8 Time Management Strategies for Online Learning Success

**Plan**
- Use your course syllabi to find important dates in all of your courses such as exam & assignment due dates. Create a term calendar of these dates and add your personal commitments such as family events & work shifts.
- At a glance, you’ll see and can better prepare for your busy weeks.
- **Embrace planning as a process.** None of us are born with skills to manage our time, we develop them. Make time to try new strategies and regularly assess for effectiveness. Adapt and adjust strategies when needed.

**Schedule Your Time**
- Use the flexibility that comes with online and remote learning to your advantage. Schedule more challenging tasks when you are most alert.
- Use time-blocking to schedule set times for watching lecture recordings, readings, and other coursework.
- **Wake up and go to sleep at the same time every day.** Routine is a crucial component to incorporate predictability and efficient management of time.

**Minimize Distraction**
- Create a dedicated and comfortable workspace in a quiet space and use the space consistently for your studies. Incorporating ergonomic design principles whenever possible.
- While studying, put your phone on silent and place it in another room. Turn all notifications off and close or block distracting websites on your computer. ...It may be difficult at first, but your ability to study will greatly improve!
- **Let your roommates know you are studying.** Purchase three coloured plastic cups. Set a red cup on your desk during times you want to be interrupted only if it is an emergency. Set out a yellow cup for times when you can be interrupted if important, and a green cup for times when it’s fine to be interrupted.

**Determine Priorities**
- Use goals to manage competing tasks. Goals help us identify what we should be doing and to assess the effectiveness of our actions and are crucial for maintaining a healthy mindset.
- Creating reasonable goals will allow you to more reliably achieve a sense of reward and pride in your work. You don’t need to build Rome in one day, understand that there is progress in bricklaying.
- **Allocate adequate time for your studies.** Use a 3:1 ratio when budgeting your study time. Plan to spend 3 hrs each week studying and completing coursework per 1 hr lecture time. If you are taking 4 courses, plan to spend roughly 36 hrs per week.
Online Learning Strategies

Be Motivated

• Stop and reflect on why you are taking courses. What is your ultimate goal? Are you taking classes to prepare for your ideal career? Or to obtain a certain financial standard of living? Your ambitions can act as guide and source of motivation when you are low. Don’t lose touch with who you are and why you are. Having a clear head and a sense of purpose

• The value of rewards. Intrinsic rewards (internal desires to learn) are not always enough to feel motivated to learn. For every 2-hours of focused study, create an ‘extrinsic’ reward. Spend 20 minutes catching up with friends or social media. This discipline can even make hobbies more enjoyable!

Be Accountable

• Develop a friendship with a peer and create an “accountabili-buddy” in each of your courses. Select a time to connect each week to talk about course assignments, study goals, and methods of study. Check-in daily to share progress, exchange learning stories, and, ultimately make for a richer and more enjoyable learning experience.

• The 2-Day Rule: when developing a new habit, never, under any circumstances, skip the habit for two days in a row. Post a large calendar on your wall and mark a big red X through each day you perform the habit. With this simple and effective rule, you should never see 2 blank days in a row.

Manage Procrastination

• Breaking larger and possibly overwhelming projects into smaller, more manageable tasks is one of the best anti-procrastination strategies. Consistently work these smaller sub-tasks, one at a time, and before you know it you’ll have competed the project.

• Short intense periods of study. Instead of a longer, 2-3 hrs of study where concentration can and eventually will deteriorate, try using The Pomodoro Method. Break study time into 30-min cycles: 25-min study, followed by a 5-min break; after four cycles, take a longer, rejuvenating 30-minute break.

Take Time for Yourself

• Working at home can mean blurring of study and personal time. Spend time on your well-being (physical, mental, and emotional health, financial and spiritual well-being) Find time each day to do something that you love(?), whatever that may be.

• Create a self-care plan. Establish a routine of doing enjoyable activates and stick to it. Go for a walk, schedule an evening of online gaming with each weekend with your friends. Taking care of yourself will increase your capacity to succeed in your courses and make learning enjoyable.

Works Consulted:

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