

Let's face it, instructors often think alike.

For example, many instructors assign major projects to be due at mid-term and near final exams, which makes for a lot of work to be done all at once. You may also have other times in the semester when two or more instructors expect you to take tests, write papers, or make presentations.

Although some students prefer to postpone their work and "cram" at the last minute, this choice is a very high-stress and high-stakes way to manage study time. Major assignments are usually a big part of your grade in the course, and you need to do your best work.

Medical and psychological research shows:

1. Most people usually perform poorly when highly stressed. It's a myth that "stress brings out the best".
2. Most people perform poorly when they haven't had enough sleep. Pulling an "all-nighter" is better than skipping the studying altogether, but it's not your best work.
3. As the deadline gets closer, most people cut corners, become less creative, and become more sloppy. It's a myth that people "do their best work right before the deadline".
4. Sleeping after studying actually improves memory and the overall effectiveness of study.

Advice: Semester Scheduling

The grid on the other side has one row for each week of the semester, numbered 1 to 17 down the left side.

To use this grid:

Photocopy the grid so that you have a clean copy to use in the future.

Take a calendar and write the dates under the numbers for each week.

Use a pencil for the next part, because sometimes instructors change due dates.

Look each syllabus, and transfer the expected dates of your exams and major projects onto the grid.

Repeat this for every class.

Make note of weeks when several major assignments are due, especially if on the same day or adjacent days.

Take your personal calendar or planner, and mark these weeks as having heavy demands.

Mark the week BEFORE each stressful week with a reminder: "Work ahead, prepare for next week."

Or... Modify this process so that it works best for you.

Semester Planner of Irregular Commitments

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							
Week 5							
Week 6							
Week 7							
Week 8							
Week 9							
Week 10							
Week 11							
Week 12							
Week 13							
Week 14							
Week 15							
Week 16							