



A Simple, Effective Time Management System

1. Getting the big picture: The semester calendar

This provides an overview of the semester. Fill in all significant events and due dates. This includes: papers, exams, presentations, organizational meetings, job or internship interviews, etc...

Filling in this information will give you a sense of when the “crunch” times are likely to be, allowing you to plan ahead. It will also ensure that you know when papers are due, the dates of exams, and when major projects are due.

2. Knowing your schedule: The weekly calendar

a) Determine the hours of the day that are not flexible or available for work. Write these down on the weekly calendar.

- class times, meetings, standing appointments
- eating, sleeping, exercising
- work, organizations, church, volunteer activities
- family time, social time

b) Determine how many hours each class takes in study / preparation time. List each class and estimate how many hours you need to devote each week (a good rule of thumb is to allow for 2-3 hours outside of class for every 1 hour spent in class).

Class _____ Hours/week _____

Class _____ Hours/week _____

Class _____ Hours/week _____

Class _____ Hours/week _____

Class _____ Hours/week _____

Class _____ Hours/week _____

Class _____ Hours/week _____

c) Now begin filling in the available study time until you have accounted for all of the hours you estimated for each class. Keep in mind the principles of time management on the previous page, and create a weekly schedule for yourself.

Semester Calendar

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Aug. 28							
Sept. 4							
Sept. 11							
Sept. 18							
Sept. 25							
Oct. 2							
Oct. 9							
Oct. 16							
Oct. 23							
Oct. 30							
Nov. 6							
Nov. 13							
Nov. 20							
Nov. 27							
Dec. 4							
Dec. 11							
Dec. 18							

Plan a schedule of balanced activities. College life has many aspects that are very important to success. Some have fixed time requirements and some are flexible. Some of the most common that you must consider are:

Fixed: eating, organization, classes, work, church

Flexible: sleeping, recreation, study, relaxation, socializing

Study at a regular time and in a regular place. Establishing habits of study is extremely important. Knowing what you are going to study and when saves a lot of time in making decisions and retracing your steps to get necessary materials, etc.. Avoid generalizations in your schedule such as “study”. Commit yourself more definitely to “study history” or “study chemistry” at certain regular hours.

Study as soon after lecture class as possible. One hour spent soon after class will do as much as several hours a few days later. Review lecture notes while they are still fresh in your mind. Start assignments while your memory of the assignment is still accurate.

Use odd hours during the day for studying. Scattered 1-2 hour free periods between classes are easily wasted. Planning and establishing habits of using them for studying for the class just finished will result in free time for recreation at other times in the week.

Limit your blocks of study time to no more than 2 hours on any one course at a time. After 1 1/2 to 2 hours of study you begin to tire rapidly and your ability to concentrate decreases rapidly. Taking a break and then studying another course will provide the change necessary to keep up your efficiency.

Provide for spaced review. That is, a regular weekly period when you will review the work in each of your courses and be sure you are up to date. This review should be cumulative, covering briefly all the work done thus far in the semester.

List according to priorities. By putting first things first, you are sure to get the most important things done on time.

Eat well-balanced meals and get regular exercise. Take time for good meals and exercise. Healthy eating and exercise can dramatically improve your concentration, mood, and increase your energy level.

Double your time estimates. Most people tend to underestimate how much time a particular activity / assignment will take. A good rule of thumb is to estimate how much time you realistically think something will take and then double it. More often than not, this doubled estimate is accurate.