

MANAGING YOUR TIME ALONGSIDE A COURSE SYLLABUS

---

# TIME MANAGEMENT

### BY THE END OF THIS PRESENTATION, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO...

- ▶ Know what to pay close attention to within a course syllabus.
- ▶ Practice valuable time management strategies.
- ▶ Schedule and plan time for school assignments, deadlines, work, and other life commitments.
- ▶ Prioritize, overcome obstacles (including procrastination), and plan for the unexpected.
- ▶ Identify ideal study scenarios and follow daily planning strategies that coincide with these preferred learning conditions.

### A SYLLABUS COMMUNICATES...

- ▶ LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES
- ▶ COURSE MISSION, GOALS, AND TOPICS
- ▶ TEACHER AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES
- ▶ DETAILED SCHEDULE WITH DATES AND ASSIGNMENTS
- ▶ GRADING SYSTEMS
- ▶ ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES
- ▶ INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

### SO, A SYLLABUS SEEMS IMPORTANT...

- ▶ Almost 60% of students transfer test dates/assignment due dates to a planner or calendar.
- ▶ However, only a handful of students actually check their planners/calendars first for these due dates (most go back to the original syllabus).
- ▶ Additionally, many students who don't use a planner/calendar only reference the syllabus a few times throughout the course of a semester.
- ▶ A course syllabus can contain A LOT of information that's passed down from semester to semester (academic integrity policies, plagiarism info, etc.), so for the purpose of this workshop, let's focus on the most important items in a syllabus...

# WHAT DO I PAY ATTENTION TO IN A COURSE SYLLABUS?

- ▶ Key assignments and assessments and their due dates
- ▶ Required readings
- ▶ Professor's attendance policies and late work policies
- ▶ Professor's office hours and email/contact information
- ▶ Support resources (ILC, REAL Center, Impact Coaches, Advising)
- ▶ Learning objectives
- ▶ Course prerequisites
- ▶ Paper formatting requirements

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

---

**WHAT KINDS OF THINGS SHOULD YOU  
PLAN FOR?**

## DISCUSSION

---

**HOW CAN YOU MAKE SURE YOU DON'T  
FORGET DEADLINES AND DUE DATES?**

# DIFFERENT WAYS TO SCHEDULE

- ▶ Planners and calendars (print, digital, or a combination of both)
- ▶ Alarms/reminders
- ▶ Phone apps (examples on the next slide!)
- ▶ Wall or desktop calendars
- ▶ Post-it notes
- ▶ Excel spreadsheets



# CALENDAR/PLANNER APPS

- ▶ Google/Apple/Outlook calendar
- ▶ SavvyCal
- ▶ Fantastical 2
- ▶ My Study Life
- ▶ Timepage
- ▶ Business Calendar 2
- ▶ Woven
- ▶ TimeTree
- ▶ Informant 5
- ▶ BusyCal
- ▶ DigiCal
- ▶ SaiSuke
- ▶ My Study Life
- ▶ iStudiez Pro

# STEPS IN SCHEDULING

- ▶ Block out time you're in class, the lab, or at your job. Make sure to factor in your commuting time.
- ▶ Then, block out the times when you have other commitments that are important to you: church, sports/working out, volunteer activities, family functions.
- ▶ Put down scheduled events such as doctor and dentist appointments. Make sure to factor in travel time, and allow a small cushion so you are not rushing.

# STEPS IN SCHEDULING

- ▶ Schedule time for how many hours you should spend studying for each class, usually from 6-12 hours, depending on the class.
- ▶ Budget in a little extra time for interruptions, delays, and other contingencies.
  - ▶ Assume something unexpected will happen every day!
  - ▶ Schedule “buffers” to account for unexpected events that might cause your schedule or plan to shift (traffic, an unexpected or extended meeting, etc.).
- ▶ The time you have left is your discretionary time. Use for relaxation, hobbies, or for “escape” activities such as TV, video games, etc.

A TYPICAL WEEK

If your course is:	Time for reading the assigned text:	Time for homework assignments:	Time for review and test preparation:	Total study time per week:
3 credits	1 to 2 hours	3 to 5 hours	2 hours	6 to 9 hours
4 credits	2 to 3 hours	4 to 6 hours	3 hours	8 to 12 hours
So for a 15 credit course load, you can expect to spend outside of class:*				
15 credits	5 to 10 hours	15 to 25 hours	10 hours	30 to 45 hours

# STUDY TIME

- ▶ Schedule some time for every class weekly and calendar it.
- ▶ Keep up with class readings, homework, etc.
- ▶ Eliminate cramming (hint: it doesn't work!)
- ▶ Be specific about when you'll study (Wednesday from 11-12- study math at library).
- ▶ Small chunks of study time are key (20-30 min). Self analyze- longer periods may work for you, but give yourself breaks and rewards!

# USING CALENDARS

- ▶ Create a term calendar to keep track of upcoming academic events and deadlines.
- ▶ Color code subjects.
- ▶ Count backwards 2-3 weeks to start upcoming big projects, and set mini-deadlines along the way (the ILC can help with this!).
- ▶ Calendar study time (remember, be specific!).
- ▶ Check calendar daily, and check off completed work.
- ▶ Make a list with “in your face” reminders, updating it regularly.

# HOW TO PRIORITIZE YOUR TASKS

- ▶ Make a master list of all you have to do (daily and/or weekly).
- ▶ Rank in order of importance, keeping in mind the long-term consequences and your goals.
- ▶ Isolate and identify the activities that give you the best return.
- ▶ Allocate your time and concentrate your effort on these items.
- ▶ Schedule specific times every day for smaller recurring tasks.

# RESOLVE CONFLICTING PROJECTS/TASKS

- ▶ Set priorities based on urgency (due tomorrow) and importance (percentage of total grade).
- ▶ Make a decision about what to work on, and move forward.
- ▶ Don't waste time debating your decision or feeling guilty.
- ▶ Reschedule other things for a later time to make the time you need now.
- ▶ Simplify, delegate, and let some less important tasks go.
- ▶ Choose the tasks that have the biggest positive effect on your life.
- ▶ Don't multitask! Work on one task at a time, and eliminate distractions.



# PROCRASTINATION

- ▶ Procrastination is the act of putting off something that needs to be done.
- ▶ Let's get the conversation started:
  - ▶ Name a situation in which you habitually procrastinate.
  - ▶ What are the effects of this procrastination?
  - ▶ What would you like to do differently in this situation?

# PROCRASTINATION

- ▶ Reasons for procrastination:
  - ▶ Trouble with goal setting (unrealistic goals/timelines; not setting goals at all).
  - ▶ Not believing in your ability to complete a task.
  - ▶ Not believing in yourself in general.
  - ▶ The tasks seems too hard to do or too time-consuming.
  - ▶ Lack of knowledge or skills needed to complete a task (or thinking you do).

# PROCRASTINATION

- ▶ Strategies to overcome procrastination:
  - ▶ Weigh the rewards/consequences of completing the task vs. putting it off.
  - ▶ Set reasonable and specific goals (i.e. "I will study for biology three nights this week" instead of "I will study biology ALL weekend").
  - ▶ Get started! Going from nothing to doing something is often the hardest part.
  - ▶ Break the task into smaller parts.
  - ▶ Ask for help.

# PROCRASTINATION

- ▶ Strategies to overcome procrastination:
  - ▶ Ask yourself why you're procrastinating, and address the underlying issues.
  - ▶ Find the reason, and do the opposite (if you think the project is just too big to complete, think to yourself, "I can do this if I break the project or task up into smaller chunks.").
  - ▶ If you think you don't have time to complete the project or task, tell yourself, "I will just work on it for 10 minutes."
  - ▶ Be positive and proactive in your response to the challenge.
  - ▶ Reward yourself as you complete tasks or move forward on projects.

# PROCRASTINATION

- ▶ Benefits of overcoming procrastination:
  - ▶ Peace of mind, a feeling of strength and purpose, and the healthy feeling of being in charge of your life.
  - ▶ While procrastination often makes us feel weak, useless, and helpless, taking charge of our lives will make us feel strong, competent, and capable.
  - ▶ You will experience increased personal freedom!

### KNOW YOURSELF WELL

- ▶ Schedule projects and studying during your “peak” hours, not your “valley” hours.
  - ▶ Daylight hours: reading, studying, and problem solving.
  - ▶ Nighttime hours: light review and non-academic commitments.
- ▶ What’s your concentration limit? 15 minutes? An hour? Don’t plan intolerable amounts of study/homework time.
- ▶ Take breaks as needed, and avoid distractions.
- ▶ Join study groups only if you’re a group learner.
- ▶ Don’t lose sight of your academic goals.

### OTHER STRATEGIES TO KEEP IN MIND...

- ▶ Do not allow others to sabotage your schedule. Say no to requests for your time that do not directly relate to your goals and values.
  - ▶ Similarly, find an accountability partner to help keep you on track!
- ▶ Make sure the items on your schedule are your priorities.
- ▶ Try to “automate” as much as you can on your schedule. Schedule minor/routine tasks for certain days and times, such as filling the car with gas and getting groceries every Sunday afternoon.
- ▶ Batch related tasks into back-to-back time blocks. For example, schedule study/review time for a specific course either right before or right after the scheduled class time for the course.



## A DAILY PLANNING STRATEGY

- ▶ Spend five minutes at the beginning of each day to make sure you have identified the most important tasks you want to complete.
- ▶ Take a look at your calendar/planner to check for upcoming due dates or deadlines. Also, check for other life commitments going on that day, and try to plan for potential obstacles that might come up!
- ▶ Refocus during the day. Are you working on the important priorities you have identified, or have you been sidetracked or distracted? If it is the latter, get yourself back on track.
- ▶ This step is important because it forces you to manage your day hour by hour. Do not let the hours manage you!



## A DAILY PLANNING STRATEGY

- ▶ At the end of the day, spend five minutes for review.
  - ▶ What worked? What did not?
  - ▶ What distractions/interruptions did you have, and how can you eliminate or reduce these in the future?
  - ▶ What did your most focused times of the day look like?
  - ▶ Use all the information gleaned from this review to make your next day more focused and productive.

ILCTUTORING@WAKETECH.EDU

---

**THANK YOU!**