



# SUCCESSFUL STUDY STRATEGIES

## PLANNING AND TIME MANAGEMENT



### **STEP ONE: State Your Goals**

The more specific your goals are, the easier it is to determine the steps needed to meet them. Write them down and cross them off as you go along.



### **STEP TWO: Analyze Your Existing Use of Time**

Take a detailed look at how you have spent a week of time and how much studying you have actually done:

- On a PLTC Weekly Schedule, record everything you do -- including time for class, studying, phoning, eating, sleeping, exercising, laundry, etc.
- Total the number of hours of study time at the end of each day and at the end of the week.
- Look over your schedule for patterns in how you use your time. In reflecting on your study habits (both good and bad!), ask yourself:

I am surprised that I spent so much/so little time on...

I can see that I'm in the habit of...

What times do I study most effectively? How available are they?

What time commitments might I consider eliminating/adding?



### **STEP THREE: Analyze Your Tasks and Estimate Completion Time**

- On an PLTC Monthly Schedule, list the deadlines for major assignments.
- On a separate sheet, break each assignment into smaller, more manageable tasks and estimate the amount of time it will take to complete them.
- Prioritize the tasks and your immediate assignments.



### **STEP FOUR: Plan Ahead**

- Log your fixed time commitments for the week on an PLTC Weekly Schedule. Be sure to include time for daily living activities.
- Identify available study time and match specific tasks to these slots.
- Plan your schedule a day or two in advance, but make sure its flexible enough for revisions if your priorities change or new ones pop up.
- Use your Monthly Schedule to mark dates to begin and/or complete the smaller tasks within an assignment.

## TIPS TO HELP MAXIMIZE YOUR STUDY TIME

**TIP 1:** Set specific and realistic goals.

The more specific your goals are, the easier it is to determine the steps needed to achieve them. The more realistic they are, the more likely it is you will achieve them.

**TIP 2:** Prioritize.

Awareness of a task's importance forces you to plan enough time to complete it.

**TIP 3:** Learn about your study habits.

Knowing your best habits and patterns for studying, as well as eating, sleeping and exercising, allows you to plan a schedule that's most effective and comfortable for you.

**TIP 4:** Use small blocks of time effectively.

Those "in-between" times (e.g., on the bus, that half-an-hour between classes) are excellent for reviewing class notes or flash cards and chipping away at reading.

**TIP 5:** Take study breaks at meaningful intervals.

Be aware of how long you can study before needing a break and where reasonable breaks occur within a task. Plan your study sessions with these chunks in mind for a more flexible and manageable schedule.

**TIP 6:** Plan your next steps at the end of each study session.

Noting what you will do when you return to your studies saves time and helps you focus on the task.

**TIP 7:** Review course material (and we mean it!)

Review **lecture** notes right after class and fill in the gaps while the material is still fresh. Review homework right before a **discussion** class so you will be prepared to participate.

**TIP 8:** Work towards excellence rather than perfection.

Let's face it, perfection takes an infinite amount of time and can create unnecessary stress and disappointment. Strive for personal excellence and pride in your work.

