TIME MANAGEMENT

IGERT Professional Development
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TIME MANAGEMENT = WORKING EFFECTIVELY

1 day = 24 hrs

Must sleep, eat, breathe, exercise, see family & friends

Where does the time come from?

Good News: You have more time than you think you have.
REFLECT

- Where do you do your best work?
- When do you do your best work?
- What’s the environment like? Noisy or quiet?
- Do you work best alone or in a group?
- What is the most difficult/cognitively challenging/important work that you have to do in a given week?

- Ask successful people around you: how do you schedule your work?
TIPS FOR TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR SCHEDULE

✦ Block off time for work/writing/research tasks like you block off time for class

✦ Schedule your hardest/most important tasks during times when you have the most mental resources

✦ Try not to let other obligations intrude (this gets easier as you get more power, aka a faculty job)

✦ Self care: Block off time for other important things—lunch with friends, exercise, etc.
### A Personal Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 - 9</td>
<td>L-COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 12p</td>
<td>Office hours: make midterm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – Heidi o</td>
<td>lllana</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 – Xin</td>
<td>L-COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – Stephanie</td>
<td>L-COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 12:30p</td>
<td>GAIN: ROI dump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15 – 12:05p</td>
<td>LAB MEETING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30p – 1:30p</td>
<td>SLHS Colloquium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30p – 2:30p</td>
<td>Xin Record Sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3p – Kristen Fagan A</td>
<td>Lecture on Time Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30p – 4:30p</td>
<td>Psych Colloquium</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30p – 5p</td>
<td>Enroute Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 – 10:30</td>
<td>GAIN FINALIZE</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 – Lisa Mueller t</td>
<td>lllana</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 – Navin</td>
<td>L-COM</td>
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<tr>
<td>12p – Sayako fMRI</td>
<td>L-COM</td>
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<tr>
<td>1p – Julia Drouin</td>
<td>L-COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2p – 3p</td>
<td>A40 Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30p – 3:30p</td>
<td>Phonetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30p – 2p</td>
<td>Aslin talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>3p – sahil</td>
<td>L-COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30p – 1:30p</td>
<td>SLHS Colloquium</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:20p – 1:10p</td>
<td>Talk Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30p – 2:30p</td>
<td>Xin Record Sentences</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30p – 3:30p</td>
<td>Phonetics</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30p – 6p</td>
<td>SLHS Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30p – 4:2</td>
<td>PAC</td>
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<tr>
<td>4p – 5p</td>
<td>Lecture on Time Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30p – 4:30p</td>
<td>Psych Colloquium</td>
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PRO (FACULTY) TIPS FOR SCHEDULE CONTROL

◆ Consider return on investment
◆ “I could spend a lot of time making these slides pretty for my presentation on time management—but how much will that matter?”
◆ For some of us, teaching is one thing that can grab a disproportionate share

◆ Schedule student meetings strategically
◆ In blocks
◆ 30 minutes? 15 minutes? An hour?
WORKING MORE EFFECTIVELY: WHAT DOES PSYCHOLOGY TELL US?

Encoding Specificity
Positive and Negative Reinforcement
Cooling Hot Stimuli (a.k.a. minimizing distraction)
Social Pressures
ENCODING SPECIFICITY

The immediate physical environment is a cue to memory

If possible, work in the same location on the same projects

- Working on your grant at the same chair in the same desk will help you more quickly retrieve the information you were working on
POSITIVE & NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

Positive Feedback: REWARDS
- “If I can get 500 words written in the next 30 minutes, I can have five M&Ms.”

Negative Feedback: PENALTIES
- “I can’t watch Mad Men until my Specific Aims are done.”
MINIMIZING DISTRACTION

“A wealth of information creates a poverty of attention”

- HERBERT SIMON

http://xkcd.com
MINIMIZING DISTRACTIONS: DON’T RELY ON WILLPOWER ALONE

Choose your location wisely
- Your office? The library? A coffee shop?

Limit the options
- Turn off email
- Turn off distracting sites
- Turn off your cell phone
- Turn off the internet!

Don’t work with time-sinkers
FOR EXAMPLE: STAYFOCUSD
SOCIAL PRESSURES

Support each other

- Set deadlines, and share your goals with your friends, labmates, classmates, family (even advisor)
- Root for each other, generate consequences

If there’s something you’ll only do with a gun to your head . . .

. . . it helps if someone else is holding the gun.
ONE EXAMPLE: THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE

GOAL: work in intense 25 minute intervals (“pomodoro”), 5 minute break after each

Organize your to-do list—break into pieces you can do in one--four 25-minute intervals

Look at your schedule—how many ‘pomodoros’ do you have available today? (BLOCK OFF MEALS)

From your to-do list, select tasks that equal the # of pomodoros you actually have available, put them on your daily schedule in order (hard stuff first)
HOW TO WRITE A LOT

• Building a writing habit
  – Block off time in your schedule for writing, write during that time *whether you have a deadline or not!*
  – Do it frequently: maybe an hour at a time three times a week

• Write when you write best
  – Morning? Evening? After lunch (probably not)
  – PUT THE TIME IN YOUR SCHEDULE, PROTECT THAT TIME
THE WRITING PROCESS

Step 1: Outline

Step 2: Fill out the outline as if you barely speak English—the point is to get things down on the page

Step 3: Revise and revisit

Recommendation: Set # of words written goals for each 30 minute chunk!
WRITING STRATEGIES

Divide writing into manageable chunks:

- BAD GOAL: Write the introduction to my paper
- GOOD GOAL: Write one paragraph reviewing the literature on perceptual learning for speech
- If any chunk seems too daunting, divide it into smaller pieces!

The writer’s support group

- Regular weekly meeting to review goals, update on progress, even do some writing!

Choose an impoverished location for writing (no internet access, for instance)
TECH TOOLS FOR ACADEMIC PRODUCTIVITY

• Note-taking
  – Evernote

• Managing projects from multiple locations
  – Dropbox & Google Docs

• Reference management
  – End Note
  – Zotero
  – Menedley
  – Papers

• Keeping up with the literature
  • RSS feeds

• Lifehacker

• Your own tips?
PROJECT/LAB MANAGEMENT TIPS

▶ Create a pyramid scheme: undergrads are supervised by grad students, who are supervised by faculty member
▶ Delegate anything you can reasonably delegate
▶ Have mutually-accessible repositories for lab tasks / experiment design documents, etc. Google Docs? Trello?
▶ Be anal-retentive about record keeping
▶ Be anal-retentive about record keeping
▶ Any meeting should have an agenda.