

Managing Your Time

Are you having problems getting to class on time? Do you frequently rush to turn in your work, or miss project deadlines? Do you feel you have no time to study? If you have answered yes to the above questions, then you may have a time management problem. Being successful at Otis College of Art and Design, with its myriad of deadlines and multitude of projects is a challenge, but not an insurmountable one. Although there is no quick fix to becoming more time efficient, the following suggestions will assist you in understanding the best use of your time. Use the following methods to establish long term, intermediate and short term time goals.

Long Term Schedule – One per semester

Construct a schedule of your fixed commitments only. These are the obligations you are required to meet every week, such as: job hours, classes, church, organization meeting, etc.

Intermediate schedule – One per week

Make a short list of MAJOR EVENTS and AMOUNT OF WORK to be accomplished in each subject this week. This may include non-study activities. For example:

- Tuesday – Quiz at 12:30 in Art History
Ball game at 7:00
- Wednesday – Paper due in English
- Friday – Finish 40 pages of reading in Social Science

These events will change from week to week and it is important to make a new list each week. Sunday night may be a convenient time to make this list.

Short Term Schedule – One per day

On a small note card, either written the night before or in the morning, make out a daily schedule. Write down specifically what needs to be accomplished. For example:

Tuesday

- 8:30 – 9:00 Go to library for books
- 9:30 – 10:30 Preview notes for Art History quiz
- 4:30 Go to store for groceries

5:30 Pick up CJ for game
10:30 check email and phone messages

Carry this card with you and cross out each item as you accomplish it. Writing things down in this manner not only forces you to plan your time, but causes you to make a promise to yourself to do what you have written down.

Tips for Time Scheduling

It is the goal of every college student to be successful. However, many students are unaware that being successful at the collegiate level requires careful and effective utilization of time. Many times, students are away from home for the first time and have never had to schedule their own time. This feeling of "freedom" is a pitfall from which many students never escape.

Consider these constraints on your time. The average student is scheduled for fifteen or more hours of classroom time per week; in addition, the student is expected to average approximately two hours of preparation for each hour in the classroom. This means that at least forty-five hours per week are devoted school! That is a full time job. Of course these forty-five hours do not take into account the student's part-time job, family/friends, and social obligations. Therefore it is not unsurprising that the most common complaint from students is, "I just don't have enough time!"

When a student has more than one duty confronting him simultaneously, he will often fail to complete any of them. One method to counteract this inaction is to approach being a college student the way you would a job, looking for the most efficient way to do your work in the limited time you have. One of the best ways of being more time efficient is to create time schedules and to change our habits of time. Wasting or not wasting time has a lot to do with out patterns of behavior. Thus, a successful student is usually one who integrates a well-organized time schedule with discipline. The purpose of the schedule is not to make the student feel "boxed in," but to free the student from scholastic inefficiency and anxiety that is partially a by product of wasted time, inadequate planning, and hasty last minute studying.

One effective system for many students is to combine long-range and short-range planning. Thus, the student can generate a schedule for the semester and then prepare a more specific plan for two or three days at a time.

Long Range Schedule:

This is your semester schedule. Some suggestions for its development are as follows:

- ❖ **PLAN ENOUGH TIME FOR STUDY**
The college expects a student to average about two hours in studying (including library work, term papers, etc.) for each hour spent in the classroom. A genuinely high ability student may get by with less. However, many students would do well to plan for this two-for-one ratio.
- ❖ **STUDY AT THE SAME TIME EVERY DAY**
In so far as it is possible, a student should schedule certain hours which are used for studying almost every day in a habitual, systematic way. Having regular hours at least five days a week will make it easier to habitually follow the schedule and will assist the student in maintaining an active approach to study.
- ❖ **MAKE USE OF THE FREE HOURS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**
The hours between classes can be the most valuable study time, yet are frequently wasted. A student may effectively use these hours reviewing material and editing notes of the preceding class and/or studying the material to be discussed in the next class.
- ❖ **PLAN STUDY PERIODS TO FOLLOW CLASSES**
This should be done whenever possible. The next best procedure is to schedule the period for study immediately preceding the class. It is better to specify the particular course to be studied rather than merely marking "study" on the schedule.
- ❖ **PLAN FOR WEEKLY REVIEWS**
At least one hour each week for each class (separate from study time) should be scheduled for review time. The weekend is a good time for this.
- ❖ **LEAVE SOME UNSCHEDULED TIME FOR FLEXIBILITY**
This is important! Lack of flexibility is the major reason why schedules fail. Students tend to over-schedule themselves.
- ❖ **ALLOT TIME FOR PLANNED RECREATION, CAMPUS AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**
When a student plans his schedule, he should begin by listing the activities that come at fixed hours and cannot be changed. Examples of this are classes and studio, work, sleep, etc. Next, the student should schedule flexible time commitments. These hours can be interchanged with other hours if necessary. Recreational activities are planned last.

When forced to deviate from his schedule (which will invariably happen), the student should trade time rather than steal it from his schedule. So, if an unexpected guest visits at a time the student has reserved for study, he can substitute an equal amount of study time for the period set aside for recreation.