Time (Self) Management
Instructions

The following module should take approximately two hours to complete. Included are six exercises that should be completed in the assigned order.

After you complete all of the exercises, e-mail the entire packet to your instructor as a word document. Incomplete packets will not be accepted. Include your name, course and CRN on each answer sheet and identify the exercise, such as:

Robert Jones
GUST 0101
CRN 89325
Exercise 1

There are no “right or wrong” answers. The exercises focus on self-evaluation. By the time you complete the entire module, you should be able to determine if you “really” know:

“What time is it anyway?”
Can we really manage time? Of course not. Time is one of life’s few constants. One of my mother’s favorite adages was: “Time does not wait on anyone. Whether you do something with it or not, time moves on. How you use it is up to you.” So really we are not addressing time management, but self management.

To be successful in college you have to effectively manage your time/self. The basis of effective time management is setting and completing priorities. So why is it so difficult to establish and maintain such an easy concept? Some of the reasons that occurred to me include:

• I don’t have enough time.

• I’m doing ok with my schedule.

• It doesn’t work for me.

• I make a "to do" list and forget about the list.
Exercise # 1

Make a list of the reasons you have problems with time management.
Each semester I begin my classes by telling my students that the key to success in college is knowing what time it is. I ask if there is anyone present who does not know how to tell time. This question causes laughter and students say yes, they know how to tell time. I respond, “OK then, you should be successful.” You have to know when it is study time and when it is play time.

Students who do not know what time it is are generally unsuccessful. They play when they should study and study when they should play. Yes, you should schedule “play” time. Some students spend most of the semester socializing; then as the semester draws to a close, I see them cramming for finals or bombarding the library to complete end of semester projects. However, students who have managed their time/self well throughout the semester appear confident and at ease as the semester ends.
Managing Our Roles

Self-management begins with recognizing that we are individuals with numerous roles. We are students, parents, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, spouses/partners, friends, employees, employers, members of community/religious/social organizations, etc. All of these are important roles that require your time, but there is only one you. Your success requires that you effectively manage your time/self.

Exercise #2 Make a list of your primary roles.
Critical thinkers plan for success!

Exercise #3

Interview three people whom you know well and you consider successful. (The person can be a parent, spouse, friend, co-worker, another student, etc.) You can use the following questions for the interview:

- Do you use a daily, weekly, and/or monthly planner or “to do” list? If so, how do you prioritize your schedule?

- How do you manage your time to meet both your personal and professional commitments?

- What do you recommend that students do to best manage their time?

- Write one paragraph on each person and discuss his/her time (self) management strategies. Include one to two sentences in which you discuss habits, strategies that you should start to use or improve in order to better manage your time (self).
Goal Setting

Before you can successfully manage your time as a student, you need to define and set realistic goals. Your goals, most likely, will change, but none will be completed without a plan.

Many students are unaware that they are going to college simply to go to college. They have not established clear goals for themselves.
Exercise #4 Answer the following questions:

- Are you enrolled in college to pursue a particular program of study or to complete a defined set of courses? If so, what is the program, or what are the courses?

- How long should it take to complete the program?

- What courses do you need to complete each semester in order to accomplish your goal?
In order to set goals you must:

- Have a plan
- Have a system to accomplish the plan
- Be in control of your time/self

Goals should be defined based on:

**Long term** – what you plan to accomplish in the next few years or beyond, such as completion of your program of study

**Short term** – stepping stones to achieving the long term goals, such as completion of the courses you are enrolled in this semester

**Immediate** – daily, weekly steps to accomplish your short term goals, such as study time, completion of assignments, etc.
Daily Planners/ “To Do” Lists

- Immediate and short term goals are more easily met with the use of planners and “to do” lists. You should maintain daily, weekly, and monthly calendars. Check off the goals as you complete them. You will see how much you actually accomplish.

- Prioritize the daily list, starting with the most important objectives for the day. Use the weekly and monthly calendar to chart and complete goals for each week and month. Align your calendar with the semester. Instructors provide a syllabus/calendar at the beginning of the semester that provides important information about major exam dates, due dates for major projects, weekly assignments, etc. Check the course schedule for final exam dates and times and include this information on your calendar. Students have missed my final exams because they never checked the syllabus or calendar!
## Sample Weekly Planner

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Be sure to leave some open spaces in your schedule or schedule open time for yourself. The easiest way to overwhelm yourself is to over schedule and not leave time for you! Remember you are involved in multiple roles; your success in each role depends on you! Give yourself some free time.

If you compile daily and weekly to “do lists”, but never complete the items on the list, are you effectively managing your time/ self?
Exercise #5

Answer Yes or No to the following questions to determine how effectively you are managing yourself/your time:

1. Do you complete daily and or weekly to “do lists”?
2. Do you plan time for study?
3. Do you allow your answering machine or voice mail to pick up calls during your study time? Do you turn off your cell phone during your study time?
4. Do you start to work on assignments as soon as they are given?
5. Are you rested when you study?
6. Do you usually feel that you have enough time to complete your assignments?
7. Do you take “short” study breaks?
8. Do you easily decide which work to complete first?
9. Do you limit the time you spend on the Internet or email when you still have assignments that you have not completed?
10. Have you scheduled your course load wisely? (Consider the number of courses you are taking, number of hours you work per week, number of hours you spend in social activities each week, etc.)

Answers: Yes = effective time/self management in relation to your studies

No = ineffective time/self management in relation to your studies
How to improve time/self management:

1. We all function in multiple roles. Look for opportunities to incorporate more than one at a time. For example, in the math class look for ways to incorporate the concept that you are studying at work, at home, or teach the principle to a child, etc. Look for opportunities to write papers on subjects that relate to your major, current work assignment, or current issues in your family. Last semester one of my students wrote a definition essay on Alzheimer’s, its effect on his grandmother, his family, and his understanding of the illness.

2. Have fun- Laugh. It sounds trite, but it is true. Learning is fun. Expect it and look for it. Learn to laugh at your mistakes and move on.
3. Identify your best times for concentration and study during those times. Are you a morning or night person? Use your non-peak time for routine tasks such as cleaning, washing the car, etc.

4. Identify appropriate study places.

5. Include time for sleeping and eating properly.

6. Use “down” time effectively. If you have an hour break between classes, use 30 minutes to review notes or work on short assignments. At work use your break or lunch time two to three days a week to read or study.
7. Complete difficult assignments first.

8. Don’t try to study for extended periods of time without taking short breaks. It is better to study twice a day for an hour or two at a time (include short breaks), than to schedule four hours of non-stop study.

9. Schedule time for yourself **and** time for entertainment. Don’t put entertainment first on your daily/weekly to do list. It is part of who you are; manage it; don’t allow it to manage you.

10. Don’t postpone your study time to socialize or to assist others with situations that do not require your immediate attention.
Exercise # 6

Use the weekly planner to chart your time for the past week. As you are enrolled in this course, you have already identified college as something that is important to you.

Use your chart to write a one-two page summary that discusses how you are currently managing your time/self in relation to your college work. Is there a gap between what you have identified as important (college) and the way you spend your time? If so, discuss what changes you need to make to better manage your time/self. Also use your answers from exercises 1-5 to assist you.
What time is it anyway?