Survival Skills

**Getting More Done In Less Time**

- Monitor your time for a week to see how you actually spend your time. The results are always surprising.
- Create a schedule for yourself as a guide, but be willing to be flexible when necessary.
- Each night prepare a list of things you hope accomplish the next day.
- Every morning look at your to-do list. Determine which task you dislike the most and do it first. Completing unpleasant tasks decreases anxiety and gives you a sense of accomplishment.
- Write things down to eliminate confusion and forgetting.
- Keep a record of all test dates, assignment deadlines, appointments, etc., on a calendar.
- Improve efficiency by 'bunching' activities. For example, plan one afternoon a week for running errands such as shopping, banking, picking up cleaning, etc.
- Do specific tasks on specific days.
- Focus your efforts on items that will have the best long-term benefits.
- If a project seems overwhelming, divide it into smaller tasks and complete one immediately. Doing the first task will help dissipate negative feelings and encourage you to go on.
- Cut off non-productive activities as quickly as possible.
- Learn to delegate tasks to others when you can.
- Use your personal time clock; know your own best working style.
- Set time limits for projects and activities.
- Concentrate on one thing at a time.
- Give yourself time off and special rewards when you’ve done important things.
- Make maximum use of short time periods.
- Keep your desk cleared to prevent distractions while working.
- Do not waste time regretting your failures.
- Remember, the less time you feel you have to spare; the more important it is for you to plan your time carefully.

**Managing Stress**

- Discover what situations cause you stress and why. Knowing what triggers your stress gives you an opportunity to help prevent or reduce your body’s reaction.
- Evaluate your stressors: is the stress-causing event important to you or is it something that you can delegate to somebody else?
- Remember, what is stressful for one person may not be stressful for another.
- Learn to discriminate when you try to change stressful situations (or people) and when to hold back. Calculate what is in your best interest in the long run and save energy for the important battles.
- When you cannot change or control things, letting go can be freeing. Putting your energy into pursuits that are in front of you can release pressure.
- Frankly assess what you as an individual can or cannot manage at any given time. Be honest with yourself about your capabilities of stress tolerance.
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities. Entrusting responsibility for making decisions and/or carrying out tasks to others who are capable of doing the job adequately involves educating others as to what is needed or expected; following up on task completion; and providing them with sufficient authority.
- Confront the stressor effectively. Assert yourself, attempting to change something or someone that is creating pressure by saying no, setting limits, expressing your feelings, asking directly for what you need.
• Learn to say no. Protect your priorities by learning to decline, tactfully but firmly, every request that doesn't contribute to the achievement of your goals.
• Keep your social and academic commitments within limits. Learn how much time you need to complete assignments, sustain relationships and maintain yourself (eating, sleeping, clothes washing, etc.). Journaling can help you keep an accurate account of your daily activities.
• Sometimes stressful situations can lead to better outcomes. Try to look for the opportunity that may come from the stressful situations. Finding out that you are not really committed to your major can be stressful. But it can lead to finding a more satisfying field of study or career.
• Ask for help. Reach out to family, friends, fellow students to build a support system. Build a safe outlet for gripes, frustrations, and pent-up feelings.