OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION

PRESENTED BY:
UNDERGRADUATE ADVISING & ACADEMIC SUPPORT
WHAT ARE THE REASONS YOU PROCRASTINATE?
PROCRASTINATION

• ….is common in college
• ….is the act of unnecessarily postponing
• ….can have a major impact on your grades

Examples include:
  – Delaying studying
  – Avoiding homework assignments
  – Putting off a research paper
VARIABLES OF PROCRASTINATION

- Confidence you can get the task done
- How much the task means to you
- How easily you give into temptations
- How long you have to wait before you receive an expected reward for completing the task
REASONS FOR DELAYING

- Lack of motivation
- Fear and anxiety about doing poorly
- Low self-confidence
- Overwhelmed by the task at hand
- Not having control of outcomes
- Looking unintelligent
- Having sense of self challenge
HOW TO OVERCOME PROCRASTINATION

• Set reasonable goals
• Stay motivated
• Focus on your goals
• Stay actively engaged in class
• Be aware of the reasons that lead to procrastination
• Write down your goals/tasks
• Think about all the steps it will take to accomplish each goal
• Break tasks into smaller more manageable tasks
KNOW YOUR EXCUSES

• Pay attention to the excuses you make to continue your procrastination
• Excuses are little voices inside your head that tell you why it is okay to put something off
• Stop that little voice and replace it with action
TAKE CONTROL

• Procrastination is a habit that can be overcome
• When you procrastinate your assignments/homework control you
• Deciding to complete a project ahead of time allows you to control the timeline and your grade
TACKLE NEGATIVE BELIEFS

• Tackle the underlying issues
  – Doubting your abilities
  – Afraid of failure
  – Don’t think you deserve success

• Address negative core beliefs and practice self-compassion
• Negative core beliefs include “I am unworthy,” “I am incompetent,” and “I am wrong”
• Find the source of negative beliefs and replace them with positive beliefs
BREAK DOWN TASKS

• You are more likely to procrastinate if a task will take a lot of effort
• Important tasks are often the hardest
• Break assignments up into manageable tasks
• You are in control and can create your own pressure if you work best under pressure
• Create a plan once you receive the assignment
• Every item should start with a verb (i.e. write, read, outline, do)
• Be as specific
• Don’t schedule tasks that will take more than 2 hours
STAY MOTIVATED

• Write down your short and long term goals
• Post them where you can see them
• Remind yourself why you are in school and where you want to go in life
BE AN ACTIVE/ENGAGED LEARNER

• Find what is interesting/relevant in the course material
• Set your own purpose and goals for readings and class sessions
• Ask yourself what you are learning
• Quiz yourself
• Re-write, re-organize and review notes soon after class
• Change study habits
BE ACCOUNTABLE

• Get a mentor/friend to keep you accountable
• Buddy up with someone in your class
• Inform your academic advisor of your goals for overcoming procrastination
• Surround yourself with people who care about school
  – Will help you stay motivated
  – Will not distract you from reaching your goals
DON'T BE HARD ON YOURSELF

1. Being hard on yourself only deflates your motivation
2. Don't punish yourself
3. Make a plan to avoid procrastination
4. Figure out what went wrong
5. Reward and compliment yourself
DOWNPLAY THE ALTERNATIVE CHOICES

- Think through the alternative choices
  - What are the downsides?
    - Will you lose sleep?
    - Will you do poor on your exam?
  - Convince yourself that the alternative choice is not appealing
  - Focus on why doing well in your classes is important
  - Not failing classes is a good motivator
  - Think about why doing well is important to your future goals
Are distractions the reason for your procrastination?
FIND YOUR “WHY”

• The biggest factors behind most distractions is:
  – Lack of motivation
  – Lack of interest
  – Lack of purpose

• Think of why you are doing what you are doing

• The connection between what you are about to do and your “why” will keep your interest level higher
WRITE DOWN YOUR DISTRACTIONS

• Writing down your distractions will free your mind of them

• You can focus solely on the task at hand

• Once you are done with the study session, you can accomplish the tasks you wrote down on your distraction list
CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS

• Unwanted thoughts can creep in at anytime pulling your attention away from the task at hand
• Become aware of the thought
• Write it down on your distraction sheet
• Deal with the thoughts after your study session is done
• Drop the thought as it can cause mental distress and loss of focus
TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT

• Temptations and distractions you are putting you at a disadvantage from the beginning
• Find a quiet place where the phone, internet, friends, etc. will not be an issue
• Find the optimal study space- one that works for you
CREATE A DISTRACTION FREE STUDY SPACE

Make sure everything you need is in arms reach
- If you accidentally leave something in another place, you are giving yourself an excuse to interrupt your workflow
- Pack up and stay put

Keep it consistent
- Return to the same space over and over
- Brains love patterns
- Associate space with studying

Remove all distractions- video games, phone, snacks people

Remove all distractions- video games, phone, snacks people

Make

Keep
CHOOSING A STUDY LOCATION

Consider the following:

– Can you really stay focused?
– Do you prefer group settings or working alone?
– Do you prefer the library, coffee shop, outdoors, dorm room, etc.?
– Do you work better in silence or with background noise?
  • Silence: use earplugs/headphones
  • Background noise: play white noise or quiet music, run a fan
ELIMINATE YOUR CHOICES

- Multitasking is one of the biggest distractors
- Switching back and forth between multiple tasks is a huge distraction
- The more options you have, the harder it is to complete a task
- You can’t pay attention to more than one thing at a time
- Attention is what gets things done
- Break to-do-list into small, management tasks and check them off when done
PUT YOUR PHONE ON SILENT

- Cell phones can be very distracting
- At the start of your study session, put your phone on silent
- Place your phone far away from you on the other side of the room
- This will eliminate interruptions while you are studying
- Check your phone every 30 to 45 minutes when you take break
ASK PEOPLE TO GIVE YOU PRIVACY

• Human interactions can be very disruptive
• Before you begin to study inform people who are most likely to disturb you
• Make an intentional effort to ask others to respect your privacy and your commitment to your academics
• They are less likely to interrupt you when studying
WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO STOP PROCRASTINATING?
RESOURCES


