

Registration Tips

OFFICE OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Picking a class schedule is like putting a puzzle together. You need to identify the classes you want to take, figure out which days and times they meet and adjust for any overlaps — you can't be in two places at once! Typically you will take four to six courses a semester, depending upon how demanding they are. Here are a few things to consider when you register for your college classes:

- ⇒ **Plan ahead so you can register as soon as you are eligible.** The earlier you register, the more likely it is that you can get into the classes you want. Classes fill up, so make a list of alternative classes.
- ⇒ **Plan your for studying time.** Students are advised to spend at least two hours studying for every hour of in-class time.
- ⇒ **Anticipate how your schedule will play out each week.** Make sure you have a reasonable workload, spread out somewhat evenly over the week, not a crushing load on one or two days. Do you work better with a 50 minute class or a 75 minute class? Would class meetings three days per week or two days per week work best for you? Do you need time between classes to prepare?
- ⇒ **Take breaks.** Strategically planned breaks during your day can help your brain wire information. Research suggests that back-to-back classes may make learning more difficult.
- ⇒ **Think about yourself and how you learn best.** Are you a morning person? Do you need to take medications at a certain time of the day? Do you need breaks between classes? Are multiple classes in a row stressful?
- ⇒ **Schedule time to get involved.** Build time in for employment, service projects, socialization, clubs, errands, and other co-curricular and personal needs.
- ⇒ **Plan for your health.** Plan to get enough sleep. Breakfast is proven to be the most important meal of the day and crucial for concentration. If you are tired and hungry, your learning is impacted. Keep in mind regular medications or dietary concerns that help you maintain your health. Plan time to eat well and for exercise. A healthy body will help you maintain a healthy brain.
- ⇒ **Consider course expectations.** You may not realize how challenging college courses can be, and how much reading and other work they require. Build your schedule around subjects that require different kinds of work (e.g. a lot of reading and writing, solving problem sets, hands on activities). Keep in mind things like course prerequisites, major and minor requirements, scheduling labs, and availability of tutoring.
- ⇒ **Take an extra course.** Sometimes we don't know what we can handle until we push ourselves a little. If you think you can handle 12-14 credits, try 16-18 credits. After the term starts, you can evaluate the expectations of each course. If you have concerns, you can consult with the instructor or academic advisor. If necessary, you can then drop a course--be sure you check deadline dates!
- ⇒ **Seek guidance.** There are many people who can give you advice on scheduling, including your academic advisor, family and friends.