



# TIME MANAGEMENT

Time can often feel like an enemy when there are many tasks that need to be completed. It doesn't have to feel like that all the time though. Below are ideas to help you manage time effectively to achieve both personal & academic goals. If you find you are struggling with time management, contact the Counseling and Testing Center by calling or visiting our website to learn more about the many services available, such as an appointment with an Academic Specialist for academic time management support.

- **Spend time planning & organizing.** Using time to think and plan is time well-spent. Organize in a way that makes sense to you; this might mean color coding, creating a calendar, or making lists.
- **Set goals.** Goals give your life, and therefore how you spend your time, direction. Set goals which are specific, measurable, realistic, and achievable. Goals should be challenging and a bit uncomfortable, but not impossible to achieve.
- **Prioritize.** Identify tasks to complete which result in the greatest reward. Once you have identified these items, focus on completing the items. Prioritizing items with a deadline is another way to stick to your priorities.
- **Use a To Do list.** There are many ways to create a To Do list, so try out the different ways to see what works best for you. Some methods are create a list for the next day the night before, create a list first thing in the morning, add a list to your calendar, and use a "running" list that you continually add to.
- **Be flexible.** It's important to allow time for interruptions and distractions since these things will inevitably occur. Time management experts suggest only planning for about 50% of your time; by managing your time this way, you have the flexibility to handle interruptions. To get back on track, ask yourself "What is the most important thing I can be doing with my time?".
- **Determine your most productive time of day.** Take notice of when you tend to be most productive and capitalize on it. Schedule your priority tasks (if possible) during your most productive hours.

- **Do the right thing.** Doing the right thing is effectiveness and doing things right is efficiency. Focus first on effectiveness, and then concentrate on efficiency.
- **Eliminate the urgent.** Urgent tasks have short-term consequences while important tasks are those with long-term, goal-related implications. Work towards reducing the urgent thing you must do (using some of the skills above) so you'll have more time for important priorities.
- **Practice intelligent neglect.** Eliminate trivial tasks and tasks which do not have long-term consequences for you. Work on tasks which only you can do and eliminate or delegate other tasks.
- **Avoid perfectionism.** Spending time on small, less important details can be a form of perfectionism.
- **Conquer procrastination.** When you are avoiding something, try breaking it into smaller tasks and then complete one task or set a timer and work on a big task for 15-minutes.
- **Learn to say "No."** You and your priorities are important, so try blocking time in your schedule for values such as family, friends, or leisure. Practice prioritizing yourself, and then saying "no" to the unimportant things in life can become easier.
- **Reward yourself.** Celebrate the achievement of goals and small successes. Promise yourself a reward for completing a task or finishing a project. Then, keep your promise and enjoy your reward. This can help create a life balance between work and play.