

Time Management

What you value can be seen in the way you manage your time.

Ben Franklin once said, “By failing to plan you are planning to fail,” and nowhere is this idea truer than in time management. Managing time wisely is a challenge for many people, not just college students. However, transitioning from an environment where time is highly structured (such as high school) to an environment with much more freedom to manage time as you wish can be challenging for new college students. When thinking about how to manage your time, it is important to remember that there is not a one size fits method that works for everyone.

Credit hours (units of instruction) are defined by federal law as “one hour of classroom or direct instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work.” That means if you have a 50 minute class that meets three days a week, you should plan to spend six hours a week outside of the classroom studying and completing assignments. If you have a four unit class, you should plan to spend at least eight hours a week on outside of class activities. Students who take 15 units a semester should generally spend 45 hours a week in class and on outside class activities.

In pairs or small groups, discuss some of the ways you will spend your time working on academics (class, homework, etc.).

How much time each week do you anticipate spending on each of these activities?

The first step to successful time management is to set your priorities. We previously discussed the reasons why you are attending college, some experiences you are hoping to have as a college student, and what some of your goals are. Think about how these experiences and goals fit into your schedule.

The second step to effectively managing your time is to remember the importance of balance. While homework and studying are important, it is also important to make time for relaxing, exercising, spending time with family and friends, and participating in social activities. These should not be your top priority as a college student, but they are an important part of academic life. They are equally important to manage.

In pairs, small groups, or as a class discuss some of the ways you will spend your leisure time (clubs, sorority/fraternity, family, church, volunteer). Which are most important to you? How much time each week do you anticipate spending on each of these activities?

Regardless of how you choose to spend and manage your time, it is important to be organized and to use some sort of planner. There are many types of planners (electronic, day-at-a-glance, month-at-a-glance, google calendar, etc.) that are available.



Using the charts below, plan at least one week of school and outside activities for the summer or fall semester—keeping in mind your goals for the semester as well as the prioritized list of advantages of college.

As you plan:

- 1) Remember to set realistic goals for your time.
- 2) Be specific when scheduling time to study (read vs. read biology vs. read and annotate chapter 8 biology).
- 3) Use your time wisely. Do you have 30 minutes between classes? How can you use this time to your advantage?
- 4) Think about the times of the day when you are at your best. Are you a morning person? A night person? Do you think best after working out? Use that time for your most mentally strenuous activities.
- 5) Schedule time for family obligations, social activities, rest, and relaxation.
- 6) Be flexible. You cannot plan for every distraction or disruption. Try to build extra time into your schedule to accommodate unforeseen events.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
TIME	Activity		
6:00 AM			
7:00 AM			
8:00 AM			
9:00 AM			
10:00 AM			
11:00 AM			
12:00 PM			
1:00 PM			
2:00 PM			
3:00 PM			
4:00 PM			
5:00 PM			
6:00 PM			
7:00 PM			
8:00 PM			
9:00 PM			
10:00 PM			

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday and Sunday
TIME	Activity		
6:00 AM			
7:00 AM			
8:00 AM			
9:00 AM			
10:00 AM			
11:00 AM			
12:00 PM			
1:00 PM			
2:00 PM			
3:00 PM			
4:00 PM			
5:00 PM			
6:00 PM			
7:00 PM			
8:00 PM			
9:00 PM			
10:00 PM			