3 Tiers of Time Management

Tier 1

**Master Calendar** – What is my general weekly flow?

**Objective:** Mapping out a typical week’s schedule will help you visualize how you’d LIKE to use your time and how you ACTUALLY use your time. It can also show you where you have large chunks of unused or under-used time.

Tier 2

**Semester Calendar** – When is my work going to fit into the semester?

**Objective:** A semester Calendar is intended to outline when projects, papers, assignments, readings and exams are due to enable you to visualize where the bulk of your work will fall and to plan ahead so you don’t get caught off guard. Some students use one, all, or a combination of these formats to view and track their assignments.

a. **Snap Shot Calendar** – This tool is good to plot out your larger assignments (exams, papers and projects) into a one-page shot of all the weeks in the semester. This tool will give you a clear view of heavier and lighter weeks and allow you to prepare ahead of time on light weeks for the heavier weeks.

b. **Month-by-month Calendar** – One way to get a ‘big picture’ view of your semester’s flow AND have space to add a more significant amount of detail. This tool consists of a 6 or 12 page packet (depending on single or double sided) to give each month its own page and each day more space.

c. **Master Assignment Spreadsheet** – This tool is useful for organizing a course load that consists of a lot of details, readings, and small projects. A good strategy when filling it out is to color code different types of work (i.e. reading, exams, papers, projects). Also, for the student who falls behind easily in readings you can average the amount of pages you need to read per day or week to stay on track.

d. **Planner/organizer** – This can be an actual book/notebook or kept on a PDA or phone and can include project and paper deadlines, meetings, to do lists, contacts, reading due, etc.

(Over for Tier 3)
**Tier 3**

**The Details** – How am I going to organize, coordinate and complete my work?

a. **To do List** – Some students like to have a simple list of tasks they have to do by day or by week. If the satisfaction of crossing things off a list and seeing your progress sounds rewarding, this might be the simple solution for you.

   *Aspects to consider:* What is a reasonable amount of work to expect to get done in a day? How will you prioritize what gets done first and what, if anything, gets left until later?

b. **Hour-by-hour plan** – Some students need to budget their time very specifically and like to list exactly what they are going to do with their time for the day. This is a good tool to track what you *hope* to do versus what you *actually* do with your spare time.

   *Aspects to consider:* Do you like to plan out WHEN you will do things, or do you prefer to let it flow? Would it be helpful to learn how effective you are utilizing your time and how well you can stick to a schedule?

c. **Individual project timelines** – Now that you know when your work is due, you can plan out how you will get all of the work done in manageable sections. Refer back to your Semester Calendar to see what projects are biggest (most time consuming), are due soonest, or fall on very busy weeks. Based on this, prioritize your projects and papers and map out a timeline for each using the step method.

   *Aspects to consider:* Think about your writing/working process when plotting out the order of steps in your timeline.

   Are you a linear thinker and like to write an outline before beginning or do you like to let your outline develop as you write?

   Are you going to leave time to hand in a rough draft and revise?