
Student Success \ Exam-taking

KAVEH FARROKH (PH.D.)

Key Exam Question Terms

KEY QUESTION TERM	SUGGESTED RESPONSE FORMAT
ANALYZE	Find the main ideas and show how they are related and why they are important.
COMMENT ON	Discuss, criticize or explain the meaning as completely as possible.
COMPARE	Show the similarities and differences.
CONTRAST	Compare by showing the differences.
CRITICIZE	Give your judgement or reasoned opinion of something, showing its good and bad points – no need to “attack” it.
DEFINE	Give the formal meaning by distinguishing it from related terms. This usually a case of having memorized definition.
DESCRIBE	Write a detailed account or verbal picture in a logical sequence or literary form.
DIAGRAM	Make a graph, chart or drawing. Be sure to label it and add a brief description if needed.
DISCUSS	Describe by giving the details and explain the pros and cons of it.
ENUMERATE	List. Name and list ideas one by one. Number them.
EVALUATE	Give your opinion or some expert’s opinion of the truth or importance of the concept. Tell the advantages and disadvantages.
ILLUSTRATE	Explain or make it clear by concrete examples, comparisons or analogies.

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INTERPRET	Give the meaning using examples and personal comments to make it clear.
JUSTIFY	Give a statement as to why you think it is so. Give your reasons for your statement or conclusion.
LIST	Produce a numbered list of words, sentences or comments. Same as enumerate.
OUTLINE	Give a general summary. Must contain a series of main ideas supported by secondary ideas. Omit minor details. Show the organization of ideas.
PROVE	Show by argument or logic that it's true. "Prove" has a specific meaning in math and sciences.
RELATE	Show connections between ideas/concepts – telling how one causes or is like another.
REVIEW	Give a survey or summary in which you look at important points and criticize where needed.
STATE	Describe the main points in precise terms. Be formal. Use brief clear sentences. Omit details or examples.
SUMMARIZE	Give brief condensed account of main ideas. Omit details or examples.
TRACE	Follow the progress or history of the subject.