

# Time Management Guidebook



MIAMI UNIVERSITY

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BERNARD B. RINELLA JR.  
LEARNING CENTER

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“Time is not a means to keep or prove your worth in the world, but a means to experience the richness of all that is.”

*Elizabeth Grace Saunders*

“Don’t let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put that passing time to the best possible use.”

*Earl Nightingale*

“Managing your time without setting priorities is like shooting randomly and calling whatever you hit the target.”

*Peter Turla*

“The bad news is time flies. The good news is you’re the pilot.”

*Michael Altshuler*

“This is the key to time management - to see the value of every moment.”

*Menachem Mendel Schneerson*

“Nothing is a waste of time if you use the experience wisely.”

*Rodin*



## **Introduction**

Since starting at Miami, you've probably heard how college will require you to keep a strict watch on how you use your time. Too many of us, the idea of scheduling out each and every aspect of our day causes some anxiety. Not only is it anxiety-provoking, but in many cases it is not necessary. Time management is about understanding what needs to be done and coming up with a flexible but firm plan to accomplish your goals.

You have 168 hours each week, 24 hours in each day. In college you have to balance a full load of classes, often involving at least 15 hours of in-class time and an average of 25-35 hours of out of class time each week. That in itself is a full-time job, but most students are involved in activities like clubs and sports, in addition to keeping an active social life and maybe even a part-time job. That's a lot to keep track of each week.

The driving force behind time management is prioritizing. To establish a method for prioritizing, you must first know what you want to accomplish and what aspects of life are most important to you. After you determine what you want to achieve, you can make a plan and schedule for achieving it. This guidebook will help you determine your priorities and make a plan for meeting your goals.

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## **Priorities & Planning**

What matters to you? For most students at Miami getting a degree, hopefully within a reasonable time-frame, is one of their primary goals at the university. But almost everyone has other goals; long-term, short-term, and even goals related to their coursework. Some examples:

### Long-term Goals

- Graduate with a degree from Miami University
- Be a member of a team that wins a championship
- Get into a prestigious graduate school

### General Short-term Goals

- Finish foreign language requirement
- Train an extra hour each day
- Research requirements for graduate school

### Specific Project Short-term Goals

- Collect needed books and references
- Create an outline
- Write introduction
- Write section one

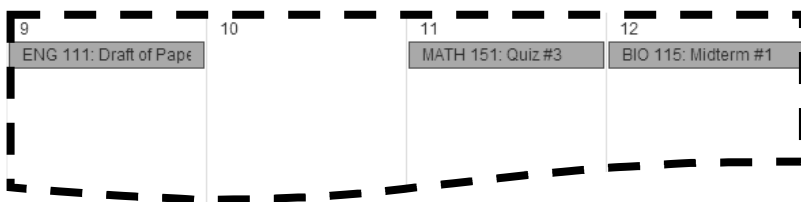
Your own goals and priorities will lay the foundation for time management. Having a firm understanding of what is important to you and what you want to accomplish will aid in making decisions about how you spend your time.

## **Your Master Schedule**

After thinking about your goals for the semester, you will want to think about how you can use your time most effectively to meet them. It helps to have a visual representation of your commitments for a semester and there are a lot of ways you can achieve this including:

- Miami Memos, available at the bookstore
- Weekly or Monthly planners or calendars
- Google Calendar or similar programs
- The Rinella Learning Center planner (available for purchase in 14 CAB)

At the beginning of each semester, regardless of the type of schedule you prefer to use, it is good practice to **put all major assignments from each of your syllabi into your schedule**. If you prefer to use both weekly and monthly paper planners, it is in your best interest to put all of this into both types of planner. You can easily take a look at your weekly and monthly assignments throughout the semester and be aware of what is coming next.



Each week you should review the following two to three weeks on your planner. You should also update your planner as soon as you hear about new assignments or responsibilities. This way, no assignments will surprise you and you will be able to keep yourself aware of all of the work that you need to complete.

### Digital vs. Paper: Pros & Cons

Online calendars, like Google Calendar, are a popular way to keep track of assignments. Paper planners require a lot of writing and often require you to look at them frequently. Google Calendar can remind you of events, so if you are forgetful, this can be quite useful. Some students also find using both paper and digital planners to be helpful. Consider these pros and cons before you choose which will work for you:

	Paper Calendar / Planner	Google Calendar / Digital Planner
<b>Pros</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple and easy to use</li> <li>• Concrete; physical reminder of assignments</li> <li>• No worries about wrong data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible; only have to enter data once</li> <li>• Email and text reminders</li> <li>• Accessible through phone</li> </ul>
<b>Cons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data is in one format and can't be viewed differently</li> <li>• If lost, information is gone</li> <li>• No reminders of assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires some knowledge to use effectively</li> <li>• Data can be input incorrectly</li> <li>• Abstract; easier to ignore or lose track of assignments</li> </ul>

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## Studying & Classes

The first rule for successful studying is to establish specific and regular times to study within your schedule. A useful and effective method for organizing study time is to use the time immediately before and immediately following each class to study. This method allows you to effectively use time between classes and to create large **blocks** of time to study a specific subject. This type of focused study increases comprehension and retention.

Often it is suggested to spend 2-hours out of class for each hour in class for studying. Considering that all courses are not the same you may need more or less time for each course each week. Some courses are more time consuming and challenging than others, so it may help to think about which classes require more time for study. For example, if you are taking a moderately easy course, you may only need one hour of study time for every in-class hour. Likewise, more challenging classes may require 3 or 4 hours of out-of-class study time for each in-class hour. See the sample schedule below:

Course	Difficulty Level	In-Class Hours	Hours per In-Class Hour	Total Study Hours per Week
BIO 115	High	4	3	12
ENG 111	Moderate	3	2	6
GTU 154	Moderate	3	2	6
MUS 135	Moderate	3	2	6
EDL 100	Easy	2	1	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>32</b>

After gaining an understanding of your studying and classroom time needs, you will be prepared to create a block schedule for yourself. Block schedules allow you to see how your day will play out. We encourage you to think about how you can best use the time you have available during the day—including before, after, and between classes—to complete most of your academic work. On the following pages we present an example of how you can use your time most effectively during the day.

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## Block Scheduling

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
8 a	<i>ENG Study</i>	<b>GTY 154</b>	<i>ENG Study</i>	<b>GTY 154</b>	<i>ENG Study</i>
9 a	<b>ENG 111</b>	<b>GTY 154</b>	<b>ENG 111</b>	<b>GTY 154</b>	<b>ENG 111</b>
10 a	<i>ENG Study</i>	<b>BIO 115-L</b>	<i>ENG Study</i>	<i>GTY Study</i>	<i>ENG Study</i>
11 a	<i>BIO Study</i>	<b>BIO 115-L</b>	<i>BIO Study</i>		<i>BIO Study</i>
12 p	<b>BIO 115</b>	<i>EDL Study</i>	<b>BIO 115</b>	<b>BIO 115</b>	<b>BIO 115</b>
1 p		<b>EDL 100</b>		<b>EDL 100</b>	
2 p	<i>MUS Study</i>	<b>EDL 100</b>	<i>MUS Study</i>	<b>EDL 100</b>	<i>MUS Study</i>
3 p	<b>MUS 135</b>	<i>EDL Study</i>	<b>MUS 135</b>	<i>EDL Study</i>	<b>MUS 135</b>
4 p	<i>BIO Study</i>	<i>BIO Study</i>	<i>GTY Study</i>	<i>BIO Study</i>	<i>MUS Study</i>
5 p	<i>GTY Study</i>				

As you can see above, block scheduling allows you to visualize how your day can be the most productive. If you look at the above example, you can see that a majority of this student's planned study times are during the day—for some classes, they are completely meeting their required study times just by studying in between and before classes. Consider how you can best use your time effectively during the day, so that you can meet your other goals during your time off in the evenings.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
8a					
9a					
10a					
11a					
12p					
1p					
2p					
3p					
4p					
5p					
6p					
7p					
8p					
9p					

**Create Your Own Block Schedule:**

Above is an empty block schedule for you to create your own. Don't feel pressured to fill in every single box—your first priority is to schedule enough time to meet your academic and social obligations, but leaving free time for yourself to complete personal tasks is important too.



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## **Procrastination**

Have you ever told yourself that you “work better under pressure?” Do you find yourself waiting until the last minute to complete your assignments? If so, you’re not alone. Procrastination is a common response to the stress of college and it is easy to convince ourselves that it is just because we’re lazy or just work better that way.

Procrastination isn’t necessarily a symptom of laziness. Few can argue that having less time to perfect an assignment is a good thing. It’s usually a symptom of being bored with the material you are studying or not understanding the assignment. These factors often make putting the assignment on the backburner seem much more attractive. If you find yourself struggling with procrastination try the following:

- Talk to your professor, especially if you don’t understand what you need to do for an assignment.
- Work with one of the tutors available in the Rinella Learning Center, or for writing assignments, in the Writing Center, to get a better grasp on the material.
- Sign up for an appointment with a Learning Specialist in the Rinella Learning Center—they can help you identify ways to become more engaged

## **Motivation**

It’s hard to talk about procrastination without talking about motivation. While having low motivation can lead to procrastination, low motivation itself often has a number of causes. If you’re having trouble focusing on your schoolwork, it may help to first think about where your struggles are coming from.

Are you simply bored with college? Are other priorities in your life more important right now than your studies? Do you feel socially isolated or anxious about life in general? All of these can impact motivation, but all of these can also be addressed.

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Finding a way to get yourself motivated is not something you have to do alone. If you're simply bored with college, it's good to consider the following methods and resources:

- Consider speaking to a career advisor or Learning Specialist about your major and career paths
- Break up complicated assignments into smaller parts
- Leave your technology behind—laptops and cell phones can be distractions and lead to lower motivation to work on your assignments
- Give yourself a clear stop and start time to studying with time for breaks in particularly long stretches
- Find a quiet place on campus to study, where you're less likely to be distracted



If you find yourself completely lacking direction, emotionally overwhelmed, or juggling too many priorities, keep in mind that there are resources on campus to help you.

- The Rinella Learning Center offers appointments for students struggling with motivation and we can help you find resources on campus—give us a call at 513-529-8741
- If you're feeling emotionally drained, overwhelmed, or anxious, professional counselors are available to assist you at Student Counseling Services: 513-529-2975

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## Resources

There are numerous resources available to you to assist in developing better time management skills. If you are interested in learning more about time management please explore the following resources:

### **On-Campus Resources:**

<i>The Rinella Learning Center</i>	513-529-8741
<i>Student Counseling Services</i>	513-529-2975
<i>Career Services</i>	513-529-3831

### **Web Resources:**

#### **Time Management Test**

[http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE\\_88.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_88.htm)

#### **Time Management Self-Quiz**

<http://www.uccs.umn.edu/oldsite/lasc/handouts/checklisttime.html>

### **Notes:**



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If you are interested in working with a Learning Specialist to improve your note-taking, test-taking, or general study strategies, please contact:

**Miami University**  
**Bernard B. Rinella, Jr. Learning Center**  
**513.529.8741**  
**[MiamiOH.edu/learning](http://MiamiOH.edu/learning)**



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