

Time Management

“In the traditional Indian view, humans do not always have to live by the clock. Nature has its own natural rhythms that signal the beginning and ending of things. So-called Indian time says that things begin when they are ready and end when they are finished.”

Whether or not you agree with this quote, it is important to remember that perceptions of time differ across cultures and even between individuals. For example, you may have friends who always arrive five minutes late, while you prefer to arrive five minutes early. Culturally speaking, predominantly European-American universities tend to operate on a stricter schedule. This may include definite start and ending times for classes and meetings, or specific due dates for assignments and projects. Because of this, time management is a useful skill to develop.

DISCUSSION: What challenges do you experience related to time management?

Barriers to Time Management

- 1) Self-Confidence:
 - “I don’t know if I can do this.”
 - “Am I taking on too much?”
- 2) Style and Structure:
 - Day person? Night person?
 - Do you work better in frequent, short bursts of time or one long period?
 - Do you plan ahead or work best under pressure?
 - Do you work better in groups or alone?
- 3) Lack of connection to the big picture:
 - “What is the point of all this work?”
 - Long-term goals need to be clear.
 - How will this grade affect me?
 - Where do you want to be in 5-10 years?
- 4) Procrastination:
 - Perfectionism – everything has to be perfect.
 - Fear of not doing well.
 - The project seems too big to tackle.
 - You get distracted by the details.
 - “This work doesn’t interest me or doesn’t relate to my major.”

Time Management Skills

1. Create a calendar or planner. Some people may prefer a pen-and-paper planner; some find electronic planners and apps to be more effective.
 - Due dates for homework as well as papers/projects
 - Exams
 - Breaks and holidays
 - Family events and dates with friends
 - Appointments (doctor, advising meetings, clubs, etc.)
2. Try to write down everything that comes up when it comes up so you don’t lose track of appointments or assignments.

3. Identify your most productive time of day by noticing when you feel your most energized, focused, and motivated. Perhaps it is early morning, the mid-day, or the evening.
4. Plan ahead! It is much better to get something done early than to have to try to concentrate under time pressure.
5. Complete more difficult or boring tasks first. Projects that are more of a challenge will be easier to complete when you are less fatigued.
6. Take larger projects that may seem overwhelming or too difficult to tackle and break them into smaller, more manageable parts to be completed over a course of time.
7. Learn to say “no” if you can’t afford the time. Anticipate your needs.
8. Set priorities. Although your priorities can change, it is a good idea to be honest with yourself about what activities, goals, and commitments matter most.
9. Make plenty of time for yourself. Self-care will set you up to make the most of the time that you do have.
 - Sleep
 - Exercise
 - Balanced diet
 - Hobbies
 - Spiritual or religious activities
 - Social (family and friends) time

****Take the Time Management Quiz at the following link:**

http://www.ucc.vt.edu/academic_support_students/online_study_skills_workshops/time_management_strategies/

Resources on Campus

**The Office of Student Success
177 SUB or 406.994.7627**

<http://www.montana.edu/success/learningstrategies/index.php>

The Office of Student Success offers learning strategies to help you reach your full potential. They strive to motivate and empower students to succeed academically, personally, and professionally through practical and efficient learning strategies. The learning strategies team offers individual and group appointments, as well as workshops for study skills, test anxiety, time management, critical thinking, and more.

**Counseling & Psychological Services
211 Swingle or 406.994.4531**

<http://www.montana.edu/counseling/selfhelp/online.html>

Counseling & Psychological Services provides FREE and CONFIDENTIAL services to students taking at least 6 credits. If you are interested in working more individually on time management, procrastination, or motivation issues, call or stop by to set up an appointment. You may also want to consider joining one of our drop-in workshops on time management or visit our website link above to learn more under the self-help link.

