

C H A P T E R 1

Creating Academic Success

FOCUS QUESTIONS

What are the three essential ingredients of a system of study?

Why is each important?

How am I going to apply each?

CHAPTER TERMS

After reading this chapter, define (in your own words) and provide an example for each of the following terms:

- active learning behaviors
- extrinsic reward
- intrinsic reward
- learning style
- passive learning behaviors
- Personal Action Statement



A System of Study: The Essential Ingredients

As a college student, you no doubt have experienced—or will experience—approaches toward instruction and requirements for learning unlike your previous years of education. Recent high school graduates often welcome the greater personal and social freedoms associated with college life. However, along with these freedoms come challenges. No longer does a teacher or a parent oversee your learning; at the postsecondary level, you, the student, are expected to be a self-directed and self-motivated learner.

For the nontraditional student, college life offers a different set of challenges: Returning to school after a hiatus often creates a complicated juggling act among job, family, and academic responsibilities. Whatever the personal circumstances, individual students require their own set of learning strategies to meet the multifaceted challenges encountered at the college level effectively. This text provides you, the student, with the tools for developing these strategies so that you become a self-directed learner and are able to achieve academic success throughout your college career.

By the time you enter college, you have developed a system of study based on three essential ingredients:

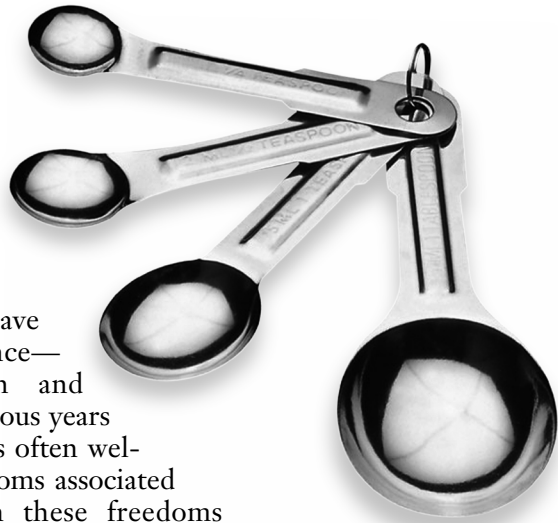
1. Your learning behaviors
2. Your learning attitudes
3. Your learning style

Each of these is discussed in the following sections.

Your Learning Behaviors

The term *learning behaviors* refer to a variety of actions done in an academic situation. These learning behaviors combine to form your system of study. Note that some behaviors are conducive to learning, such as arriving at class several minutes early with notepaper and pen, sitting in the front and middle of a classroom, listening attentively and selectively, asking questions to clarify points, reviewing notes after class, seeking out help when needed, and so on. These are termed **active learning behaviors** because they represent self-responsibility, initiative, and involvement in the learning process. Active learning behaviors lead to successful outcomes—that is, high grades and a smooth path toward graduation.

In contrast, a host of behaviors impede learning, such as skipping classes, sleeping during class, yielding to distractions, studying after social and leisure



activities, and not seeking assistance. These are termed **passive learning behaviors**. Students exhibiting these behaviors do *not* take charge of their learning. Passive learners often are not accustomed to working hard in school; they tend to devote minimal time and effort in their academic life.

This text will introduce you to active learning behaviors at the college level. Each chapter focuses on a group of active learning behaviors—or strategies—related to a major study skills topic. Principal elements of each topic are labeled “Essential Ingredients.” Within each chapter you will be given choices of which behaviors, or strategies, you will put into practice as you engage in your day-to-day college course work.

Your Learning Attitudes



our attitude toward all aspects of academic life (going to class, interacting with the instructors, completing assignments, studying) has a huge impact on your accomplishments in college. Successful college students exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Motivation.** They *want* to achieve and are determined to reach their academic goals.
- **Persistence.** They do not let hurdles block personal achievement. When problems arise, they seek out help and persevere until a satisfactory solution is reached.
- **Self-Discipline.** They are willing to make the necessary sacrifices and devote the necessary efforts to receive that college degree.
- **A Personal Support Network.** They have at least one family member or close friend they can rely on for personal encouragement and support. Likewise, they tend to associate with peers who are responsible and caring.

How many of these characteristics do you exhibit at this point in your college career? As you read the upcoming chapters in this text, you will be exploring your outlook toward the many aspects of college life and determining if your attitudes work *for* or *against* your immediate and long-term successes.

A note about online courses: Because distance education can be a very anonymous and independent process, your level of motivation, persistence, and self-discipline are especially important. Oftentimes students enroll in online courses for reasons that work *against* their success. For example, they are disinterested in the subject, want to get the course out of the way, or think distance education courses are easier than face-to-face instruction. You are much more likely to do well in online course work if you assume the mind-set of “What can I learn?” as opposed to “How little can I do to pass?”

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Keep in mind that in college, *you* will be determining your own academic path; thus it is up to you to take responsibility for your successes—or failures. This mission of self-determination and responsibility can be accomplished by an awareness of *why* you are here, *what* you want to accomplish, and *how* you can develop a viewpoint that contributes to personal success.



pause... and reflect

- What motivates *you* to achieve?
- Are you persistent when faced with a problem or stumbling block? Provide a personal example.
- Research indicates that self-discipline is more important than I.Q. in predicting academic success. Why do you think this is? Would you describe yourself as self-disciplined in regard to school? In what areas are you self-disciplined? Describe in what areas you are not self-disciplined, and explain why.
- Who is part of your personal support network?

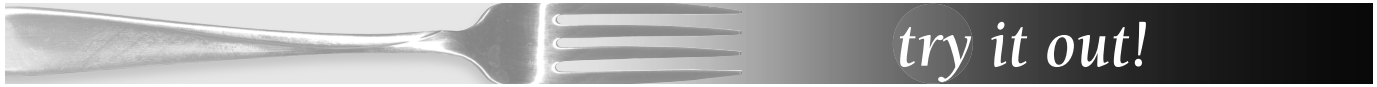


Your Learning Style

Your learning behaviors and attitudes are, to some degree, shaped by what is termed your **learning style**, which refers to preferences in behaviors characteristic of each person, that is, *how a person learns best*. For instance, one student prefers to discuss new course information with others, and she takes advantage of weekly study groups. Another student prefers to study alone in a quiet location allowing him to create detailed flow charts summarizing the new information. Both students are just as effective with their studying, yet both follow differing paths in *how* they study. This is part of their individual preferences, or learning style, that they have developed throughout the years. By assessing and analyzing your learning style, you can create a system of study that is both comfortable and successful for you.

ASSESSING YOUR LEARNING STYLE

A widely used method to define learning style is by a person's preference for sensory modes of learning. The VARK questionnaire is an informal instrument that assesses how individuals prefer to take in or receive and give out or express information via *visual*, *aural*, *read/write*, and *kinesthetic* modalities. Each of these modalities are explained after you complete the VARK.



Complete either the hard-copy version here (see Figure 1.1), or for the online version at www.vark-learn.com/english/index/asp, go to Questionnaire.

The VARK.

FIGURE 1.1

Directions: For each item, choose the answer that best explains your preference and circle the letter(s) next to it. **Circle more than one** if a single answer does not match your perception. Leave blank any question that does not apply.

1. You are helping someone who wants to go to your airport, business district, or bus station. You would:
 - a) draw or give her a map.
 - b) tell her the directions.
 - c) write down the directions (without a map).
 - d) go with her.
2. You are not sure whether a word should be spelled dependent or dependant. You would:
 - a) see the word in your mind and choose by the way they look.
 - b) think about how each word sounds and choose one.
 - c) find it in a dictionary.
 - d) write both words on paper and choose one.
3. You are planning a trip for a group. You want some feedback from them about the plan. You would:
 - a) use a map or Website to show them the places.
 - b) phone, text-message, or e-mail them.
 - c) give them a copy of the printed itinerary.
 - d) describe some of the highlights.
4. You are going to cook something as a special treat for your family. You would:
 - a) look through the cookbook for ideas from the pictures.
 - b) ask friends for suggestions.
 - c) use a cookbook in which you know there is a good recipe.
 - d) cook something you know without the need for instructions.
5. A group of tourists want to learn about the parks in your area. You would:
 - a) show them pictures on the Internet, photographs, or picture books.
 - b) talk about or arrange a talk for them about parks.

(continued)

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FIGURE 1.1 *Continued.*

- c) give them a book or pamphlets about the parks.
 - d) take them to a park and walk with them.
6. You are about to purchase a digital camera or cell phone. Other than price, what would most influence your decision?
- a) A modern design and looks good.
 - b) Salesperson telling me about its features.
 - c) Reading the details about its features.
 - d) Trying or testing it.
7. Recall a time when you learned how to do something new. Try to avoid choosing a physical skill, such as riding a bike. You learned best by:
- a) diagrams and charts (visual clues).
 - b) listening to somebody explaining it and asking questions.
 - c) written instructions, such as a manual or textbook.
 - d) watching a demonstration.
8. You have a problem with your knee. You would prefer that the doctor:
- a) showed you a diagram of what was wrong.
 - b) described what was wrong.
 - c) gave you a Web address or something to read about it.
 - d) used a plastic model of a knee to show what was wrong.
9. You want to learn a new program, skill, or game on a computer. You would:
- a) follow the diagrams in the book that came with it.
 - b) talk with people who know about the program.
 - c) read the written instructions that came with the program.
 - d) use the controls or keyboard.
10. I like Websites that have:
- a) interesting design and visual features.
 - b) audio channels where I can hear music, radio programs, or interviews.
 - c) interesting written descriptions, lists, and explanations.
 - d) things I can click on, shift, or try.
11. Other than price, what would most influence your decision to buy a new nonfiction book?
- a) The way it looks is appealing.
 - b) A friend talks about it and recommends it.

Continued.

FIGURE 1.1

- c) You quickly read parts of it.
 - d) It has real-life stories, experiences, and examples.
12. You are using a book, CD, or Website to learn how to take photos with your new digital camera. You would like to have:
- a) diagrams showing the camera and what each part does.
 - b) a chance to ask questions and talk about the camera and its features.
 - c) clear written instructions with lists and bullet points about what to do.
 - d) many examples of good and poor photos and how to improve them.
13. Do you prefer a teacher or a presenter who uses:
- a) diagrams, charts, or graphs?
 - b) question and answer, talk, group discussion, or guest speakers?
 - c) handouts, books, or readings?
 - d) demonstrations, models, or practical sessions?
14. You have finished a competition or test and would like some feedback. You would like to have feedback:
- a) using graphs showing what you had achieved.
 - b) using a person who talks it through with you.
 - c) using a written description of your results.
 - d) using examples from what you have done.
15. You are going to choose food at a restaurant or café. You would:
- a) look at what others are eating or look at pictures of each dish.
 - b) ask the server or friends to recommend choices.
 - c) choose from the descriptions in the menu.
 - d) choose something you have had there before.
16. You have to make an important speech at a conference or special occasion. You would:
- a) make diagrams or get graphs to help explain things.
 - b) write a few key words and practice saying your speech over and over.
 - c) write out your speech and learn from reading it over several times.
 - d) gather many examples and stories to make the talk real and practical.

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Scoring:

- Count your choices for each letter. Write each total on the lines below.

Total number of a's circled = _____ Visual

Total number of b's circled = _____ Aural

Total number of c's circled = _____ Read/write

Total number of d's circled = _____ Kinesthetic

- Calculate the differences between your highest score and the remaining scores.
 - If differences are 4 or more, your highest score represents your *single learning preference*.
 - If differences are 3 or less, you have a *multimodal learning preference*; that is, you have two or more dominant learning modalities.

Here are two examples:

- Total number of a's circled = 8 Visual [5-point difference]
 Total number of b's circled = 3 Aural [10-point difference]
 Total number of c's circled = 7 Read/write [6-point difference]
 Total number of d's circled = 13 Kinesthetic [highest score]
 The highest score is 13. Subtract the other scores from 13. All of the differences are 4 or more. Thus the student's *single learning preference* is "kinesthetic."
- Total number of a's circled = 9 Visual [highest score]
 Total number of b's circled = 3 Aural [6-point difference]
 Total number of c's circled = 7 Read/write [2-point difference]
 Total number of d's circled = 6 Kinesthetic [3-point difference]

The highest score is 9. Subtract the other scores from 9. Some of the differences are 3 or less. Thus the student has a *multimodal learning preference* with visual, read/write, and kinesthetic as the dominant modalities.

The purpose of this scoring method is for you to recognize your dominant mode(s) of learning, which can range from mild to very strong. Be aware that you likely use all four modalities at various times and in varying situations. Also, because this is an inexact scoring technique, use it as a *guideline* for identifying your favored mode(s) for learning.

Indicate your learning preference:

- My single learning preference is (circle one) visual–aural–read/write – kinesthetic.
- or
- My learning preference is multimodal. My dominant modalities are (circle all that apply) visual – aural – read/write – kinesthetic.

Applying/Interpreting Your Results

Keep in mind that no one mode is superior to others. You can be successful with any combination of preferences, as described next.

- **Visual learners** rely on spatial images when learning—that is, they learn best when they can see information in their mind. Visual learners often are proficient at identifying relationships among objects and ideas. When learning information, they prefer illustrations, charts, maps, and other graphic formats, including the use of color and design.
- **Aural learners** learn best when they hear information; thus they tend to prefer listening, verbalizing, and discussing new knowledge. When learning information, some aural learners favor listening to tapes or CDs, or talking aloud to themselves and others.
- **Read/write learners** prefer learning by reading—texts, handouts, directions, manuals—and by writing—lists, notes, answers to exams. They often rely on rereading and rewriting new information, organizing ideas into statements, and summarizing or turning illustrations into words. Most of your college course work will incorporate read/write modes of learning, such as reading texts, writing notes and papers, and taking essay and multiple-choice exams.
- **Kinesthetic learners** prefer to learn by doing. In learning situations, they rely on sensory feelings and prefer physical hands-on activities, such as manipulating objects, moving about, dramatizing, and going to labs or on field trips. Kinesthetic learners favor videos, photographs, and other medium with real-life scenarios. Additionally, their learning is often enhanced with the use of analogies, case studies, examples, and simulations. However, be mindful that nearly *all* students, even those with visual, auditory, or read/write preferences, benefit from application and practice of what they are learning.
- **Multimodal learners** tend to be more flexible and better able to adapt to various learning contexts. Multimodal learners tend to prefer variety and often use more than one modality and multiple strategies when learning information. Between 50% and 70% of people are considered multimodal learners.

At the end of text chapters, you will be directed to identify, implement, and evaluate specific learning and study strategies that match your learning preference as defined by visual, aural, read/write, and kinesthetic modalities. If you are multimodal, you will have even more choices of strategies to try out.



pause... and reflect

What are the characteristics of your learning style? Describe *how you learn best* in each of these situations:

- You are reading a novel for English.
- You are writing the first draft of a research paper.
- You are completing math homework problems.
- You are studying for a test in a science course.



As you transfer suggested learning strategies to your daily course work, you will continually assess the success or failure of the strategies. The following section describes a process to assist you with applying and assessing strategies as you build and strengthen an effective system of study throughout your college career.

A Path to Success: Personal Action Statements

A successful system of study requires much trial and error; you must *try* a strategy to know whether it will work for you. Your academic path in college will be strewn with both successes and failures. Savvy students are alert to what strategies do and do not work for them and, when needed, they take the initiative to substitute other techniques. A **Personal Action Statement** is one way to oversee the piece-by-piece construction of your overall system of study. It is a concise, step-by-step, written plan of one specific strategy—either a behavior or an attitude—that you commit yourself to do within a predetermined span of time.

Effective Personal Action Statements entail reflection, decision making, and judgment on your part. Because you are required to deliberate, analyze, and critique, each Personal Action Statement is designated as a critical thinking task within the chapters.

Use these guidelines to ensure a successful Personal Action Statement:



- Recognize that a Personal Action Statement is a *commitment to yourself* for action.
- Make the Personal Action Statement manageable by identifying a *specific step* to implement.
- Be realistic and honest with yourself. Identify a step, or strategy, that you *intend* to do, as well as hurdles and rewards for yourself.
- Be willing to put both *thought* and *time* into the Personal Action Statement. Know that, for most students, the results are worth the effort. Soon, you will become adept at identifying and outlining strategies and steps. You

will be able to see how the Personal Action Statements can *motivate* you toward action and achievement as you continue to build a system of study for yourself.

- Type your answers for each step. Writing space is limited on text pages. Furthermore, when you type you are able to make more revisions, resulting in higher quality responses. With this in mind, each Personal Action Statement and accompanying Assess Your Success are located on the companion Website where you can access templates for typing your answers.

Here is the setup for the Personal Action Statement:

1. I will: _____.
2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is: _____.
3. I will eliminate this hurdle by: _____.
4. My time frame for achieving this is: _____.
5. My reward for achieving this is: _____.

On line 1, write what you intend to do. Write a strategy that is specific, realistic, and meaningful to you. Here are some examples:

- “I will study in a library study room three nights next week.”
- “I will improve my concentration by taking short breaks every 30 minutes when reading my biology textbook.”

Line 2 refers to what you anticipate as being the greatest barrier toward completing the Personal Action Statement. Relying on past experiences and your personal weaknesses, what tends to hinder successful completion of your schoolwork? Examples of hurdles are boredom, the temptation to turn on your computer games, friends dropping by to chat, and your dislike of the subject matter or the instructor. Be honest with yourself: What tends to obstruct your study plans?

On line 3, write *how* you will overcome the hurdle identified in line 2. What can you do realistically to reduce, if not eliminate, this barrier? For instance, you can study with a classmate to relieve boredom, or leave your computer games at home, or be more assertive with your friends, or talk to your professor about your problems.

On line 4, indicate your time frame. When are you going to implement this Personal Action Statement? Make the time frame immediate; begin as soon as possible.

On line 5, identify a reward for completing your Personal Action Statement successfully. It can be an **intrinsic reward** (such as a sense of satisfaction with a high test grade or increased confidence from knowing subject matter) or an **extrinsic reward** (such as watching a favorite television program, talking on the phone to a friend, or buying an ice cream cone).

After completing the Personal Action Statement, place it in an accessible location (such as above your desk, in your planner, or on your desktop computer

screen) so that you can refer to it regularly to remind yourself about your intentions.

The last, yet very important, step in this process is the follow-up. At the conclusion of implementing your Personal Action Statement, assess critically what happened. Did you accomplish all that you set out to accomplish? If so, great—reward yourself! Think about the factors that contributed to your success. Use the follow-up as a time to evaluate what happened and anticipate building on your successes.

Also, learn from your partial successes as well as failures. If everything did not work out as anticipated, do not berate yourself. Keep in mind that risk taking is an inherent part of change, and it is inevitable that you will not always be successful when taking risks. However, do learn from your ineffective Personal Action Statements. Analyze what happened. Often students make their Personal Action Statements either too general or too unrealistic (refer to the examples that follow). Think about how you can shape your Personal Action Statement to make it more specific and/or practical.

TOO GENERAL:

I will improve my time management.

TOO UNREALISTIC:

I will study in the library for three hours *every night* this week.

MORE SPECIFIC:

I will write class assignments in my planner.

MORE REALISTIC:

I will study in the library for two hours on three days this week.

How about the anticipated hurdle? Did it actually emerge? If so, were you able to overcome it effectively? Did you discover other impediments? Furthermore, was your time frame appropriate for completing the Personal Action Statement?

Finally, examine your reward. Did you identify a reward that is meaningful to you? Your reward should motivate you to finish a task and make you feel good about succeeding. Dangle a reward in front of yourself that you really want—and can have!

Answering these and similar questions will aid you in analyzing what learning strategies do and do not work for you. It takes deliberate practice to develop effective Personal Action Statements, but the practice is worthwhile. Not only will you be learning about valuable college study strategies, but you also will be learning about yourself!

Conclusion



our success in college depends on a combination of factors: your behaviors in and out of class, your attitude and commitment to working hard, your awareness of key learning strategies, and your commitment to

apply and assess these strategies in your daily life. The following checklist contains keys to a successful academic year, elements that directly relate to success, satisfaction, and, ultimately, graduation from college. As the year progresses, review the checklist periodically with the goal of accomplishing as much as you can to keep yourself on the track of academic success.

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC YEAR

1. **Be aware of *why* you are attending college, as well as what you expect to get out of college.** Whose decision was it to attend college, yours or your parents? Are you attending the college of your choice? Do you intend to graduate from this or from another college? What do you expect to accomplish in college? Be honest with yourself and clear in your goals.
2. **Know what is *expected of you* in each subject.** Read each syllabus. Make an appointment with each instructor. Attend all classes. Go to review sessions or form your own study group. Ask, and then write down the answers!
3. **Manage your time *wisely*.** Establish a routine; be aware of the dangers of too much free and unstructured time. Muster the self-discipline to say no to tempting people and activities. Also, create a balance among your academic, personal, and social/leisure lives. Assess your priorities periodically: Do you typically place your academic responsibilities *before* your social aspirations? Do you allow yourself time for fun between the academic and personal demands on your time?
4. **Develop and *use* effective methods of study.** Create a study system that is advantageous to you; choose, use, and evaluate recommended learning strategies. Form beneficial habits early in the year.
5. ***Involve yourself in college life.*** Students who participate in academic, social, and personal campus activities tend to do better academically. Create a link between yourself and other people within the college community. Make commitments like these:
 - Join a student organization or club related to your interests or major.
 - Obtain a campus job.
 - Participate in academic support services, such as tutoring, group study sessions, and workshops, or become a tutor or peer educator.
 - Go to campus cultural events, such as guest speakers, fine arts productions, and museum exhibits.
 - Participate in intramural sports and other extracurricular activities.
6. ***Avoid these hazards:***
 - Mishandling of your personal freedom and time
 - Misuse of alcohol and drugs
 - Mishandling of your personal health
 - Mishandling of your best interests



pause... and reflect

Refer to the checklist that offered keys to a successful academic year. As a starting point in your college career, where would you place yourself?

For each of the six items, write a short paragraph assessing yourself at this point. Include what you have done as well as what you still need to accomplish.



try it out!



Create a sample Personal Action Statement by choosing one of the items that you still need to accomplish for a successful academic year. Use the following examples as models.



EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL ACTION STATEMENTS

1. I will: *become more involved in campus life by obtaining an on-campus job.*
 2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is: *not knowing where campus jobs are advertised.*
 3. I will eliminate this hurdle by: *(1) asking my adviser about job listings during our meeting on Wednesday, and (2) inquiring at the career services office.*
 4. My time frame for completing this is: *by Thursday of this week.*
 5. My reward for achieving this is: *the self-satisfaction of knowing that I began looking for a job early in the semester!*
-
1. I will: *set aside definite times during the afternoon to do both math and chemistry problems.*
 2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is: *the distractions of TV and my computer in my apartment.*
 3. I will eliminate this hurdle by: *studying at a solitary desk at the library during the afternoons when I have large chunks of free time.*
 4. My time frame for completing this is: *next Tuesday.*
 5. My reward for achieving this is: *not having unfinished work hanging over my head.*
-
1. I will: *join a campus club related to my interest in an outdoor sport.*
 2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is: *not knowing what clubs are here.*
 3. I will eliminate this hurdle by: *checking the Website for the Office of Student Organizations and narrowing my options to two or three clubs that I will contact and visit.*

4. My time frame for completing this is: *within the next 2 weeks.*
 5. My reward for achieving this is: *the knowledge that I actually followed through with something, as well as looking forward to meeting other students.*
-

Your Personal Action Statement



1. I will: _____

 2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is: _____

 3. I will eliminate this hurdle by: _____

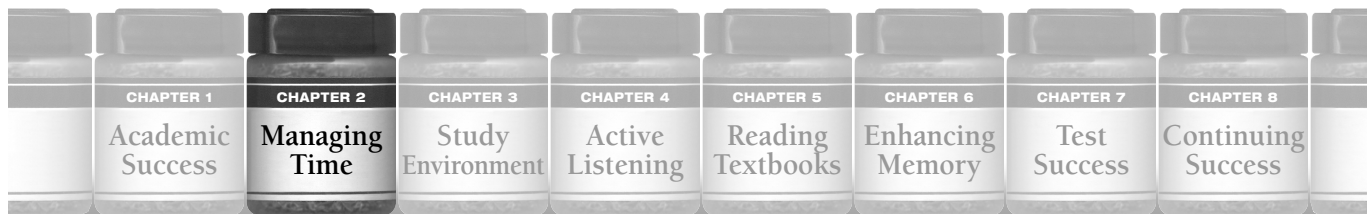
 4. My time frame for achieving this is: _____

 5. My reward for achieving this is: _____

-

Comprehension Check

Return to page 1. Without looking back through the chapter, provide a complete answer for each focus question. Then, define each chapter term in your own words and provide an example.



C H A P T E R 2

Managing Your Time

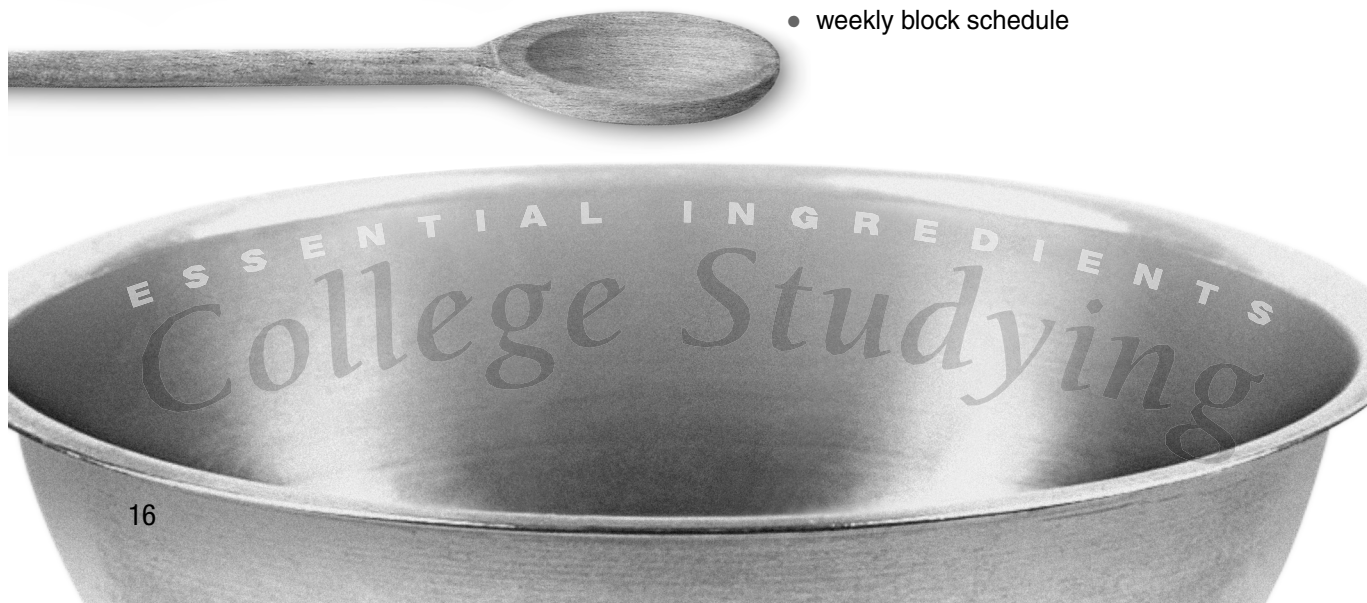
FOCUS QUESTIONS

- How effectively do I manage my time each day?
- Why do college students often have difficulties with managing their time productively?
- What are five essential strategies for successful time management?

CHAPTER TERMS

After reading this chapter, define (in your own words) and provide an example for each of the following terms:

- academic planner
- procrastination
- self-regulating attitudes and behaviors
- weekly block schedule





Controlling Your Time: Five Essential Ingredients

Many college students face the challenge of how to manage their daily use of time effectively. As a college student, you likely are—or soon will be—juggling a variety of responsibilities and tasks, both personal and academic. The freedom you experience as an undergraduate college student often is unparalleled. For the first time, you are making many daily decisions without having a parent or teacher oversee you. For instance, you decide what time to awaken, whether to eat breakfast, whether to attend class or start an assignment, who to socialize with, and so on. Your decisions, and the subsequent consequences of these decisions, will determine if you are successful in college or not. Read what one freshman wrote; his comments are typical of many first-time college students:



“Time management is my biggest problem. When I have to choose between leisure time and study time, leisure time always wins. I end up cramming the night before a test. One of my roommates, however, starts studying a week ahead of time for his exams and does much better than I. My problem is that nobody is here to make me study. In high school my parents made me study; here at college there always is something else I’d rather be doing.” —DEVON

STUDENT VOICES



Critical
Thinking
Task

pause... and reflect

Are you similar to Devon when making daily choices and decisions about academics and studying? Answer the following questions:

1. Do you have, or anticipate having, problems choosing study time over leisure time? Describe a situation when you should have studied but did not. Why didn't you study? What did you do instead? How could you have reacted differently? What might help you choose study over leisure?
2. Do you need someone to make you study? If so, who can help you monitor your study time—a roommate, friend, tutor, or relative? Think of ways you can develop the needed self-discipline and structure to focus on academics.

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3. Some college students already possess **self-regulating attitudes and behaviors** and are able to monitor their independent time consistently. Self-regulating students have developed the internal discipline, focus, and skills necessary to channel both their time and energies productively. If you fall into this category, describe how you approach your study time. What strategies and attitudes do you adopt to focus on and complete projects, assignments, and other tasks?
4. Interview a present or former student whom you consider skillful about managing his or her time. What strategies does the student use? How did he or she develop those strategies? What suggestions can the student give you about having a productive yet balanced semester? Why would you describe this student as self-regulating?



Each of the following five strategies is essential to the development of a successful system of study. As you read, consider how to incorporate each strategy into your day-to-day activities. Be aware of the importance of these strategies in reducing stress in your daily life:

1. Use a weekly block schedule.
2. Use a daily planner.
3. Use a semester calendar.
4. Balance academic with social and personal demands.
5. Avoid procrastination.

USE A WEEKLY BLOCK SCHEDULE

At the start of each semester you will be faced with many new and unfamiliar situations—different classes, instructors, on-campus or off-campus jobs, and sometimes even changes in your daily living arrangement. With these unfamiliar situations come unaccustomed expectations and responsibilities. Your most immediate need will be a schedule that provides an *overview* of what and where you should be for the week. The weekly schedule will be one tool for you to use to structure your time as you develop sound habits and routines at the beginning of each semester.

Develop a weekly routine that includes these considerations:

1. Class attendance and course work as your main priority.
2. Regular slots for study throughout the week. Look for chunks of time during the day and evening when you are the freshest.
3. Time *before* classes to refresh yourself about the day's topics.
4. Time *after* classes to go over lecture notes, work on assignments, and complete readings.

5. Ready access to a study location with minimal distractions.
6. Time to take advantage of campus support services, such as the tutorial center, writing center, counseling center, and career services.
7. Time to attend extracurricular activities, such as fine arts productions, lectures and presentations, student organizations, and community service projects.
8. Time for personal commitments, such as a job, sports, or family responsibilities.

An added personal bonus that results from following these guidelines is that you are associating with others who are responsible, successful, and have similar values and interests. As a result, you will be creating a valuable social network for yourself.



“I consider how difficult the class is for me and judge how much studying I will need. Studying earlier in the day helps me concentrate better because I am not tired. Also, I reduce my study time because I am reviewing after class when my recall is the greatest. I concentrate better during short spurts; therefore, I take advantage of the time between classes and small periods throughout the day.” —RICARDO



“Using a weekly schedule has greatly reduced my procrastination (my biggest problem). I have begun utilizing those odd hours that I used to watch TV and visit friends. I now study when I feel the freshest. Also, I have become more regular in my evening study time. I find myself getting more done during the day and evening—a major difference.” —JAMAL

STUDENT VOICES

The **weekly block schedule** (Figure 2.1) provides a visual representation of your week. By filling in the blocks you build a picture of your typical week.

Follow these steps when creating a weekly schedule:

1. First, write in activities that you must do at *fixed times*, such as classes and labs, employment, commuting times, established meetings or appointments, certain family responsibilities, and practice for athletics, band, and so forth. Can you think of other established activities for your typical week?
2. Next, fill in those events for which you can establish your own times to work on and complete. Include three types of activities: academic (homework, study, tutoring); personal (meals, sleep, household tasks, errands); and social and leisure (calls/e-mails, exercise, down time).

For *academic* time, take into account these factors:

- Schedule study time when you are most alert, using chunks of time that you have available throughout the day.
- Spread out study and review through the week, including weekends.
- Be generous with the amount of time you anticipate needing each week for out-of-class course work. When you underestimate time needed for academics, you create added complications and stress for yourself. Therefore, allow for substantial study and review time for *each course*.

Figure 2.2 shows two students' weekly block schedules. Note the differences between the two. Although each student approached the schedule with differing amounts of information and detail, both evaluated their schedules as effective for them. Note these two features of student B's schedule:

- The darkened blocks represent weekly activities established at fixed times.
- The outlined blocks represent times devoted to academic activities outside of class, including reviewing class notes, studying, and tutoring. Student B actually color-coded these outlined blocks according to subject.



Critical
Thinking
Task

pause... and reflect

Some students (such as Student B) are more productive when they fill in nearly all of the blocks in their weekly schedule. They favor the structure of prearranged specific daily activities, including meals, sleep, study for *each* subject, and even breaks. Others (such as Student A) find this technique too restrictive and prefer to fill in only those blocks representing the most important activities.

- How about you? Are you more similar to Student A or Student B? Explain.
- Are you more productive when you plan details ahead of time or when you leave blocks open for spontaneous decisions and changes?
- What type of schedule are you more likely to follow and why?
- What type of activities should you be writing down in your weekly block schedule?
- How does time management, scheduling, and planning affect *your* levels of stress? Describe a situation in which you created stress for yourself by not managing your time adequately.



22 CHAPTER 2

FIGURE 2.2 Two examples of weekly block schedules.

Student A

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
9:00 class	9:00	9:00 class	9:00	9:00 class	9:00	9:00
10:00 class	10:00 class	10:00 class	10:00 class	10:00 class	10:00	10:00
11:00 class	11:00	11:00 class	11:00 class	11:00	11:00	11:00
noon	noon	noon	noon	noon	noon	noon
1:00 class	1:00 lab	1:00 class	1:00 lab	1:00 class	1:00	1:00
2:00 work	2:00 ↓	2:00 work	2:00 ↓	2:00 work	2:00	2:00
3:00 ↓	3:00 ↓	3:00 ↓	3:00 ↓	3:00 ↓	3:00	3:00 ↓
4:00 ↓	4:00	4:00 ↓	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00
5:00	5:00	5:00 ↓	5:00	5:00	5:00	5:00 ↓
6:00	6:00 S.I. for Biol	6:00	6:00 S.I. for Biol	6:00	6:00	6:00
7:00 study	7:00	7:00	7:00	7:00	7:00	7:00
8:00 ↓	8:00 study	8:00 study	8:00 study	8:00	8:00	8:00 study
9:00 ↓	9:00 ↓	9:00 ↓	9:00 ↓	9:00	9:00	9:00 ↓

(continued)

Continued.

FIGURE 2.2

Student B

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8:00	8:00 <i>breakfast</i>	8:00	8:00 <i>breakfast</i>	8:00	8:00	8:00
9:00 <i>breakfast</i>	9:00 <i>review for Chem</i>	9:00 <i>breakfast</i>	9:00 <i>review for Chem</i>	9:00 <i>breakfast</i>	9:00	9:00
10:00 <i>English class</i>	10:00 <i>Chem class</i>	10:00 <i>English class</i>	10:00 <i>Chem class</i>	10:00 <i>English class</i>	10:00 <i>workout</i>	10:00
11:00	11:00 <i>lunch</i>	11:00 <i>laundry</i>	11:00	11:00	11:00 <i>get ready</i>	11:00 <i>church</i>
noon <i>lunch</i>	noon <i>Chem lab</i>	noon <i>lunch</i>	noon <i>lunch</i>	noon <i>lunch</i>	noon <i>begin job</i>	noon <i>brunch</i>
1:00 <i>History class</i>	1:00	1:00 <i>History class</i>	1:00 <i>Writing Center</i>	1:00 <i>History class</i>	1:00	1:00
2:00 <i>Theater class</i>	2:00	2:00 <i>Theater class</i>	2:00	2:00 <i>Theater class</i>	2:00	2:00 <i>pack</i>
3:00 <i>review notes</i>	3:00 <i>Health class</i>	3:00 <i>review notes</i>	3:00 <i>Health class</i>	3:00 <i>pack</i>	3:00	3:00 <i>drive school</i>
4:00	4:00	4:00 <i>BigBroth's/Dis</i>	4:00	4:00 <i>travel home</i>	4:00	4:00
5:00 <i>workout</i>	5:00 <i>dinner</i>	5:00 <i>workout</i>	5:00 <i>dinner</i>	5:00	5:00 <i>dinner</i>	5:00 <i>dinner</i>
6:00 <i>dinner</i>	6:00	6:00 <i>dinner</i>	6:00	6:00 <i>dinner</i>	6:00 <i>get ready to</i>	6:00
7:00 <i>study group</i>	7:00 <i>review notes</i>	7:00 <i>Chem tutoring</i>	7:00 <i>read history</i>	7:00	7:00 <i>go out</i>	7:00 <i>English?</i>
8:00 <i>for Chem</i>	8:00 <i>Economics club</i>	8:00 <i>break</i>	8:00 <i>TV break</i>	8:00 <i>get ready to</i>	8:00	8:00 <i>history?</i>
9:00 <i>TV break</i>	9:00	9:00 <i>study Health</i>	9:00 <i>study theater</i>	9:00 <i>go out</i>	9:00	9:00 <i>theater</i>
10:00 <i>study Health</i>	10:00 <i>prepare for class</i>	10:00 <i>floor meeting</i>	10:00 <i>finish English</i>	10:00	10:00	10:00 <i>Homework</i>
11:00 <i>ASLEEP</i>	11:00 <i>ASLEEP</i>	11:00 <i>ASLEEP</i>	11:00 <i>ASLEEP</i>	11:00	11:00	11:00 <i>ASLEEP</i>

STUDENT VOICES

“By making a weekly schedule I realized how many demands there are on my time. The schedule helps me complete my work and still have time for family and leisure. Last semester I was *always* rushing to get things done. This semester I am making better judgments about my time, which is reducing the stress in my life. I could not survive without a schedule and would recommend a schedule to *every student*, especially those students juggling many responsibilities.” —**NORA**



“A weekly schedule helps me see what is due for the week and figure what needs to be studied each day. Also, each night I make a schedule of classes, work, errands, and homework that I need to do the following day. And I get such a feeling of accomplishment crossing off the things that I’ve finished!” —**BRAD**

try it out!

1. Develop a weekly block schedule for yourself for the current semester (use Figure 2.1). Refer to the two steps described previously:
 - Fill in activities with fixed times.
 - Then fill in activities with flexible times.
2. Refer to the guidelines on pages 18–19. Consider each of the eight items when setting up your schedule.
3. After filling in your weekly block schedule, *use* it. Place it in a location for ready referral, such as over your desk, beside your calendar, near your computer screen, or in your book bag or planner. This weekly schedule will provide you with a framework for establishing your day-to-day routine, so refer to it often, especially at the start of each semester.
4. After a week, **Assess Your Success** by answering these questions:
 - Overall, did the schedule provide you with a needed framework for establishing your daily routine? Explain.
 - Should you have more or fewer activities and details in your schedule?
 - Should you use another format, different design, or color coding for your schedule?
 - Did you refer to your schedule regularly? Why or why not?
 - Will you continue to use a weekly schedule? Why or why not?

Critical
Thinking
Task



USE A DAILY PLANNER

An **academic planner** is a day-to-day log, either in book or electronic format, reminding you of tasks to be accomplished. It is crucial to planning and juggling schoolwork successfully with personal and social activities. A well-used planner is invaluable for keeping you on track with your many and varied plans and responsibilities. Acquire a planner that easily fits in your book bag, backpack, or purse. Carry it with you and use it daily to write down reminders.

FOR THE DAY

Jot down and prioritize what you plan to do, including

- *Academic* responsibilities for each course.
- *Personal* commitments or tasks, such as shopping, visiting a relative, or going to the bank.
- *Social* plans, such as a call home or a date with friends.

FOR THE WEEK

- Examine each course syllabus for *upcoming* lecture topics, readings, assignments, and test dates.
- Note *extracurricular* activities, such as meetings, athletic obligations, and noncredit classes.
- Be aware of *special commitments*, such as a doctor's appointment, meeting with your adviser, a tutorial appointment, a theatrical production, or a birthday celebration.

FOR THE SEMESTER

Identify key academic dates, including

- Deadline for add/drop of courses.
- Deadline for course withdrawal.
- Midterm period.
- Final exam days and times.
- Due dates for long-term course projects or papers.
- Course registration for next term.
- Breaks.

USE A SEMESTER CALENDAR

A calendar provides a long-term overview of your academic year. Use a calendar for a broad view of each semester. When you fill in important semester dates on a calendar, you create a visual picture of upcoming months, although with considerably less detail than your weekly block schedule.

Use a calendar in a similar, although less specific, manner as a planner: As suggested for your planner, chart key academic dates and assignments, projects, and

FIGURE 2.3 *A student's calendar for November.*

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>*register for spring term this week</i>						<i>Melissa is visiting</i>
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Melissa</i>	<i>Math test Chap. 7-9</i>				<i>spring work application due</i>	<i>march in Veterans Day parade</i>
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
				<i>intr. Religion Term Paper due</i>	<i>Accounting Test #3</i>	<i>Begin break!!</i>
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
→	→	→	→	→	→	→
		<i>Dentist appt. 1:00 pm</i>		<i>Thanksgiving</i>		
27	28	29	30			
<i>travel to school</i>	<i>classes resume</i>	<i>Geography Group Presentation</i>				

papers as well as special social occasions (such as someone's birthday or a friend's wedding) and personal events (such as the deadline for filing taxes or a vacation). Place the calendar in a visible location for daily reference—near your computer, over your desk, or on the kitchen bulletin board. Or use the electronic calendar in your cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or computer. Publishers often place calendars within academic planners; note whether your planner provides monthly calendars that are large enough for you to write in and use.

Figure 2.3 reproduces a student's calendar for November.

try it out!

If you don't already have a planner and a calendar, get them now!

1. Fill in the planner by referring to the lists (in the previous section) of what to write down "for the day," "for the week," and "for the semester." Check off each item as you mark the information in your planner. Continue using the planner, carrying it with you throughout the day.

Critical
Thinking
Task

2. Fill in the calendar with those major events that you want to track throughout the year. Place it in a location for easy reference.
3. **Assess Your Success:** Did you use your planner daily—that is, did you write in activities and refer to it consistently? How about your calendar? Did it help you to write down major events and due dates? What is the most useful aspect of your time management system thus far? What changes will you make to build a more effective and efficient time management system?



“Time management is a critical priority to studying, but I didn’t realize it until this year. Previously I lacked the self-discipline to follow a schedule and didn’t think it would be useful. *Now* I realize how much it can help! I bought a huge desk calendar to write in all my major assignments, tests, quizzes, and readings that are due throughout the term. Not only do I now have more free time, but I actually have a better attitude toward studying!” —JENNIE

STUDENT VOICES

BALANCE ACADEMIC WITH SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DEMANDS

College students often experience a conflict between their academic requirements and social desires. It is in students’ best academic interest to go to sleep before midnight. However, social activities often do not happen until late at night or even in the early morning hours. In both dormitories and off-campus complexes, late-night social activities are abundant and appealing. Friends will call or stop by to chat, watch TV, play music or video games, accompany you to a party, or ask you to go to an off-campus restaurant or bar. These late-night social activities are tempting and alluring to the college student who wants relief from academic demands, as well as the chance to build a social network and personal sense of belonging.

However, over time, late-night socializing results in students who:

- Become severely sleep deprived.
- Miss classes.
- Are in a dazed, passive mode when they do attend classes.
- Do not put in quality study time during the day (instead, they are sleeping!).
- Have problems organizing, understanding, and remembering subject matter.

All of the characteristics just listed contribute to lower academic performances. Thus beware: Late-night socializing and partying can become a potent and dangerous habit!

Some students, however, especially those who are of nontraditional ages, have personal demands that can supersede their academic demands. Time tending to family responsibilities, particularly children, and employment hours can easily push aside academic requirements.

The following strategies can create a balance between your academic and social/personal desires and demands and, as a result, reduce your day-to-day stress levels:

1. *Prioritize.* Make a daily list of tasks according to an order of importance.
2. *Write down what to accomplish and when to accomplish it,* and then display your list for family and friends to see.
3. *Make others*—friends, family, and employers—*aware of your needs and time constraints* and ask for their *cooperation.*
4. Don't let feelings of guilt guide you in an unproductive direction. Instead, *transform feelings of guilt into productive and useful behaviors* related to attaining success in your course work.
5. *Don't overcommit yourself.* Down time is a necessity, not a luxury.
6. *Get adequate sleep.* Research studies demonstrate the drastic and negative effect of inadequate sleep on performance, concentration, and memory. Moreover, a cumulative loss of sleep is associated with increased anxiety, overeating, and illness. Establishing and maintaining a regular weekly schedule helps you get the recommended 8 to 10 hours of nightly sleep. In addition, you can improve the quality of your nighttime sleep by reducing or eliminating evening consumption of caffeine and alcohol, as well as including some form of physical activity or exercise during the day. Also, consider supplementing nighttime sleep with midday naps of no more than 60 minutes.
7. *Combine academic and social activities.* Find, or create, an environment that provides you with both solid academic activity and enjoyable social connections. Examples are study groups, tutorial or writing center services, campus organizations (such as a biology club or commuter student organization), or other groups that require study hours (such as a fraternity, sorority, or athletic team). For example, Devon (see the nearby “Student Voices”) partially solved his time management problems by such a tactic.

STUDENT VOICES

“A help to me this semester, believe it or not, is pledging a fraternity. We have study sessions every Monday through Thursday from 6 to 8 P.M. in the library. This helps me, especially because the sessions are mandatory. If I don't go, I get into trouble. I have to hand in all my test grades to the scholastic chairman; if I don't get a 2.0, they won't let me in. This makes me want to do my best and is an added incentive.” —DEVON





pause... and reflect

1. Do you have problems balancing academic demands with personal responsibilities and/or social events? Explain.
2. When faced with a choice between doing class work and taking care of personal obligations or social desires, what do you usually do? Why?
3. Is it difficult for you to say no to other people's requests, demands, or temptations? Why?
4. Follow these steps:
 - Identify your primary academic obligations for this week.
 - Next, identify your current personal responsibilities.
 - Identify your current social desires and events.
 - Choose one of the seven strategies just described. Explain how you will use this strategy to assist you with managing the activities you listed.



AVOID PROCRASTINATION AND REDUCE STRESS

We all are guilty of **procrastination** at various times in our daily lives, be it paying a bill, looking for a summer job, writing a thank-you note, or doing the laundry. Still, constantly putting off responsibilities and tasks can be a major problem for college students, particularly for the important academic tasks of studying for exams, writing term papers, and keeping up with weekly reading assignments.

Procrastination causes undue stress, not to mention poorer performances. Underlying causes of procrastination are often complex and varied. However, having an awareness of *why* you are delaying a task often helps you tackle and complete it. The following list describes some of the common reasons why people procrastinate:

- **Being a perfectionist.** You want to be uncompromisingly perfect at this activity and don't want to do the activity unless you are able to achieve your unrealistically high expectations. Because perfection is essentially impossible to achieve, you continue to postpone the activity.
- **Avoiding failure.** You are concerned that you will fail or perform inadequately and, as a result, will disappoint yourself and others. Therefore, you procrastinate to steer clear of a poor grade—and subsequent failure.
- **Avoiding success.** You are concerned that, as a result of your achievements, you will be expected to handle additional, more difficult,

and/or burdensome responsibilities—responsibilities you simply don't want!

- **Being rebellious.** You disagree with *why* you should do an activity, dislike *who* you associate with the activity (such as an assignment from a professor you dislike), or dislike the *task itself* (such as reading from a text) and, therefore, put off the activity out of resentment or defiance.
- **Feeling overwhelmed.** You consider the task or assignment to be of overbearing proportions and don't know *where* or *how to* begin. Or you feel overburdened by multiple tasks and decisions and can't seem to get a handle on how to start tackling these activities.
- **Managing time poorly.** You don't plan ahead, use written schedules, or prioritize. You allow less significant tasks or events to get in the way.
- **Being lazy.** You want to avoid the effort and work involved in completing the task.



pause... and reflect

Identify one task, assignment, activity, or decision you should complete within the next week but you have been putting off.

Why are you putting off doing this? Use the list of reasons to describe the basis for your procrastination.



The following strategies will help you overcome procrastination:

1. **Know what you should accomplish.** You are more likely to complete a task that you clearly understand. Therefore, know expectations and what you are to undertake. If you are uncertain about what you should accomplish, *ask!*
2. **Determine deadlines.** Have a preset time limit for completing the whole task and, if appropriate, various steps of the task. People tend to follow deadlines established by other people (as opposed to self-imposed deadlines). Therefore, if your instructor does not provide a strict deadline, ask another person—a classmate, roommate, or peer tutor—to establish a reasonable written deadline for you.
3. **Use schedules/planners/calendars.** Write down *what* you want to do and *when* you will do it. You are more likely to accomplish a task that you write down.

4. **Prioritize.** Assign a level of importance to all tasks. Then categorize activities according to:
 - Will work on today.
 - Will work on today if time.
 - Will save for another day.
5. **Break a task into a series of steps.** Large tasks seem less overwhelming and more approachable if you view them as a series of steps, as opposed to a gigantic whole. At the very least, identify one step that you can do; then do it!
6. **Do the unpleasant task first.** Get the distasteful activity out of the way early, and then work on easier or more desirable activities.
7. **Change how you think about the task.** Instead of thinking of the activity as “dreaded” or “terrible,” consider it as a practical means to an end, such as a course that completes a curriculum requirement, a grade to pass a course, or a term paper that gives you research and writing experience.
8. **Have fun with the activity.** See if you can be imaginative with the task, such as adding color and other creative elements to a written assignment. Or you can invent a game or competition for yourself, such as beating a previous time for completing the task or keeping pace with a classmate’s score. Sharing and collaborating with other task-minded students can be an enjoyable method for dealing with difficult or disliked subjects.
9. **Establish rewards as personal incentives for completion.**
 - *Extrinsic rewards:* Compensate yourself by watching a favorite TV program, going out with friends, or buying a new CD.
 - *Intrinsic rewards:* Recognize the personal sense of satisfaction that you receive when you’ve completed the task. Relish the sense of accomplishment you feel when you are done and can check off the item!



“Time management is my absolute worst skill. I tend to procrastinate quite a bit. I get my work done but always just squeak in under the deadline. This year, however, I’ve been forcing myself to work when I *should*, rather than when I feel like it.” —**CHARISE**



“Making written schedules actually helps me organize my day and seize wasted time. For example, instead of reading a magazine while waiting at the hair salon for my appointment, I read an assignment. When I feel organized my stress level drops tremendously. I feel on top of my assignments instead of overwhelmed by them.” —**JESS**


Procrastination and Online Courses

The likelihood of procrastination increases if you are enrolled in distance education courses, which lack the built-in structure of weekly face-to-face meetings in a classroom. Additionally, when isolated at a computer, even routine assignments can seem tedious and time consuming, especially if you are uncomfortable with the technology. As course work piles up, you easily can feel overwhelmed, which leads to increased levels of procrastination. As a result, be especially mindful of monitoring your use of time when enrolled in online courses. These additional strategies will help you:

- Begin by getting an overview of course requirements for the whole semester. How much course work will you complete realistically each week? Mark these weekly units of work on your semester calendar.
- Be prepared to spend *more* time on online courses than you would on face-to-face courses. On your weekly schedule, block out generous amounts of time to read course materials and complete online assignments.
- Use your planner as a written log of what you intend to complete each day for the online course, and then cross off your daily accomplishments.

Plan ahead when enrolled in online courses. Use weekly schedules and daily planners to help monitor your productivity and maintain your momentum throughout the semester.

try it out!

Refer back to the task, assignment, or decision that you have been putting off (p. 30) and the nine strategies to overcome procrastination (pp. 30–31). Identify a strategy you will use to accomplish the task *this week*. Write a paragraph explaining the strategy. Be specific about what and how you will complete the task. 

In one week's time, **Assess Your Success:**

- Did you complete the task? Did the strategy help you complete it? Explain.
- What other strategies will you use to focus your attention and energies on completing an unpleasant activity?



Personal Action Statement: Applying Time Management Techniques

As described in Chapter 1, a Personal Action Statement is a step-by-step written plan of a specific strategy—in this case a time management strategy—that you are committing yourself to do. Before developing your own Personal Action Statement, examine the three examples provided and answer these questions:



1. What are the differences among the plans?
2. Which students created plans that likely will result in successful outcomes? Why?

STUDENT A

1. I will study more for chemistry.
2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is socializing.
3. I will eliminate this hurdle by socializing less.
4. My time plan for achieving this is soon—before the next test.
5. My reward for achieving this is A's in the class.

STUDENT B

1. I will study psychology for an hour after lunch each weekday.
2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is afternoon soap operas on TV.
3. I will eliminate this hurdle by not watching *All of My Children* on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and not watching *One Life to Live* on Tuesday and Thursday. This will leave me with an added hour each afternoon.
4. My time plan for achieving this is to begin on Monday.
5. My reward for achieving this is that I can start catching up with my reading assignments and thus feel better about the class and myself.

STUDENT C

1. I will use a calendar to write down due dates for all courses.
2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is the lack of exact due dates in two of my subjects.
3. I will eliminate this hurdle by penciling in estimations of due dates in my planner.
4. My time plan for achieving this is to fill in dates this weekend.
5. My reward for achieving this is a better sense of organization in my daily life.

try it out!

Critical
Thinking
Task



Learning Style and Time Management

Being able to manage your time effectively is a crucial element of a successful system of study. By linking *how* you learn best (your learning style or preference) with *ways* to learn (strategies), you will be better able to refine time management methods that are effective for you.

1. Using Figure 2.4, in the right column, circle your dominant learning preference—visual, aural, read/write, or kinesthetic. If you are multimodal, that is, dominant in more than one modality, circle all that apply.
2. Refer to the time management strategies beside each of your preferences and place a check in the circles next to those that you do use regularly.
3. Next, identify a strategy that you do not use consistently but which would likely help you manage your time more effectively and efficiently for the upcoming week. Write a Personal Action Statement for that strategy, using the guidelines outlined in Chapter 1:
 - Is your Personal Action Statement a commitment for action?
 - Have you identified specific steps that make your plan manageable?
 - Have you been realistic and honest with yourself? Did you identify a step or strategy that you intend to use, as well as anticipated hurdles and rewards for yourself?
 - Have you put both thought and time into your Personal Action Statement?
4. At week's end, **Assess Your Success**. Refer back to your Personal Action Statement and evaluate your performance by answering the following questions:
 - Did you accomplish what you set out to do? Explain.
 - Were you able to overcome any obstacles? Think about your experience and how successful you were.
 - If you were not satisfied, what additional behaviors or techniques can you implement to make your system of time management effective and efficient for you? Will you try these new strategies in the near future?



FIGURE 2.4 *Time management strategies and learning preferences.***TIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES****LEARNING PREFERENCES**

- Set up and use a weekly block schedule to create a “picture” of your week.
- Use color to differentiate dates on the calendar and activities in your planner.
- Use color and symbols to accentuate activities in your daily priority list, as well as each step needed to complete a project or paper.
- Create an interest for routine assignments by setting personal goals and rewards and using a fanciful chart to keep track of your progress.
- Use sticky notes as daily reminders. Place the notes in visible locations, such as on your computer, a bathroom mirror, refrigerator, or front door.

Visual

- Get schedules for tutorials and group study sessions. Write the days and times in your planner.
- Review notes and talk through assignments weekly with a classmate or study buddy.
- Schedule time for Web chats.
- Request auditory reminders from a roommate or family member. Give yourself daily reminders by talking out aloud to yourself.

Aural

- Use a daily planner to write down daily appointments and tasks.
- Determine appropriate amount of time to complete assignments for each subject. Write down starting and ending times for projects.
- Write a due date earlier than actually needed.
- Make daily to-do lists. As you accomplish each task, cross it off.
- Keep your schedule, planner, and lists handy so you can review them regularly.

Read/write

- Create a schedule that varies your activities. Consider ways to modify your approach toward tasks. For example, schedule time to work with others with routine assignments.
- Allow extra time for lab work and application activities, especially for difficult subjects.
- Schedule study slots for differing places, particularly locations that allow you to move about.
- Break up longer assignments into workable steps, writing each step on a note card.
- Post sticky notes with daily reminders.

Kinesthetic



Your Personal Action Statement

1. I will: _____

2. My greatest hurdle to achieving this is: _____

3. I will eliminate this hurdle by: _____

4. My time frame for achieving this is: _____

5. My reward for achieving this is: _____

STUDENT VOICES

“I really was not planning on this Personal Action Statement helping me much; however, I have to admit that it worked well. This was the first time I ever made a real schedule for myself, and I’ve now grown accustomed to using it. With a set schedule, I see the day as a whole and actually get more done, especially in those hidden time areas throughout the day. It’s odd to me that something this small can totally change my whole perspective on how, where, and when I spend my time.” —CHRIS



Conclusion

Your decisions, and the subsequent consequences of these decisions, will determine how successful you are in college. Calendars, weekly schedules, and daily to-do lists are tools to assist you with the multitude of time management decisions. After all, your time is valuable, so use it wisely!

1. Establish a weekly routine early each semester.
2. Use a planner every day—write down what and when.
3. Put important dates on a calendar to know what events are coming up and not be caught off guard.
4. Make wise decisions about balancing your academic responsibilities with social and personal activities.
5. Be aware of when you are procrastinating, and then use strategies that assist you to begin and complete the task.
6. Take charge. Be proactive, and don't allow others to control how you use your time.

Comprehension Check

Return to page 16. Without looking back through the chapter, provide a complete answer for each focus question. Then define each chapter term in your own words and provide an example.