Ten Steps to Better Test Taking
based upon Paul Nolting's "Winning at Math"

1) **State the Facts.** When you receive the test, write down all the important formulas, procedures for working problems, important facts, etc. on the backside of the last page of the test. (≈ 30 seconds)

2) **Preview the Test.** Read over the test and mark the questions that you know how to do with a 1 (easiest/quickest), the questions that you think you know how to do with a 2, and the questions you are not sure how to do with a 3 (hardest/time consuming). Pay attention to the length of the test and the point values. (≈ 1 minute)

3) **Update the Facts.** After previewing the test, add any additional information to your fact sheet that you need for the test and for solving a particular problem. (≈ 30 seconds)

4) **Max/Min Test Schedule.** Decide the how you can obtain the most points in the least amount of time on the test. (≈ 30 seconds)

5) **Work the Easiest/Quickest Problems First.** Work the problems that you marked #1 first, then #2, and then #3. Read each question twice and set a time limit for working or skipping the problem. Work as fast as you can while being accurate. Do not allow yourself to get stuck on one problem.

6) **The 15-second Rule.** If you get stuck for more than 15-seconds on a particular problem, mark it with an x and move to the next problem. Many times later, it will come to you how to work a problem that you have skipped. If that happens, immediately go back to the skipped problem and write down enough information for you to remember how to finish the problem.

7) **Review the Skipped Problems.** Once you have worked through the test, go back to the skipped problems and try to recall examples the instructor wrote on the board, examples from the book, or homework problems. If you still cannot do it, go to the next skipped problem.

8) **Guess at the Remaining Problems.** NEVER LEAVE A PROBLEM BLANK! We are trying to get points here. Write down the first step. Sometimes in doing so, it will come to you how to work the problem.

9) **Review the Entire Test.** Double-check that you followed the directions. Did you answer the question posed by the problem? Check your answers and look for careless errors.

10) **Use All of Your Test Time.** This is a game about getting the most points possible. Stopping early will cost you points.