

R

TIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

There is no mystery about managing time. Everyone has 24 hours each day and 168 hours each week to eat, sleep, work, relax, exercise, attend class, and study. There is nothing magical about getting the most from these hours; it just takes planning. However, time management requires self-discipline and control until the behavioral changes are internalized and time management becomes an everyday habit. Plans and schedules for managing time are useless if you do not follow them.

Why bother with time management? The main reason for managing time is to provide structure to your life and, in turn, peace of mind. Managing time is not just something you do for your own psyche, it also makes your days easier.

College requires that students spend much more time studying outside of class. In high school, many students could get away with two-hour test preparation sessions or with writing a research paper in an hour or two. That situation is not so in college. The amount of study time required will vary greatly from course to course, but expect to put in a significant amount of time for every course you are taking. Even though technical education classes at Ranken often have shop or lab components that require you to be present for many hours, there are often still outside assignments to be submitted online or in class. Given the limited amount of class time available for general education classes, most require substantial work to be done outside of class time. Make sure you review all course syllabi carefully in order to estimate the amount of time needed to fulfill all course requirements.

Time Management Suggestions:

- **Use a calendar.** Some students prefer printed daily planners, such as the Ranken Student Handbook. Others use electronic resources, such as smart phones, voice recorders, Microsoft Outlook, Google Calendar, or Twitter. The important thing is to discover a method that you will be sure to use and check.
- **Map out the parts of your weekly schedule that are set in stone:** classes, work, and other commitments. These things usually are not scheduled by you, and you must schedule everything else around them.
- **Identify how much time each week you spend on homework in each class.** Break the homework down into subsections to be as thorough as possible.
- **For classes with pop quizzes, classes that have an emphasis on participation, or classes that are particularly challenging,** spend 30 minutes before each class refreshing yourself on your homework, reviewing your notes from the last class, or skimming that day's chapter or section.
- **Do homework during a time when you are near a tutor.** The Student Success Center has tables and computer workstations for you to work at in a positive learning environment. You will be able to ask questions if you get stuck on part of your work. If you are doing your homework elsewhere, do as much as possible and identify all your questions so that you may make the best use of your time with a tutor later.

- **Develop as much of a routine as possible.** Be consistent with your daily activities. Aim for balance. If each day of your life is drastically different, you are more likely to feel rushed and forget to accomplish tasks.
- **Set goals.** Just like with physical exercise, once you begin to follow your academic routine, you will see more and more progress.
- **Give yourself one day that is completely yours** – if possible – to relax and have fun.
- **Identify flex times in your schedule** for sections of time when it is difficult to determine exactly what you will work on (i.e., Sunday afternoons you could flex between math, writing, and major homework).

Once you create this schedule, stick to it. If you are scheduled to start working on a paper at 3 p.m., you should be sure to start at 3 p.m., not at 3:10 p.m.

Remember, Ranken's counselor and the Student Success Center staff members are available to assist you.