

## **APSU Writing Center**

### Time Management for Graduate Students

- Managing your time effectively as a graduate student is crucial for both productivity and maintaining balance. Here are some strategies to help you stay on track with your writing and academic goals.

#### **Set Clear Goals for Writing Assignments**

- Establishing clear, actionable goals is key to staying motivated and organized. Consider using the SMART goal-setting framework:
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Action-oriented
  - Realistic
  - Time-targeted
  - Set deadlines for where you want to be with your project at specific times, and give yourself clear, achievable objectives.

#### **Use Time Blocks and the Pomodoro Technique**

- Break your writing into sections with dedicated time for each. Set a deadline for each section, and build in rewards for completing them.
- Work for 25 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break. After completing four "Pomodoros," take a longer break of 15-30 minutes. This helps maintain focus and prevent burnout.

#### **Find a Suitable Place to Work**

- Your workspace can directly affect your productivity. Consider these factors when setting up:
  - Quiet and free of distractions
  - Clear and uncluttered
  - Comfortable
  - Distraction-free
- Also, think about your optimal work time. Do you work best in the morning, afternoon, or night?

#### **Use the "Eat the Frog" Technique**

- Tackle your most important tasks first, rather than procrastinating by doing easier tasks. This helps ensure that your priority work gets done.

#### **Backplanning**

- Work backward from the assignment due date. Break down the writing steps and set deadlines for each phase.
- Don't forget to schedule an appointment at the Writing Center to get another perspective on your work!

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**Use the Eisenhower Matrix for Prioritization**

- The Eisenhower Matrix (also known as the Urgent-Important Matrix) helps you prioritize tasks based on their urgency and importance:
  - **Do First:** Tasks that are both urgent and important
  - **Schedule:** Important but not urgent tasks
  - **Delegate:** Urgent but not important tasks
  - **Don't Do:** Tasks that are neither urgent nor important
- This matrix helps you focus on the tasks that matter most and avoid getting distracted by less important tasks.

**Reward Yourself for Progress**

- Graduate school can feel like an endless cycle of work without instant gratification. To combat this, find short-term, process-oriented rewards:
  - For example, when applying for a scholarship, focus on the skills you'll develop (like grant writing) rather than just the outcome (winning the award).
- Create your own rewards for each milestone, such as taking a break, going for a walk, or treating yourself to something you enjoy.

By applying these time management strategies, you'll not only improve your productivity but also reduce stress and increase your chances of success as a graduate student.



## APSU Writing Center References

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