

STUDY HINTS

Time management is an essential key to both academic and professional success. One of the biggest downfalls for students is not knowing how to use their time efficiently and properly. The following suggestions will address strategies to use your time to its ultimate capacity and most importantly will give you permission to say “no” to outside distractions. The goal is to teach students pathways to achieve personal goals and work to their fullest potential.

One of the first things a student should invest in is a planner. It is critical to plan every hour of your day, seven days a week, one week in advance. Depending on your individual needs, allow yourself seven to ten hours of sleep nightly. Second, eat three healthy meals a day. Without an efficient amount of sleep or health eating habits, it is difficult to work to your fullest potential. Third, allow yourself one night out per week and any other four hour period which can be broken down into one or more time slots. Do not include eating, working out, religious participation or one extra-curricular activity (e.g., organization, work) as part of this time. Now that you have scheduled your individual time, you need to plan your academics.

There is a correlation between time spent on a task and reward and outcome. Therefore it is important to use your time wisely when studying. It is not sufficient to read the assigned chapter from your professor and close the book; it is very unlikely that you will be able to fully comprehend the information you have read. **Everything read needs to be outlined.** The goal is to condense the concepts and ideas from the readings, and outlining can help you achieve this goal. When outlining, draw a line vertically down the middle of the page. Use half of the page for the formal notes, and then use the second half for your comments. You **must** spend one hour weekly in a library doing supplemental reading for each of your courses. Either Friday afternoon or Saturday morning review all of your notes and outlines from the beginning of the semester up to date. You should be **reviewing** for a test, and not learning information for the first time. Also, take advantage of study buddies and study groups.

Writing papers plays a large role in your academics. It is important to outline your paper before it is written. Your paper should have a bibliography, footnotes, thesis statement, conclusion and spelling and grammar checks. Bring your typed paper to your professor or to the Educational Resource Center (Center for Student Services, 100 Bay State Road) a week **before** it is due. If you are absolutely unable to have anyone review your paper, then as a last option you should read your paper aloud. Reading it silently to yourself makes you more likely to miss mistakes.

By scheduling your time specifically you are giving yourself permission to say “no” to other distractions. For example, if you know on Tuesday from 4:00pm until 6:00pm you have scheduled study time, then you can say “no” to your friends to go to the mall. You can, however, let them know that Saturday night is your one night out if they would like to do something then. These habits can only help improve your academics, allow time for other activities, and eventually can carry over into your professional career.

In addition to implementing these study habits, Pre-Law Advising encourages you to become familiar with the services offered by the Boston University Educational Resource Center (ERC). The ERC’s services include Peer Tutoring, the Writing Center, as well as numerous workshops on how to become more successful academically. For more information on the ERC visit their website: <http://www.bu.edu/erc>.