



Stay away from drugs and alcohol ...

They kill your whole evening and leave you groggy the next day. Alcohol abuse is the number one reason for student failure and academic dismissal. Don't let it happen to you.



Learn which study breaks you don't come back from ...

such as online chats, video game marathons, etc., and avoid them until you're done for the evening. Instead, find mildly amusing distractions that won't hold your interest for more than five or 10 minutes, and use them as study breaks.



Don't put yourself in a position of vulnerability ...

by waiting until the last minute to get serious about a project. In the real world, your employer won't want to hear about how you didn't start a six-week project until the weekend before it was due, whereupon you promptly got the flu and your hard drive exploded. Your professors won't want to hear it either. The chance to use those excuses ends in high school. By taking responsibility for the things you can control, you reduce your chances of being blind-sided by life's unpredictability.



Estimate and budget reasonable amounts of time ...

for phases of a project, and for studying. If you've kept up, there should be no reason to stay up all night preparing for a test. If you haven't, it's likely to be only marginally helpful anyway. Some people fall behind because they work too hard—amassing hundreds of references for a paper or endlessly reviewing notes for one class while falling behind in another. Do your best work, but

learn to be satisfied and know when you have to move on to another responsibility—especially if it's yourself, your family or your significant other.



Avoid distractions that make you quit early ...

For a helpful list of suggestions, see the CAPS brochure on "Maximizing Your Time for Academic Success."



If you're falling behind, admit it immediately ...

and go to the Academic Support Center or CAPS. You can receive tutoring and/or improve study habits, as well as learn time management, managing test anxiety, etc. If necessary, CAPS counselors can help you approach your professors and request some extra help. Remember that your professors are human and care about students who want to learn. On the other hand, they are not likely to be sympathetic to problems they're only learning about the day before the final exam.



Remember that most of the pressure students feel comes from assignments hanging over their heads ...

You can spend a whole day putting off a paper and never feeling relaxed, and then be up all night wishing you'd started earlier. If, instead, you do the paper during the day, you will truly be able to relax that night. A favorite "Peanuts" cartoon shows Linus holding *Moby Dick* and complaining that he has to read the whole book and write a report by tomorrow. Sally asks, "The teacher gave you one night to read *Moby Dick* and write a report on it?" He replies, "No, she gave us the whole semester. But it's due tomorrow."

"Hard work is often the easy work you did not do at the proper time."

—Bernard Meltzer

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

CAPS' goals are to promote the best possible academic, vocational and emotional health.

Our services are available to students and their immediate families.

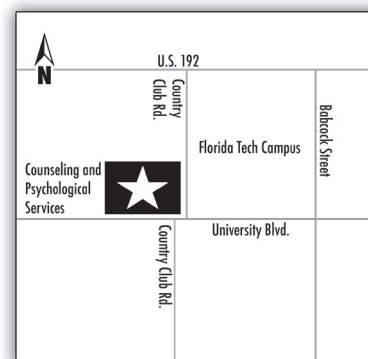
Center Hours

Monday–Thursday: 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Friday: 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Location

CAPS is located at the intersection of Country Club Road and University Boulevard, west of Babcock Street.



For additional academic success resources and helpful articles, access the CAPS Web site at www.fit.edu/caps or contact CAPS at (321) 674-8050.

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Overcoming Procrastination



Valuable Tips and Techniques for Optimizing Your Time

Florida Institute of Technology
Counseling and Psychological Services

OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION

Mylan Kaltman, Psy.D. and James R. Oelschlager, Psy.D.

Let's start at the beginning ...

Do you really like what you're studying?

Does the material hold your interest?

Do the concepts excite you?

Can you picture spending your working life in this field?

If not, then perhaps you should consider speaking with your academic adviser or getting some career counseling at CAPS.

Changing majors is much easier than changing careers!

Once you determine that you are pursuing the appropriate area of study, you may want to incorporate some of the following suggestions. They are designed to help you improve your work habits, increase your efficiency and reduce unnecessary stress.

Buy and use a schedule book ...

that breaks each day into half-hours. Keeping good track of time is the best way to make sure it doesn't slip away.

Break your tasks into small chunks ...

then schedule them. Writing "paper due" in your schedule book is fine, but it won't help you to organize the time between now and when the paper is due. Be specific. Try writing "copy three articles for paper" in the time slot between two classes. It's been said, "The way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time!"

Create meaningful short-term goals ...

and post them in conspicuous places. Something like "I will finish writing my paper by Friday at 5 p.m. so I can have the weekend free to pay attention to my significant other," on a Post-it note on the refrigerator or the TV. Keep meaningful long-term goals in mind, too. A former roommate kept a framed poster of a Lamborghini above his desk, explaining that every page he turned got him a little closer to the driver's seat. Whenever he felt like quitting, he looked up at his motivation.

Write all of your commitments in your schedule book ...

and take a look at—as singer/songwriter Dave Matthews puts it—"the space between." Learn to take advantage of small pockets of time. The 15 minutes before class is enough time to review your notes; the 30 minutes between class is enough time to do some studying.

Stay ahead. Getting an early start on projects, papers and reading is the best way to make sure you don't get overwhelmed. Wouldn't

it be nice to be one of those students who actually gets a decent night's sleep before arriving on time to turn in a paper, as opposed to the one who is screaming at the printer not to run out of ink, already ten minutes late for class?

Build a "time cushion" during the first week of school ...

Before the semester really gets rolling, get ahead on the reading. Three weeks into the semester, you'll feel on top of things, and you'll be able to stay there.

Once you get ahead, stay ahead ...

Professors assume, or at least hope, that you've done the assigned readings before you get to class. If you have, the lectures are much easier to follow and your notes will

make much more sense when you sit down to study. Also, being a little ahead in the reading will alert you to chapters or concepts that might give you more difficulty and you'll have extra time to study them or seek help.



Just Do It!

Always do a little work ...

even if you sit down saying "I really don't feel like doing this now." Those little time snatches add up.

Begin assignments immediately ...

The worst part of any project is when you haven't started. Skim the chapter, pick a topic for the paper, do some research online, scribble a rough draft. Whatever you have to do—get started. Imagine being able to say "I've been procrastinating on the paper. I'll probably need some more references and my draft needs serious help," instead of "I haven't even started yet."

Think of college as a nine-to-five job ...

There is some logic to the idea. If you get to school at nine and work until five, you'll probably have your evenings and weekends entirely free. Also, you'll be doing your studying during daytime hours, when most people learn better.

Make sleep a priority ...

Most students suffer chronic fatigue, making it difficult to be motivated and even more difficult to learn new things. At the risk of shattering the orthodoxy of academic life—coffee is not a substitute for sleep. Neither is tea, espresso, ephedrine, No-Doze™, Vivarin™, etc.