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TIME MANAGEMENT

HOW WELL DO YOU MANAGE YOUR TIME?

- _____ List the number of credit hours you are carrying.
- _____ Allow at least two hours of study for each credit or unit (hours x 2).
- _____ List the number of hours you have to work each week.
- _____ Total # Hours/Week Committed So Far

Estimate the number of hours per week you devote to:

- _____ Sleeping
- _____ Eating
- _____ Commuting
- _____ Household chores
- _____ Recreation/fun
- _____ Chapter responsibilities
- _____ Other leadership responsibilities
- _____ Exercise
- _____ Communicating with family and friends
- _____ Personal hygiene
- _____ Unexpected interruptions
- _____ Other: _____
- _____ Total Of All Other Activities
- _____ GRAND TOTAL (add two totals together)

One week consists of only 168 hours. How many hours are in your week? Are you overcommitted or undercommitted? How well do you manage your time? Does the way you spend your time reflect your values and priorities?

SCHEDULING YOUR TIME

Time scheduling will not make you a perfectly efficient person. Very few people can keep a rigorous schedule day after day over a long period of time. In fact, many students who draw up a schedule and find themselves unable to stick with it often give up completely.

The following method of organizing time has been more helpful to many students and does not take much time. It is more flexible than many methods and might help you establish long-term, intermediate, and short-term goals.

LONG-TERM SCHEDULE

Construct a schedule of your **FIXED COMMITMENTS** only. These include only obligations which you are **REQUIRED** to meet every week; i.e. meetings, job hours, classes, etc.

INTERMEDIATE SCHEDULE

Now make a list of **MAJOR EVENTS** and **AMOUNT OF WORK** to be accomplished in each of your classes and clubs or organizations this week. This may include non-study activities.

EXAMPLES :

- Quiz Wednesday in Biology
- Paper due Thursday in French
- Intramural game Tuesday night
- Chapter on Monday
- Finish 40 pages in History by Friday
- Read 6 articles for Poli Sci by Tuesday

These events will change from week to week, and it is important that you make a new list prior to the beginning of each week. Sunday night might be the most appropriate and convenient time to do this.

SHORT-TERM SCHEDULE; ONE PER DAY

On small notecards each evening before going to bed or early in the morning, make out a specific daily schedule. Write down specifically **WHAT** is to be accomplished. Such a schedule might include for example on Wednesday:

- 8:00-8:30am Review History
- 9:30-10:00am Review Math and prepare for quiz
- 12:00-2:00pm Work
- 3:00-4:00pm Study French in Language Lab
- 7:00-10:00pm Chapters 4,5 History
- 10:00pm Call home

Using this type of format allows you to move from the “big picture” of commitments to the daily things you need to do to help you methodically move towards your overall goals and objectives.

ANALYZING YOUR TIME WASTERS

Below are some common time wasters, their possible causes, and some solutions to consider.

WASTER: LACK OF PLANNING

Possible cause: Failure to see the benefits.

Solutions: Recognize that planning takes time on the front end, but can save it in the long run. Emphasize results rather than activity.

WASTER: LACK OF PRIORITIES

Possible cause: Lack of goals and objectives.

Solutions: Write down personal goals and objectives. Discuss your priorities with family and friends.

WASTER: OVERCOMMITMENT

Possible cause: Broad interests; confusion in priorities; belonging to too many organizations.

Solutions: Say no and put first things first. Resign from some activities.

WASTER: MANAGEMENT BY CRISIS

Possible cause: Underestimating how much time projects, studying, etc. realistically take.

Solutions: Allow more time and plan for interruptions.

WASTER: PAPERWORK AND READING

Possible cause: Knowledge and information explosion.

Solutions: Read selectively and skim for general understanding when appropriate.

SOME PRACTICAL TIPS FOR SAVING TIME

- Prioritize your things to do. Prepare and follow a daily written list. Make out your list at the end of each day for the following day.
- Make definite commitments to yourself and others.
- Periodically assess whether or not you are spending time on the priorities you identify for yourself.
- Keep your personal goals updated and in writing.
- Learn how to use small chunks of time instead of wasting them.
- Block in time for studying when you are most alert and likely to be productive.
- Think carefully before taking on any new commitments. Allow some time to pass between being asked to volunteer and actually responding.
- Reduce the amount of time you spend watching television, playing video games, or online.

SOME STUDY SKILLS TIPS TO REMEMBER

- Plan your schedule so that you allow plenty of time for the necessary review and account for your classes.
- Select an appropriate location for study—away from distractions. Don't try to study where you normally sleep, watch TV, etc.
- Use a study skills system. Any number of systems are available, but always approach what you're studying in a systematic way.
- Develop a consistent approach to note taking. Be sure to review your notes regularly and highlight key points.
- Learn/memorize material in some meaningful way. Rote memorization makes it difficult for you to retrieve information later. Using flash cards can allow you to test your knowledge on breaks between classes, etc.
- Avoid cramming. Such practice overloads your short-term memory, blocks long-term memory, and builds test anxiety. Try to be organized so that you aren't learning new information just prior to a test.
- Studying with a classmate can facilitate learning. This provides you with an opportunity to recite information, and helps develop good organization for improving memory.
- Talk to your professors. Ask questions in class, make appointments to visit them.
- Use the review of previous tests as a way to increase your learning. Determine what you are missing and why, and then work with your professor or a tutor to develop strategies which will help you not make the same mistake twice.
- Set realistic goals for yourself, write them down, and refer back to them often.
- Accentuate the positive in any learning situation because we learn better when we are motivated.