

A message from your Student Wellness Program: 732-235-5933

Time Management Skills*

With the new school year in full-swing, now is a great time to examine different options available to you in managing possible congested academic schedules currently being experienced. For example, you may feel as though there aren't enough hours in the day to accomplish everything that needs to get done. Similarly, you may have even noticed that "me" time doesn't quite exist anymore. Listed below are some tips that you might find helpful as you balance the many demands of academia while still working to make time for YOU!

- ✓ **Take a step back and evaluate how your time is allocated** – Break down your schedule (monthly/weekly/daily/hourly) to see how you *actually* spend your time. Try to identify if there are times during the day you might reorganize and possibly enhance your individual efficiency. For example, are you making multiple trips to campus each day that could be consolidated to avoid losing time commuting? Perhaps, you can try different studying sites to uncover an optimal study site for you? Do you know what to expect of your schedule each day or are you making decisions on how to use your time at the last minute? Would using a planner or calendar help keep your events, exams, and activities more organized?
- ✓ **Make a wish list** – Once you have evaluated how your time is spent, reevaluate and identify how you would *like* your time to be allocated. Is there anything that you can let go or say "No" to? Are there activities that are important to you that you would like to find a way to include in your schedule?
- ✓ **Set goals and deadlines** – Recognize it's important to be realistic in your goal-setting to allow for continued success. Identify reasonable goals and identify what you will need to do to accomplish them. Break larger goals down to smaller and more manageable ones. Set a time or date to accomplish each goal and strive to meet each deadline. Make a checklist and cross each task out as it's completed. Prioritize your list to allow for the most important/difficult tasks to be completed first.
- ✓ **Pay attention to your environment** – Try to identify factors that help you to stay focused on your work. Do you study better late at night or early in the morning? Do you stay focused easier in silence or with music in the background? Do you get more accomplished in the library or in your bedroom? If you study better at night, is there a way to simulate darkness during the day by blacking out any windows and turning a light on to increase opportunities for studying? Would it be helpful to identify a study partner as another form of study?
- ✓ **Make use of wasted time** – Always be prepared for unexpected down-time with pocket work, short reading assignments, flash cards for studying, or make a plan identifying your goals for the rest of the day while you are waiting in lines, commuting, sitting in your doctor's office, or waiting for class to begin.
- ✓ **Be flexible** – Remember that interruptions and distractions are sometimes unavoidable. If possible, add extra time into your schedule to allow for the unexpected.
- ✓ **Utilize your resources** – Learn what resources are available around you. If you recognize your study habits might be improved by a makeover, contact the Cognitive Skills Program. If you are feeling overwhelmed or are having difficulty managing the stress you are encountering, the Student Wellness Program is just a phone call away. Remember the Office of Student Affairs and the Student Peer Mentors are available to assist you as well.
- ✓ **Take time for YOU** – Even if it's just ten minutes a day, be sure to allow time to take a few deep breaths, evaluate your progress, and take a break. Take the opportunity to check-in with your social supports, to connect with your spiritual self, or to engage in an activity you enjoy. Eating well and sleeping on a regular schedule (or as regular as possible) also promotes well-being. We are most productive when we attend to our individual physical and emotional needs.

Please call the SWP at 732-235-5933 to schedule an appointment; both day and evening appointments are available.

UMDNJ-University Behavioral HealthCare
220 Old New Brunswick Road, Suite #104
Piscataway, NJ 08854

For those of you who elect to be seen on the Piscataway Campus, an appointment can be arranged at 671 Hoes Lane, Room #C-122-B; please alert the receptionist of your preferred meeting site at the time of the call.

*Adapted from Kuther, T. (2008). Manage Your Time: Time Management for Graduate Students. About.com, The New York Times Company.