Scheduling and Prioritizing Your Life

Student Handout

Scheduling and Prioritizing Your Life Handout

1. Create blocks on your calendar for the following events. These are events that are protected and you cannot schedule over them unless you have an EMERGENCY reason for doing so. The blocks that are left will be for working on school related stuff.
    a. Class/Lab
    b. Meal Times (at least two 1 hour blocks)
    c. Sleeping (at least 8 hours)
        i. Set a time to stop working for the evening because you need to have at least an hour to relax and unwind before bed.
    d. Meetings/spiritual services (if applicable)
    e. Exercise (if applicable)
    f. Job
    g. Travel time
    h. 10 to 15 minutes each evening to set schedule for the next day
    i. 30 minutes to 1 hour Sunday evening to draft your schedule for next week

2. Try to keep times consistent, such as waking up at the same time each day, eating lunch at the same time, etc. It is fine if your M W F schedule looks different from your T R schedule. For example, you may eat dinner at 6 PM on M, W, F but at 5 PM on T and R because of a lab at 6:30 PM.

3. Eliminate notifications on your phone that are not important. Then, set calendar reminders. By eliminating non-important reminders your phone will only alert you to important reminders that will be related to calendar items.

4. Make a list of all assignments, upcoming exams/tests/quizzes that you need to study for, readings, projects, etc. using the Tasks and Priority List.
    a. Think about breaking down studying into smaller chunks. So, if you have a test on Friday, maybe study chapters 1 and 2 on Monday, study chapter 3 on Tuesday because it's a longer chapter, study chapters 4 and 5 on Wednesday, etc. as opposed to spending all of Thursday cramming for the exam.
    b. Break writing assignments into smaller chunks. This website might be helpful: https://writing.ku.edu/assignment-planner
    c. Remember the "rule of ½ or ¼": If you plan to study chapters 1 through 4 on Monday, think about studying only chapters 1 and 2 on Monday and 3 and 4 on Tuesday. It often takes us longer to complete tasks than we think—the planning fallacy. So go easy on yourself. If you find that you have time to study chapter 3 on Monday, that's great! But don't feel pressure to get to it until it's on the schedule.

5. Now take your list and start to place these items on the template in the spaces that are left open. Be sure to fill all open spaces for now. If you have open spaces, either fill them with other work so you can get ahead, or take that time for yourself. Even time with friends/going out should be scheduled for now.
    a. Think about when you are the most productive, somewhat productive, and not as productive and be strategic about scheduling more cognitively taxing tasks during times when you are most productive and so on.

6. When working, do so for about 15 to 25 minutes. During this time eliminate distractions on your computer and put your phone on silent, not vibrate, but silent. After you have worked for 15 to 25 minutes, take a 5 to 10 minute break. Then work for another 20 to 25 minutes.
    a. Remember to think about what type of environment and what type of stimulation is best for you when you work. The environment and amount of stimulation may change depending on what type of task you are doing.

7. List ways to reward yourself for your hard work. Think of things that you ordinarily wouldn't do at the end of the day or week. So, if you regularly play video games, don't make video games a reward since you do it anyway unless you are going to stop playing video games during the day and will only allow yourself to play them after you have completed your work for the day.
    a. Extra Small: <u>5 to 10 minute breaks</u>
    b. Small (end of each day): _____
    c. Medium (end of each week): _____
    d. Large (end of each month): _____
    e. Extra Large (end of each semester): _____

Tasks and Priority List

This Week	
Due	**Task**

Course (repeated vertically for each group)

Next Week	
Due	**Task**

Long Term	
Due	**Task**