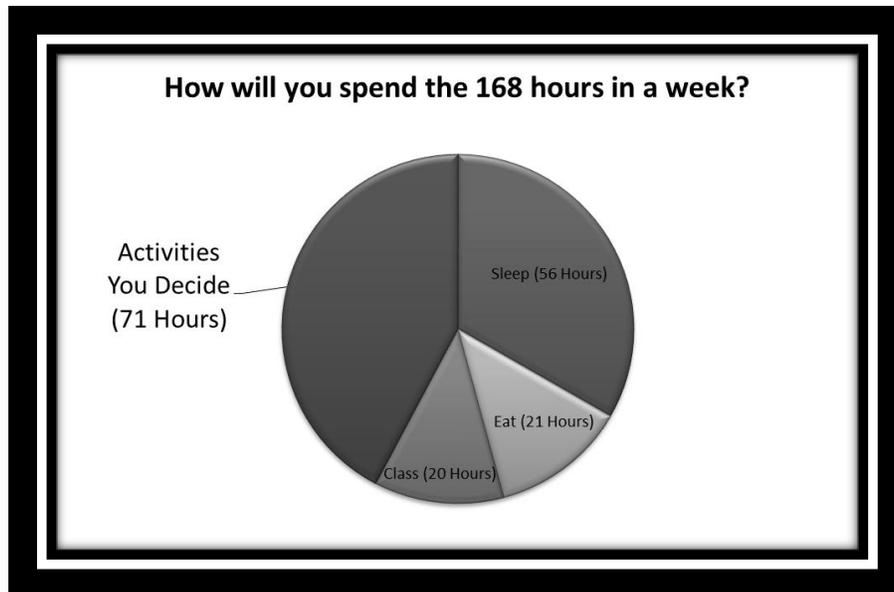


## SCHEDULING YOUR TIME

# WHY?

Assuming that you will sleep 8 hours a night and eat for 3 hours a day, you will have 71 hours of time a week, or about 10 hours a day, at your disposal to spend in whatever way you want. Ten of every 24 hours are hours in which you'll have to make DECISIONS about what to do.



Consider scheduling your time and what you will do during these times. If you decide to schedule your time, you will be removing yourself from constant day-to-day, hour-to-hour decisions about how to spend your time. For example, an hour well begun with study on one course is not disturbed by wondering when you will study for another course or when you'll be able to get out and have some fun.

# HOW?

A "study-time schedule" is a weekly plan of when and what you will study. It identifies specific times for studying particular subjects, as well as times for writing papers, conducting library research, and completing homework assignments for each course (McWhorter, 1992). Use the guidelines that follow to produce a schedule.

1. **Print the "SLAC Daily Schedule" off the website.**
2. **Schedule fixed blocks of time first.** Start with *class time* or *work time*, for instance. These time periods are usually determined in advance. Other activities must be scheduled around them. Then, schedule essential daily activities like *sleeping* and *eating* (Ellis, 1984).

3. **Figure out the time demands of each subject.** Some classes require more outside work than others. You will have to determine what is expected for each class and how many hours you need to meet that expectation. Until then, plan 2 to 3 hours of study time for every hour you spend in class (Ellis, 1984).
4. **Write down study times.** A typical 15-credit hour schedule will have 25-30 study hours.
  - A. Identify study hours by class--for example, "study biology" not just "study." You will be amazed at the amount of time you save by knowing what you are going to study, what materials you will need, etc., rather than having to make those decisions each time.
  - B. Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions. When possible, study in shorter sessions. Three 2-hour sessions are far more productive for most people than one 6-hour session (Ellis, 1984).
  - C. Use spare moments or waiting time effectively. The time spent waiting for a bus, commuting, or between classes can be used for study or review. Reviewing lecture notes, returned quizzes, etc. is an extremely important, but often neglected, type of study. It's especially wise to spend a few minutes reviewing **BEFORE** a class. Immediately **AFTER** a lecture class, spend a few minutes reviewing your notes while they are still fresh in your mind. A short, immediate review is vastly superior to many hours of deferred review.
  - D. When is your best time of day? Put as much of your studying as possible at that time, but do not kid yourself--most students study best during the daytime hours, not 3 o'clock in the morning.
5. **Include time for errands.** Time we spend buying toothpaste, paying bills, and doing laundry is easy to ignore. These little errands, which are easy to overlook, can destroy a tight schedule and make us feel rushed all week. Plan for them (Ellis, 1984).
6. **Schedule reasonable amounts of time**, especially on weekends, for having fun and relaxing (McWhorter, 1992).
7. **Set realistic goals.** Do not set yourself up for failure by telling yourself you can do a 4-hour job in 2 hours. There are only 168 hours in a week. If you schedule 169 hours, you lose before you begin (Ellis, 1984).
8. **Allow flexibility in your schedule.** Recognize that unexpected events will occur, so plan for the unexpected. Do not schedule every hour. Give yourself time to get between places, etc. (Ellis, 1984).



Keep your schedule where you can see it. It should be conspicuous, so put it on top of your desk or pin it to the wall.

**Sources:**

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