Developing a Study Routine

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We are back in session, and it is time for you to develop a study routine. Creating a plan of action can be a daunting task; however, if you choose to not place those important due dates on your calendar then you will find yourself stressed and overwhelmed. We often add to our own distress, when we choose to put off projects, papers and studying until the night before the exam or due date.

What can you do to prepare yourself for today? Consider following these Ten Steps to alleviate the impeding stress:

1) Mark your calendar with the due date (provided in the course syllabus).
2) Block-Off three days prior to the initial date.
3) Avoid making any additional plans—as this will cause a distraction.
4) On Day One, draft notecards (plain, lined or fluorescent) with key terminology.
5) Take frequent 10-minute breaks in between each set of terms (for 20+ terms).
6) Review the key terms before bed.
7) During your breaks, consume healthy snacks (trail mix, popcorn, etc..) and remain hydrated.
8) On Day Two, read each chapter and draft an outline. Divide the total chapters by the number of hours and focus on the material. Take frequent 10-minute breaks in between each chapter.
9) Review the Outlines before retiring to bed.
10) On Day Three, spend half of the day reviewing the key terms and take a 30-minute break. Consume a small meal (filled with a good source of protein and vegetables) and stay hydrated.

During the second half of the day, review all outlines and you are ready for the exam!

The same method can be used for drafting papers, with a final day spent on revisions. Preparing yourself for either task is crucial to success, so avoid simple distractions like Facebook, Snapchat, etc...

Three Quick Tips for drafting papers in three days:

1) Day 1 - Organize your ideas into sections: a) abstract, b) introduction, c) body d) conclusion, e) sources, f) future implications, and g) reference page— for further research or study.
2) Get sticky notes and label each section. Post them on a wall with free space, or a poster board (if applicable). Gather all sources and organize them in alphabetical order under your reference section. Create additional sticky notes with the name of each source to be
used in the desired order in your paper. Draft bulleted thoughts that you would like to include under each section (a – f).

3) Day 2 – Create a written draft of your organized thoughts on the computer, following the information you have posted on your wall or poster. Do not forget to select either APA, MLA, Chicago for the specific formatting style required by your professor.

4) Day 3 – Take your completed draft to the Writing Center, located in the Hall of Languages – Room 103, for assistance with grammar, formatting and clarity of expression. If you are short on time, then upload your drafted paper to the Online Writing Lab. For the specifics on accessing the OWL, submit a request to them via e-mail at: writing.tamuc@gmail.com.

Stay ahead by planning in advance, and following the guidelines provided by your professors. Ask questions for clarification and reward yourself by visiting the Counseling Center’s Relaxation Room to destress. You may just find that inner peace that you have been missing.