“If Only There Were More Time…”
The fast-paced American society has many people repeating this phrase, on a daily basis. Today many individuals often find themselves hoping for just a few more hours in the day to complete a task, study for an exam, hang out with friends, or just relax. As lifestyles become even busier, it is important to prepare for the occasions when it will seem impossible to get anything done. By organizing time more efficiently you will find that you are able to meet more deadlines, have more free time, and lead a well-balanced life.

Why Set Priorities?
In order to manage time more efficiently, it is important to determine how time is currently spent. You may find that you are spending too much time on tasks that are less important and do not require immediate attention. Create a list of all the tasks/activities you perform each day for a seven-day period. Then rate how much you value each task. If you find that you are filling each day with a lot of unimportant tasks, you may want to re-evaluate how your time is being managed and reprioritize your goals.

Overcoming Procrastination
Make class time your best time
• At least survey the assignments if there is no time to read them in their entirety
• Listen attentively
• Paraphrase what the professor says in your own words

Make a daily list
• Keep it short (5 or 6 items) – both academic and personal
• Set small, specified goals (e.g., read 5 pages in Psychology chapter)

Stay organized by carrying a daily planner
• Be sure to record exam dates, important deadlines, meetings, appointments, errands, and reminders for your classes
• Keep track of work and extracurricular activities, as well as housekeeping duties, sleeping, and eating
• Schedule study time at a ratio of two hours of study per one credit hour of class

Use daylight hours and minutes
• Find a quiet place to study
• Use time between classes
• Review notes right before class
• Review notes right after class
• Don’t let questions about the material accumulate

Concentrate on one problem at a time
• Be active in what is going on at the time
• Plan to take a 5-10 minute study break after every 30-40 minutes of concentrated study

Common Myths
Before exploring specific time-management techniques, consider several common myths which contribute to poor time management.

Myth: Life is completely controlled by external events.
Fact: You can have control over many aspects of your life, but you and you alone are responsible for initiating that control. Learn to recognize what you can and can’t control before making your choices. Anticipate the future and clarify the external demands that must be faced. From there, it is easier to determine what can be done and within what time frame, despite the demands.

Myth: I should meet everyone’s expectations.
Fact: The needs and demands of others may be inappropriate for you and your lifestyle. They may be poorly timed, highly questionable, or simply unattainable. They may also be of a different priority than your own. By trying to meet the expectations of others, you may be shortchanging yourself and your needs. First become clear about what your needs are and then consider what others expect of you.

Myth: I should have no limits.
Fact: We all need limits…failure to acknowledge this may cause you to become a perfectionist in your expectations. Perfectionists are especially prone to procrastination because the perfection they demand is often impossible to achieve. For example, no paper will ever be perfect in all ways. The immediate consequence of turning in an imperfect paper may be brief, acute anxiety, but the long-term consequences of procrastination (e.g., inconveniences, academic or career losses, and lingering self-doubts) are usually more devastating.
Managing Time More Efficiently

1. Use biological rhythms to your advantage Identify the time of day when your energy levels are highest and do your most important work at that time. For example, if you work best in the morning, do not plan all your studying for the evening.

2. Optimize the work environment
Keep things that are needed in the work area and make sure the physical environment is conducive to concentration, not just comfort. For example, some people work best in a quiet setting while others work best with background music; some work best amidst clutter, while others need a cleared desk or table, etc. Find what works best for you!

3. Safeguard blocks of work time
Protect time by saying "no" to various interruptions, activities, requests, or persons. Interruptions reduce effectiveness. Some interruptions can be avoided by keeping in mind the following:
- Arrange your work area so your back is to the traffic flow
- Keep doors closed
- Find and use a special space or an office away from others
- Unplug the phone, or let the answering machine pick up calls; return telephone calls when it is more convenient, perhaps during a study break