



Figure 1 Logos for the Academic Resource Center and The Writing Center

TIME MANAGEMENT AND STUDY SKILLS

People aren't born knowing how to be good students. Adopting good study skills takes practice and dedication, but anyone can become a good student. The two most important things that all good students share are effective *time management* and strong *study skills*.

Time Management and Setting Goals:

There are only 24 hours in a day, and managing those hours effectively is the key to gaining success as a student. The following are suggestions for getting organized and managing your time:

Set Goals

- ❑ When you start a class, figure out how well you want to do, and visualize it. If you see yourself getting an A, you are more likely to achieve your goal.
- ❑ When you feel like slacking off, and you will, remind yourself that each small task is a step toward your goal. Reward yourself for completing tasks.



Figure 2 A cartoon image of a clock

Get Organized

- ❑ Write out your goals. Once you have written something down, it becomes your plan of attack. Write them in pencil, so you can make changes when necessary. Cross off accomplished tasks; don't erase. Seeing what you've already done encourages you to keep working.
- ❑ Get a planner! Planners are great for keeping track of assignments and progress. With all assignments written down in the same place, you are

less likely to forget about an assignment. Planners also have calendars for planning large assignments.

- ❑ Set up a priority system. Mark your daily assignments on a scale of importance from one to ten, one being the most important, and then do the important work first. Homework that is due tomorrow would get a one, homework that is due next week would get a two, and so on.



Figure 3 A cartoon of a thinking student

Time Management

- ❑ You do not want to end up with a ten page paper to write the day before it is due, so plan ahead. Use your calendar to break your paper up into manageable chunks – research sessions, outline, draft, and final paper. Have your final paper done a few days early, and bring it in to the Writing Center for any extra help.
- ❑ Allow yourself approximately two hours to study for every hour you spend in class. It sounds like a lot, but remember your goals!
- ❑ Plan your study time for when you are most alert. Some people learn better in the morning, some at night. Which one are you?
- ❑ Study in short sessions. You remember more from ten one-hour sessions than from one ten-hour session because you do not overload your brain.
- ❑ Study the difficult or boring subjects first when you have more energy. Saving your favorite subject for last makes you more likely to finish.
- ❑ Use your down time. When you are doing laundry or waiting for the bus is a great time to get reading assignments out of the way. Remember, short sessions are better for retention.
- ❑ Tell your friends and family that you are studying and need to be undisturbed. Turn off the TV, and radio *and* the telephone during study time. Anyone who calls can leave a message.
- ❑ Use the resources that are available to you! The Internet, school library and the Writing Center are all there to help you achieve your goals.

Exercise:

Plan for the following two assignments for the month of April with your group. Make sure to keep in mind how much each assignment is worth in your overall grade in the given class.

Assignment #1: A quiz in your History class covering four chapters worth of material (the chapters are about the same length). The quiz is worth fifteen percent of the overall grade. Date: April 16.

Assignment #2: During the month of April there is an Andy Warhol exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA). Go to the exhibit and find one piece of art that you particularly like. After you attend the museum, go online and research Warhol himself **and** the specific piece you have chosen. Then write a two to three page paper including and short biography of Warhol, an overall evaluation of the exhibit, and your interpretation of the chosen piece. Typed. MLA Format. The essay will be worth fifty percent of your grade. Due Date: April 27.



Figure 4 A cartoon drawing of a date planner

APRIL						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Study Skills:

In addition to managing your time, there are tricks to get more out of the time you spend studying. They can help you learn more in less time.

Reading

- ❑ Preview the material. Look through the table of contents and skim through the section of the chapters to get an idea of what you will be reading. This prepares your brain to absorb the information.
- ❑ Before you start reading, know what you want to get from the chapter. Reading with a plan helps you skip over irrelevant facts and focus on what is important for the lesson.
- ❑ Read actively. Underline passages and take notes on the chapter. Write questions or thoughts in the margins, and use a dictionary to look up unfamiliar terms. Make note of concepts you have trouble with and ask your professor or other students for help.
- ❑ When you have finished reading, recite what you have learned to yourself in your own words to see how well you understand the material.

Taking Notes

- ❑ Come to class prepared. The professor is going to assume that you are keeping up with the reading and the homework and lecture accordingly. If you aren't keeping up, you will feel even more lost than if you just don't understand the subject.
- ❑ If you know the teacher is lecturing on a chapter of the book, read the chapter before you come to class. This way, you have a better understanding of what is being said and you will already have your questions for the professor.
- ❑ Sit in the front of the class, sit up straight, and pay attention. Ask questions if you don't understand something and don't be afraid to speak up in class.
- ❑ The professor will let you know what is important if you know how to look for it. If they repeat something, write it on the board, or say, "This will be on the test," write it down!
- ❑ After class, go over your notes within the next 24 hours. You will retain more information this way! Try to connect the information with what you've read and with previous lectures.



Figure 5 A cartoon drawing of a light bulb

Preparing for and Taking Tests

- ❑ Form a study group. Two heads are better than one, and five heads are even better. Your professor may be able to help you get one together.
- ❑ Review daily. Cramming the night before a test is the worst way to prepare. Reviewing your notes and reading frequently will help you retain

much more information and understand it better, which will help you more on test day.

- On the day of the test, come to class well rested, sit where you usually sit during lectures, and relax!

Tips for Taking Multiple Choice Tests

1. Scan the test first to familiarize yourself with the questions.
2. Try to come up with an answer before looking at the choices.
3. Eliminate any answers that are obviously wrong.
4. Don't be fooled by an "obvious" answer that may be a trick.
5. If two answers seem identical, they are probably both wrong.

Tips for Taking Essay Exams

1. Make a list of all of the information you can recall that should be included in your answer.
2. Put your ideas in order by writing a number next to the items on your list.
3. Write your first paragraph, including key points you will cover in your essay.
4. Write as legibly as you can.
5. Leave yourself time at the end of the exam to reread your essay and make any necessary changes.

This handout is based on the following texts:

Allen, Jane E. "When Drivers Get a Busy Signal." [LaTimes.com](http://www.latimes.com/technology/la-he-drivers3feb03004428,0,8003.story?coll=la%2Dheadlines%2Dtechnology) 3 Feb. 2003. 4 Feb. 2003
<[http://www.latimes.com/technology/la-he-](http://www.latimes.com/technology/la-he-drivers3feb03004428,0,8003.story?coll=la%2Dheadlines%2Dtechnology)

[drivers3feb03004428,0,8003.story?coll=la%2Dheadlines%2Dtechnology](http://www.latimes.com/technology/la-he-drivers3feb03004428,0,8003.story?coll=la%2Dheadlines%2Dtechnology)>.

Fry, Ron. How to Study. 5th ed. Franklin Lakes: Career, 2000.

Smith, Laurence N. and Timothy L. Walter. The Mountain is High: Unless You Take the Elevator. Belmont: Wadsworth, 1992.

Walter, Timothy L., et al. Student Success: how to Succeed in College and Still Have Time for Your Friends. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 2000.

For further reference, see also:

Langan, John. Reading and Study Skills. 5th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 1992.

All of the above texts are available in The Writing Center.