

Effective Time Management

Academic Resource Center, tel: 684-5917

Do you ever wish there were more than 24 hours in a day so that you can do all of the things you need to do? Are you finding it hard to keep up with your reading and regular homework, especially when tests, papers or other projects are due all at once? Do you wish you had time to go to the gym, be more active on campus, volunteer, or just have time to relax and have some fun? An ASIP instructor can work with you to evaluate the demands on your time, set personal goals, and develop the time management strategies that can help you achieve them.

Advantages of Time Management:

- ✓ gain time
- ✓ motivates and initiates
- ✓ reduces avoidance
- ✓ promotes review
- ✓ eliminates cramming
- ✓ reduces anxiety

Carrying a full load of college credits is essentially equivalent to having a full-time job!

- In other words, to understand the material in each of your courses at a level the professor considers adequate, you should plan on studying between two and three hours for every hour you spend in lecture.
- Research has shown that people remember information best when they study in **frequent**, relatively **short bouts** of time, rather than in last-minute marathon study sessions.

HOW DO YOU GET STARTED?

1. Get the “big picture”. Plan out your semester:

- Gather all your syllabi together and read them through carefully! Make a note of when and how many major assignments are due (above and beyond the weekly homeworks and readings that you have).
- Use a **semester calendar** to record when all your exams, quizzes, lab reports, papers, finals, etc. are due.
- Most students find this an incredibly helpful exercise because it gives you an overview of what your semester is going to look like and where you may have “crunch periods”. This will give you an idea of how far in advance you need to plan. Make sure that you can complete all your assignments, *without* sacrificing the time you need to put in to make sure you keep up with all your classes.

- Once you have an idea of where your crunch periods are, you can use a **monthly planner** (in addition to a weekly planner which focuses on the details) to plot out a strategy. When do you need to start your assignments or studying? How much work do you need to do every day or week to make sure you have enough time for review and/or editing/fine tuning?
- Remember that you need to set **realistic goals** for yourself! It's always better to be safe than sorry. If you know that you like sleeping in late over weekends or that you don't want to sacrifice your Saturday evening, then don't plan to start studying at 7am in the morning or 9pm on Saturday evening. The goal is to be balanced! And that means that you have to be realistic about your habits and behavior.
- If you are unsure about how much time you should be putting in or feel you are putting too much time into one thing (e.g. a class or readings) then meet with an **ASIP instructor** and let us need help with figuring out a effective time management strategy.

2. Make a weekly schedule based on your needs:

- One effective way to make time for all your work is to create a **weekly activity planner**. You can print out a weekly planner and write your schedule in or use i-Cal (if you have a mac), dCal, or google calendar (free) to create an electronic schedule to plan out your week.
- Try to make sure you put this some place **visible!** Make copies and put one in class binders, on your dorm room wall, etc. You're more inclined to follow something if it's in your face and not hidden away....

DIRECTIONS: Read all of these directions before you make up your weekly schedule. Check off each direction as you complete it.

1. Record class and lab times in appropriate day/hour blocks on a time schedule sheet.
2. Record meal times.
3. Record all regularly scheduled personal activities such as meetings, work, and athletic commitments.
4. Record any special activities you need to do or want to do on a regular basis.
5. Include time for class preparation.
6. Schedule your intensive study/ review time for each class. Try to schedule some study time each day for each class. Depending on your learning style you may want to schedule daily time for all your classes or chunks of time on one class per day. Meet with an ASIP instructor to find out how to make the most of your learning style when you study!
7. Think about what time of the day you do your most effective studying and take this into consideration when planning your week.
8. Try to be **task-oriented** rather than time-oriented. Think in terms of "blocks of time" and what specifically needs to be accomplished, not hours of study time.

9. Start your **study period** with the courses you like least or that you're not doing well in. You are more inclined to be motivated to learn and retain this knowledge when you are fresh.
10. Try to set up **routines**. This may seem like a mechanical way of scheduling, but you will find that such a routine can help you develop a pattern for efficient and effective learning.
11. Schedule a **weekly review** for each course. Do it at the end of the week if possible. This weekly review gives you an opportunity to spread out all of the past week's notes along with the reading assignments to see what you have been learning in the past week during class and study time for each course. You can also look ahead to plan the next week and determine how much reading you need to do, what projects are due, and if any tests are scheduled.
12. Keep open some day or evening time for daily **physical activity**. Remember, research indicates that regular exercise will not only give you a general sense of well-being, but can reduce tension and help you accomplish a tough class, study, and work schedule.
13. Leave some empty blocks of time open for academic or personal needs. So many students forget about things like laundry and showering etc., and many students underestimate how much time it takes to do things. If you are trying to be too regimented in your time and things crop up that throw you off your schedule, it will just add to your stress and make you feel a sense of failure that will only increase procrastination or bad habits.
14. Schedule some time during the week to “play”, relax, or do whatever you want to do. This is your reward for sticking to your schedule. In addition, you'll enjoy your free time more.