Essay Exam Attack Plan

- Memorize a **checklist** of possible exam topics that will be covered (consult the professor’s syllabus, your outline, or course text’s Table of Contents).

- Write checklist on inside cover of Blue Book (if allowed). This will help with issue spotting when fatigue and nerves affect your recall.

- Read exam directions. Read again, and follow them. Note how many essays and what percentage weight is given to each. Judge time accordingly and be aware of the clock/your watch while writing.

- Read the call of the question: **what is it you are being asked to do?**

- Read the exam, noting parties, issues, defenses in the margins as you spot them. Reread. Concentrate on each sentence and ask why a particular fact is included.

- Craft a short, bare bones **outline** (sample below) in either chart or list format to organize your thoughts and to narrow the focus of your response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plaintiff</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Defendant</th>
<th>Defense</th>
<th>Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>battery</td>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>self defense</td>
<td>- J hit B 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>tr. to land</td>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>necessity</td>
<td>- bad weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- plane malfunction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Refer to checklist for issues you might have overlooked.

- Re-read exam for missed issues.

- Begin writing/typing essay in Blue Book/Exam Soft adding meat to your bare bones outline.

- Answer in **IRAC format** (but do not label I-R-A-C).

- Analysis: include P v. D. Weave the facts of the hypo in with the law. Show factual support for P and D’s assertions.

- Conclusion: “Because of XZY, a court would likely rule in favor of....”

- Write legibly. Use erasable pen or pencil, if allowed. Dot i’s, cross t’s. Even on Exam Soft, you must review for grammar and spelling. Make exam readable/understandable/legible.

- **Caveat:** This essay attack plan is a suggestion. Follow your professor’s specific directions