It's Beach Time!

Aligning Your Workload and Career

Part 2: Strategies for Balancing Workload

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Your presenters

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Learning objectives for today's workshop

- Participants will
  - Reflect on their experience tracking their own time use
  - Explore strategies for managing time well
  - Consider when to say "yes" and "no" to demands on their time
  - Reflect on requests for their time that they received in the last two weeks, and how they responded
  - Select at least one strategy to put into practice between now and the final workshop

Reflecting on your own time use

In the chat, share something you learned from tracking your work activities for a week.

Were there any surprises?

How did the experience make you feel?

What does "time management" typically look like?

- Constantly moving from task to task
- Little pre-planning or organizing
- Often a lack of clear priorities
- Excessively optimistic about how much time things *actually* require
- Little strategy about taking on new work
- Frustration with work routines that seem unworkable

Some principles of effective time management

- Knowing your priorities

- Keeping track of your work time

- Planning and blocking out specific times

- Strategizing about work requests

- Establishing work routines that work for you

Time strategies we will consider

- Prioritization:
  - Identify priorities
  - Block time
  - Make a *manageable* to-do list

- Dealing with email
  - Manage and limit email response time
  - Use the two-minute rule
  - Have templates for routine responses and requests

- Finding focus
  - Avoid interruptions
  - Consider what can be delegated
  - Organize

- Dealing with new demands
  - Be strategic about "yes" and "no"
  - Look for support and allies
 - Recruit a "No" committee

- Stay Healthy!

Identifying Priorities

- Identify larger goals (the "big picture")
  - What can you work on that will contribute to these?
  - What would be doable over the near term (say, the next month)
- Ensure you include goals that relate to your career progression
  - What *must* get completed?
  - How much time will it take?
- Recognize *important* versus *urgent* goals
  - Do some things always get pushed to the back burner?
  - Can you limit the time being spent on less important goals?

# Identifying priorities: some typical challenges

- Is it manageable? Can it be accomplished

- Be realistic about time!
  - Everything takes longer than you expect
  - Plan for time on the margins – down time and transition time

- The "SMART Goals" concept
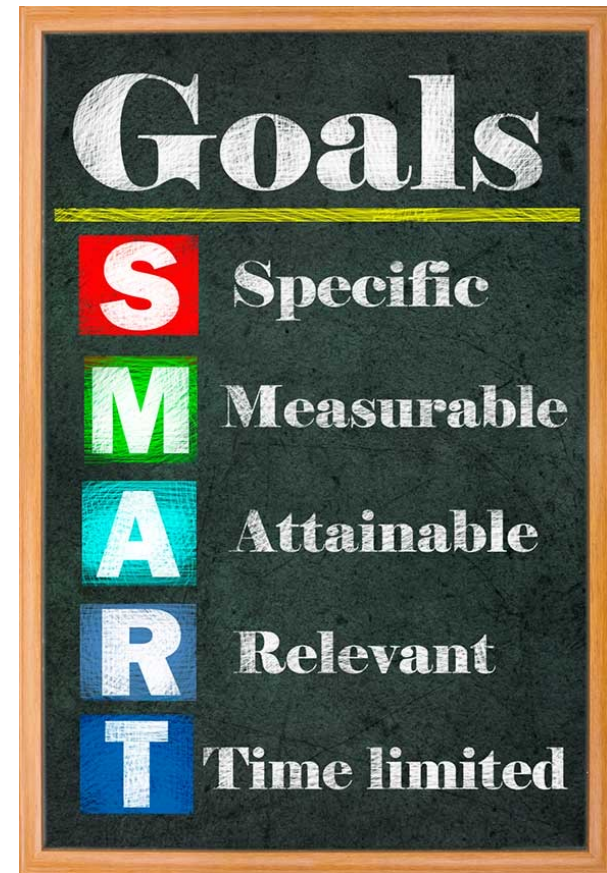
Tyranny of the urgent

- Think about:
  - What makes a task *urgent*?
  - *Who* made the task urgent?
  - What makes it *important*?
  - Are you spending too much time on tasks that are neither urgent or important?

Important & Urgent	Important and Not Urgent
Not Important & Urgent	Not Important or Urgent
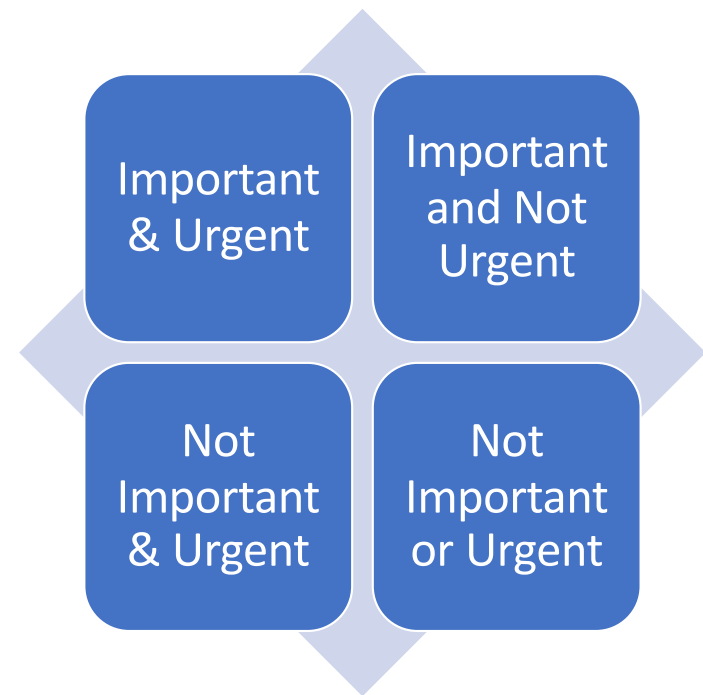
Breakout activity

- In your group, spend a minute or two identifying one or two of your own goals/priorities for the rest of the semester

- Then discuss these goals with the group. Which are most urgent? Most important? How did you decide?

Block Time for Priorities

- Schedule your priorities
- Include deadlines
- Schedule routine activities
- Treat high priority blocks as sacred
- Make recurring on calendar
- Schedule meeting blocks that can be canceled
- Say "sorry" when calendar is booked

| Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
8-9					
9-10					
10-11					
11-12					
12-1					
1-2					
2-3					
3-4					
4-5					
5-6					

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Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
8-9	WFH	Travel	Travel	Travel	WFH
9-10	Research				
10-11	Research	Teach		Teach	
11-12	Research	Teach		Teach	
12-1	Exercise				Exercise
1-2	Prep				
2-3	Prep		Teach		
3-4	Prep		Teach		
4-5	Office Hr		Teach		Grant due
5-6					

Things to consider when blocking time

- Reflect on your peak concentration times
    - Are you a night person? Best in the morning?
- How do your needs change over time?
    - Academic rhythm (time of semester)
- In our teaching and research we reflect, adapt, and change, so...
- Scheduling requires flexibility informed by experience, learning, "other humans" in your life
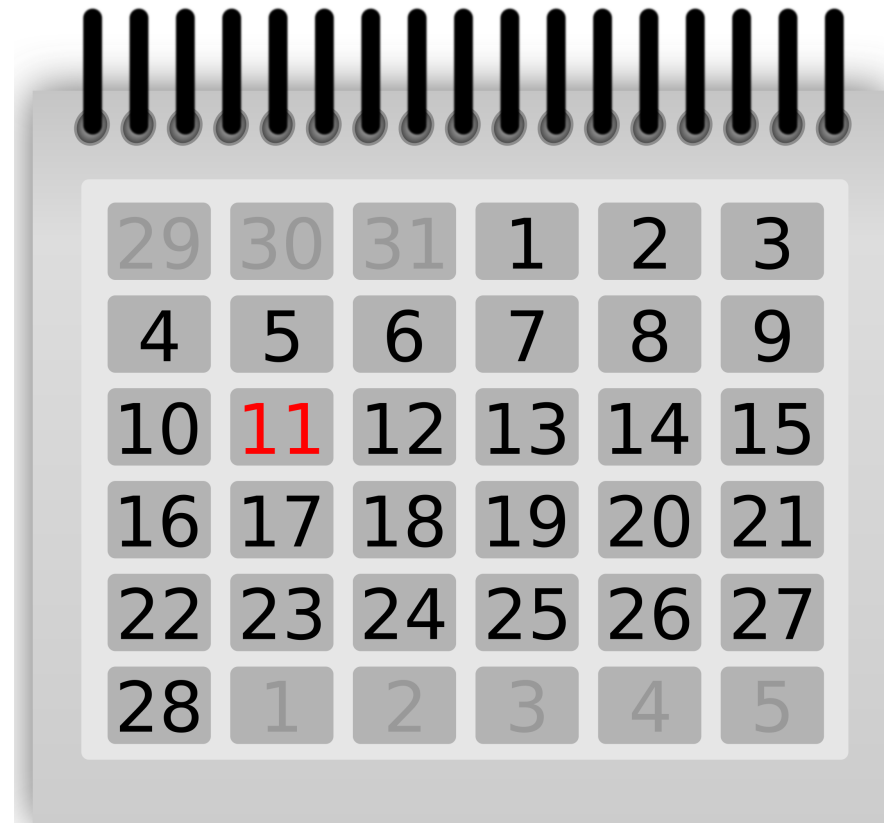
Email strategies

- Choose 2-3 times a day to check messages
  - When convenient for you!
  - Set expectations
  - Schedule replies (e.g. for students)
  - Turn off notifications
- Categorize messages (organize as you see fit)
  - Pin, flag, etc.
- Sometimes a phone call is better than an email!
- Use different email addresses for different purposes

2 minute rule

- Touch the email as little as possible
- No response required: Trash/file/archive
  - o Add reminders to your calendar (deadlines, etc.)
- Respond if <2 minutes
- Delegate or schedule time if >2 minutes
  - o Acknowledge right away, full response later
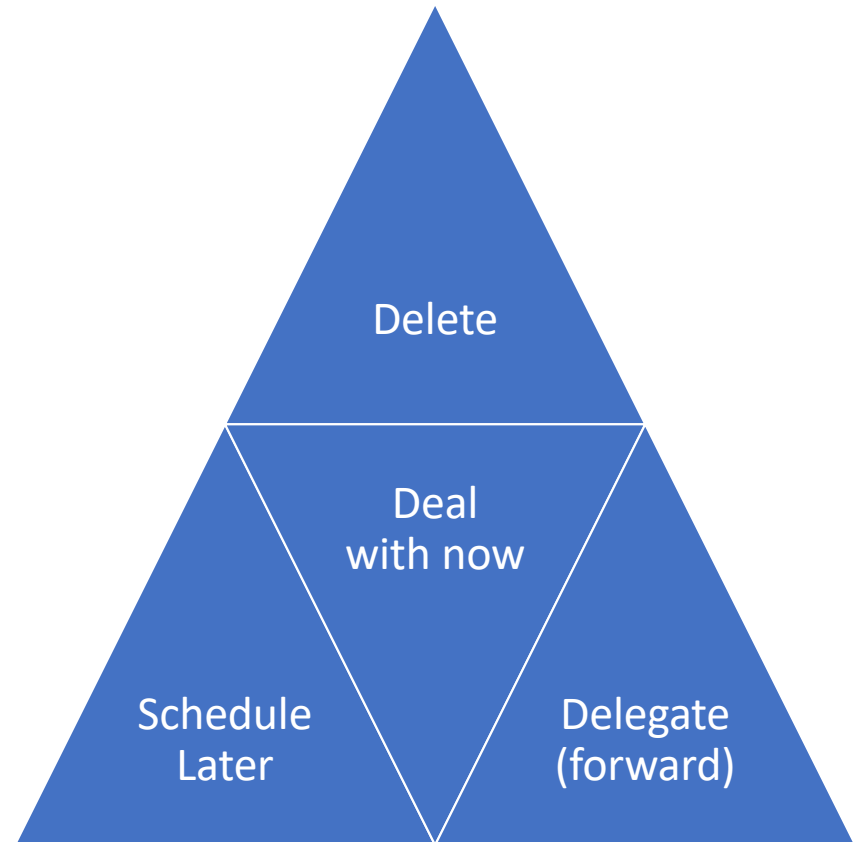
Being mindful of others' time

- Use "reply-all" selectively
- Use "bcc" for really large groups
- If *you* are asking for something, make it clear what you need
- When scheduling meetings:
    - Take advantage of calendar functions
    - If you are polling on availability, set parameters for response time
- Be nice!

Build templates for routine (and common!) requests, responses

- Examples
  - Requests for letters of rec
  - Thesis committee
  - Committee service
  - Common student issues
- Include the things you need to know
- Repurpose previous responses
- Compose once, use many times

Let's share tips and tricks!

- What strategies do you use to keep email under control?

Back to the homework: What kind of requests came in?

- Share your experience (chat or raise hand!)

- How did you decide how to respond?

Help Wanted

Saying Yes or No Strategically

- Avoid saying "Yes" on the spot
  - "This sounds great, but let me check my calendar and get back to you"
- Examine priority list
- Evaluate fit with passions, priorities, career development
- Estimate how long it'll take to carry out request
  - If you don't know, ask others, and then multiply * 2 since academics underestimate.

Saying Yes or No Strategically

- Try to block out time
- Only if fits into priorities and schedule, say "Yes"
- If you say "No"
  - Be firm, but nice.
  - Provide limited context only if important.
  - Recommend other people or strategy.
  - Confirm you cannot and mean it.

Recruit a "No" Committee

- Trusted colleagues who:
  - Know your priorities
  - Understand the context
  - Give good advice that values *you*

- Find allies in positions with more power

Homework!

- Identify at least one strategy that resonates for you
- Between now and the final workshop, put that strategy into practice
- At the final session, you will have time to share your experience and what you've learned

Wrapping up

- Next time –
  - We'll discuss the "Homework"
  - A few more ideas about finding focus
  - Focus on work-life balance and staying healthy
  - In-person session – meet your colleagues IRL
  - Going forward: how can you apply this material in finding work-work and work-life balance?

Questions?

Thank you!