

ONE-WEEK LOG

Creating a One-Week Log (OWL) will help you recognize what you do with your time on a weekly basis. There are 168 hours in a week. The way you spend them will show you what your current priorities really are. Then you can compare the current priorities with what is important to you in terms of life goals. If it turns out that you do not spend enough time on what is most important, the OWL becomes a tool for changing the way you manage your time.

Step #1: Map out your schedule for an entire week.

Pages 5-7 of this document contain a one-week calendar template divided into half-hour intervals. Use the half-hour segments to record your activities for a week of this semester. Use these blocks of time to keep track of what you do during a week. You should enter something into each block. Keep it brief but specific; you can list “free time” if you have no other options. The template starts on a Sunday, but you may begin recording your time any day of the week. It is important to finish step #1 before continuing on to the rest of the worksheet. The more honest you are, the more helpful the OWL will be.

Step #2: Total your hours.

Calculate the number of hours in your OWL for each of the categories below. (It may help to color code your activities so you can total the hours accurately.) Record your results in the chart that follows. Your totals should add up to 168, the number of hours in a week.

Time in class = time spent in the classroom.

Homework and study time = time spent completing homework, reading, studying, or working with a tutor.

Sleep = any time spent sleeping (including naps).

Job = time spent at a paying job, work/study job, or official school sports practices, workouts, and events.

Personal time = basic self-care, shopping, cleaning house, cooking, commuting, workouts not related to official school sports, relaxing, watching TV, Facebook, etc.

Social time = time with friends, church, temple, volunteering, social clubs, intramural sports, Greek life, etc.

| Activity | Time spent |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Time in class = | |
| Homework and study time = | |
| Sleep = | |
| Job = | |
| Personal time = | |
| Social time = | |
| Total hours = | |

Step #3: Analyze your numbers

So how do your numbers stack up against “ideal” numbers?

Your **time spent in class** should be equal to or greater than your credit hours (keeping in mind that most one-credit-hour science labs run for two and a half hours).

The amount of time you spend on **homework and studying** should correspond with the following equations:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Freshmen and sophomores = | Credit hours × 2 |
| Juniors and seniors = | Credit hours × 3 |
| Graduate students, law students, medical students, or students taking 6-week summer courses = | Credit hours × 4 |

For example, a freshman taking a total of 12 credit hours should devote approximately 24 hours a week to studying for tests, completing assigned readings, making note cards, researching and writing papers, meeting with study groups, attending office hours, or any other actions required for school work. Think of college as a full-time job. If you only devote part-time hours to a full-time job, it’s doubtful that you will keep that job for very long. The same is true for college. To perform at your highest level and reach your intended GPA, you need to dedicate yourself and your time.

Getting the right amount of **sleep** in college can be difficult for students. Many students sleep as much as they want at night and take a lot of naps during the day. Other students find time for only a few hours of sleep each night. Getting too much sleep may take up time that you should devote to your studies, and not getting enough sleep will lead to regular fatigue during the daytime and prevent you from performing at your best. For these reasons, aim for 50-60 hours of sleep per week (approximately eight hours per night).

Since college is a full-time job, you are going to run into trouble if you try to work another full-time **job** at the same time. If the above freshman needs 36 hours for class and study, 60 hours for sleep, and 40 hours for a job, he or she has only 32 hours left in the week. Add a few more credit hours or more study hours needed when the student is a junior or senior, and time becomes even more scarce. So keep your job hours below 20, or work with your Dean’s office to lower your course load to become a part-time student.

Being a college student does not mean that you can’t have any fun. Even students who earn straight A’s make **socializing time** for friends or take **personal time**. You need to reserve time each week to blow off steam, have fun, or simply “zone out” to recharge your internal batteries. The blowing off steam and zoning out should NOT happen during class time, nor should they take up so much of your time that you have none left for studying!

Step #4: Update your schedule

Now let the OWL tell you about how you manage your time. The amount of time you spend on an activity usually indicates its priority level in your life. Review the numbers in your chart, and consider the following questions.

- Does this chart represent an ideal schedule for academic success?
- Are your priorities accurately reflected according to how you spend your time?
- What changes can you make to better balance your schedule?

Based on this information, use the chart below to adjust your schedule to reflect your priorities. If you are not devoting enough time to homework and studying, then add the amount of hours you need to reach your ideal number. Since there are only 168 hours in a week, you need to take those additional study hours away from another category. You must decide which activities deserve the most time and which activities are of a lower priority. Attending class and devoting time to homework and study should be your highest priorities as a college student. Be sure to reflect these priorities in your time management chart by devoting the necessary time to them.

| Activity | Time spent | Add | Subtract | New total |
|---------------------------|------------|-----|----------|-----------|
| Time in class = | | | | |
| Homework and study time = | | | | |
| Sleep = | | | | |
| Job = | | | | |
| Personal time = | | | | |
| Social time = | | | | |
| Total hours = | | | | |

AS AN EXAMPLE... let's look at the OWL for a freshman named Kevin, who is taking 12 credit hours. He works a part-time job as a cook to make some extra spending money. However, he feels tired most of the week and loves to squeeze in a nap rather than go to the library to study. Kevin also spends time at his fraternity each week and loves to hang out with his friends over the weekend. Between school, cooking, and all the campus social events, Kevin feels rushed during the week. He can't seem to catch up and feels like his life is a bit out of control. Here are his weekly totals:

| Activity | Time spent |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Time in class = | 12 |
| Homework and study time = | 15 |
| Sleep = | 76 |
| Job = | 20 |
| Personal time = | 14 |
| Social time = | 31 |
| Total hours = | 168 |

Let's say that Kevin decides to make some changes to his schedule. To increase his study time, he wants to add nine hours to his homework and study time, raising his total to 24. This is based on the equation that, as a freshman, he should study for the number of credit hours (12 in Kevin's case) multiplied by two.

To find the nine extra hours, Kevin converts 9 hours from his 76 hours of sleep. The 67 hours left over still provide a healthy amount of sleep time each week. Remember that Kevin felt that he never had any time for himself but was always rushing from one place to another. In an attempt to feel more relaxed and in control of his life, Kevin decides to reserve another 10 hours a week for himself. He talks to his boss at work and drops his hours in the kitchen from 20 to 10. This still leaves Kevin some extra pocket money each week, but the extra hours for himself gives him a chance to slow down and relax more. Kevin may feel less tired, more balanced, and less rushed from day to day with another hour or so each day. He also still has 31 hours to spend on social activities! Here is Kevin's new plan:

| Activity | Time spent | Add | Subtract | New total |
|---------------------------|------------|------|----------|------------|
| Time in class = | 12 | | | 12 |
| Homework and study time = | 15 | + 9 | | 24 |
| Sleep = | 76 | | - 9 | 67 |
| Job = | 20 | | - 10 | 10 |
| Personal time = | 14 | + 10 | | 24 |
| Social time = | 31 | | | 31 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total hours = | 168 | | | 168 |

Managing your time commitments and finding a balance in your schedule is an ever-changing process. Even though Kevin's adjustments to his schedule may work for this semester, things will likely change in the following semester. Time management is a skill that requires constant attention – but the more you practice, the better you become.

If you would like to discuss time management or how to make adjustments to your weekly routine, contact the FSU Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) to schedule a personal academic consultation with an ACE instructor. The ACE staff can help you create a balanced schedule that can improve your academic performance, decrease your stress level, and help you stay more organized. Check out the website for more information on personal academic consultations or other programs offered by ACE.

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