HOW AM I GOING TO GET EVERYTHING DONE?

OR, HOW DO I AVOID PROCRASTINATION?
Case Study #1

Mary finds that after receiving her mid-term grades for her courses, she is not doing as well as she though she was doing. Mary felt that she was doing all the right things:

- Attending classes, but not on Friday.
- Spending 2 hours a night studying.
- Devoting 3-5 hours per week actively participating in a club.
- Working weekends 20-25 hours to pay bills.

Mary believes that if she continues in the same manner that she may receive the dreaded “academic warning, probation or dismissal letter.”

What are the implication(s) and what advice would your provide?
Case Study #2

Sam is constantly receiving what he believes to be threatening letters from the Bursar’s office asking him to pay the tuition bill. He is frustrated. Without thought, he runs to the Bursar’s office and in a loud and angry voice proceeds to inform the staff that there has been a mistake.

What are the implication(s) and how could Sam have better handled the situation?
Case Study #3

It seems that Juan is on the road to failing Math 099. Juan has math anxiety or phobia. He does not want to let anyone know that he cannot do math, so he avoids seeking assistance. His attendance is now becoming sporadic, even more so on Friday, the day after club night.

What are the implication(s) and what can Juan do to improve the situation?
Case Study #4

Jenny knew that after meeting Sofia during the EOP summer program that she would be the ideal roommate in the fall. Initially, everything was going well between the roommates. But as of late, Sofia has taken the liberty to have guests visit into the early morning hours and on occasion have a guest stay overnight. Even during quiet hours, Sofia has decided to play her music loud. Jenny is unable to study, nor sleep. Jenny finds it difficult to confront Sofia, in fear that she may be screamed at or taken to be the bad person. Jenny is not one to start trouble so she keeps quiet; little by little things begin to worsen.

What are the implication(s) and should Sofia do to gain back her respect?
Case Study #5

Eldridge attends all of his classes; he enjoys playing basketball prior to going to dinner. He spends 2 hours in the dining hall eating and talking to his friends, and then he goes back to the residence hall to play on his “XBOX 360” with his friends. There is a lot of pressure being placed on Eldridge to be a successful college student. He knows that he has poor study skills and his test grades are beginning to reflect it.

What are the implication(s) and how can Eldridge improve the situation?
NON-PROCRASTINATION

• make a schedule
• get motivated
• reevaluate your priorities
• take responsibility
• cause and effect relationships
• working “under pressure”
• think small
• be realistic
• focus on assets
• rewards
MAKE A SCHEDULE

• allocate specific times to complete tasks using monthly, weekly, daily planner, or PDA

  – Monthly: “THE BIG PICTURE” - use your syllabi to jot down projects, exams, papers, etc...

  – weekly: “THE SMALLER PICTURE” - what requires priority this week...

  – daily planner: “THINGS TO DO TODAY”
GET MOTIVATED

Define: Internal v. External Motivation

- it does no good to make a schedule unless you plan to follow it.
- work with a friend to motivate each other.
- consider how short-term and long-term will be fulfilled by getting things done on time.
- visualize how it felt to get tasks done on time in the past, and remember how stressful it was to put off work.
RE-EVALUATE YOUR PRIORITIES

• how do I prioritize success in school, social life, work, and other activities in your life?
• If school is your priority, then school work must come before any other activity.
• If you decide success in school is not your first priority, then don’t expect high grades.
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

• don’t make excuses to yourself for procrastinating and don’t blame others when distracted. saying “I’m so busy I never get to…” is just an excuse and form of procrastination.

• ultimately you have “control” of your actions.
CAUSE AND EFFECT RELATIONSHIP

• step back and critically examine cause and effect relationships in your life?
• how do I explain failures?
• to what factors do you attribute them? be honest.
• did you receive a poor grade on a project, examination, paper because you started it late or didn’t put in enough time?
• avoid rationalization like “the professor hates me” or “I didn’t understand the assignment”.
• thoughtfully examine the consequences of your behavior.
• some people describe themselves as “working best under pressure.”
• do you feel this way, honestly and critically on the validity of this statement?
• when you work under pressure, are you really turning in your best work?
  – if not, procrastination is having a negative impact on you.
  – if you really think you are doing your best, make sure the pressure comes from you and not someone else.
THINK SMALL

- because it is easier to put off overwhelming tasks than small ones, divide major assignments into smaller parts and work on one part at a time.
BE REALISTIC

- some people procrastinate because they have too much to do.
- they have every intention of doing things in a timely manner, but they run out of time.
- there are only 24 hours in a day.
- thoughtfully examine your obligations and responsibilities.
- is your schedule realistic?
- are you involved in too many activities?
- don’t “spread yourself too thinly” because none of your projects, exams, or paper will get the full attention they deserve.
FOCUS ON ASSETS

• some people are good at summarizing major ideas.
• others write exceptionally well.
• some people work well with others.
• find out what your assets are.
• then work them into everything you do.
• this will improve your confidence and motivation for tackling a distasteful job.
FOCUS ON ASSETS

• reward yourself lavishly when tasks are completed on time.
• make reward appropriate for the difficulty and boredom of the task