fall semester Junior may not have had enough courses in his or her major to take the specific major test and may want to choose the general test.
- Timing is critical.
- Keep track of the time.
- Make sure you have time to guess on the unanswered questions.
- Check to make sure you didn’t miss any unanswered questions.
- Last year, they were allowed to write in the test question pamphlet, so you would have been able to mark the questions that needed to be reviewed (questionable answer) and the questions you skipped.
- Some of the test questions in the afternoon needed iterative solutions (trial and error), it might be quicker and easier to work backwards from the possible 4 answers.
- Keep it simple, avoid procrastinating and stay on schedule.
- Work the easiest problems first, in your strongest areas.
- Check the units of the answer you select.
- Skip the problems that are confusing or will take too much time to answer, you can always come back later.
- The answers have been rounded off, even the intermediate answers, so don’t expect your answers to exactly match.
- If you can’t correlate the problem with an equation in the handbook, you probably don’t know what you are doing.
- There will be 4 to 5 possible answers, many with just 4 possible answers.
- Towards the end of the test, look for the unanswered questions and guess.
- When guessing, see if you can eliminate any of the possibilities, maybe by units.
- Select and stay with the same letter (maybe B or C) for your blind guesses.
- If you are drawing a complete blank, relax, breathe, think about having to file your taxes, this test isn’t so bad after all.