TIME MANAGEMENT Strategies

An important step to studying effectively and efficiently is to manage your time appropriately. This may seem like an unnecessary step, but you will find that through managing your time you will create more free time and significantly reduce your stress levels and chances of burning out. You may also find that you are more motivated to complete your tasks (maybe even ahead of time!).

Time management requires planning and discipline. You can use different types of schedules to organize your time. Here are a few that we recommend:

Long Term Schedules

- Monthly Schedule
- Term Schedule

In general, make sure you include:

- Assignment deadlines, appointments, social events, application deadlines.
- Use colour to distinguish between different types of events (e.g. Blue for tests).
- Use a large wall calendar or print off 4 separate sheets with each month on them so you can visually see your commitments over a longer period.

Short Term Schedules

- Weekly Schedules
  - When creating a weekly schedule, be specific.
    - Detail how you will use the hours in your day throughout the week.
    - Include classes, meal times, study periods, meetings, etc.
    - Prepare an updated schedule the night before the beginning of the week.
    - Use different colours to help identify different types of commitments.
    - Don't forget to schedule in time for meals, socializing, travel time and relaxation. This is key in preventing burn out!

- Tasks Lists
  - If you find a weekly schedule too restrictive, use a task list.
    - Create a new task list at the beginning of each day or week.
    - Prioritize each item on your list.
    - Assign an amount of time to each task.
    - Check off the activities you have completed.

When planning your short term schedule try to schedule more time for activities to build flexibility into your schedule.
Prioritizing

There are many ways you can prioritize. Having a clear idea of what the priority level of each task is will help you work on the more difficult tasks first. Here are a few ways you can prioritize:

- Number your tasks from more important to least important then re-write them in that order.
- Group your tasks into what needs to be done (A) immediately, (B) soon and (C) what can wait. Then prioritize the tasks in each group from one to five, one being the most important and five being the least. When you are done, re-write your tasks list.
- Prioritize according to what needs to be done in each class, in what order.
- Prioritize which classes / events are most important.

Don't forget to REVIEW your schedule/task regularly.
Revisiting your schedule will help you to:

- Determine how realistic it was
- Identify where you are wasting your time
- Decide if the amount of time you allocated was appropriate
- Realistically plan for future events

Effective time management takes practice. By creating, committing to, and regularly reviewing your schedule you will boost your own efficiency. Not only will you complete your prioritized tasks, but you will also be able to create time for fun and relaxation.