

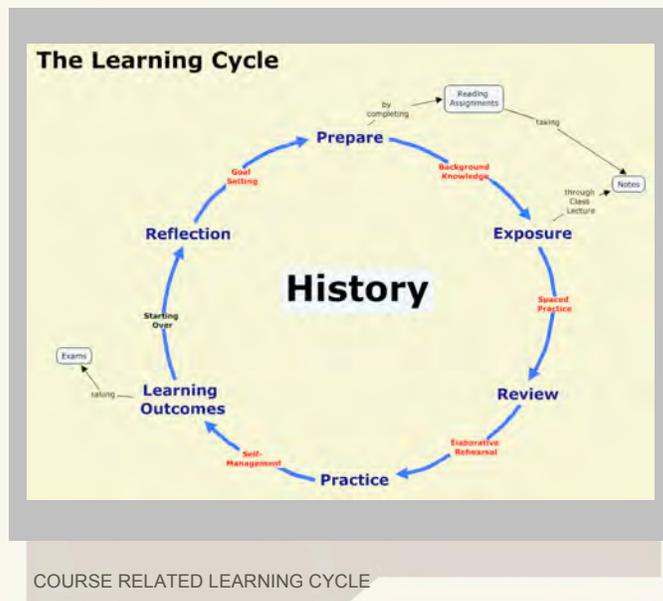
YOUR LEARNING CYCLES

The Learning Cycle represents a single course. At Saint Mary's you'll typically be enrolled in five (5) courses per semester. That means you'll be juggling five (5) learning cycles along with your work and extracurricular schedule. Each class may be focusing on a different step in the learning cycle at any given day. You may be preparing for an exam in your psychology course (review and practice); working daily problems in your math course (practice); struggling with reading in your philosophy course (prepare); and may have just received your exam back in first year seminar (reflection). On top of that you also need to be sensitive to your student work schedule and daily track practice or whatever other involvements you may have. How do you manage your time?

THE MYTH OF TIME MANAGEMENT

Marcus Baker said it best, "You can't manage time any more than you can manage the weather... You can only manage that which you can control. In relation to time this means that you can only manage yourself within the confines of time." So in reality, the question above: How do you manage your time?, should really be asking how do you manage yourself with the time you have.

This brings us to the first step of self-management, mapping out a weekly schedule that indicates your time obligations. By listing your classes (exposure), work schedule, and practice times, you begin to see what other times are available in your day to work on the rest of your learning cycle. You could address each course by separately mapping out time for reading (prepare), condensing your lecture and reading notes (review), or working problems (practice). However, it may be easier to block off time for these steps of the learning cycle... reading (prepare), condensing your notes, making flashcards, diagramming overall ideas (review), working problems or study groups (practice), and evaluating your learning (reflection).



COURSE RELATED LEARNING CYCLE

ESTABLISHING HABITS

A weekly schedule is all good and fine, but we all know this is the first place where our "time management" falls apart. Unless you turn your scheduled blocks of time into "habits." What is a habit? The dictionary defines habit as "a regular tendency or practice, one that is hard to give up... an addictive practice... an automatic reaction." If, through your own self-management you can turn those blocks of time (reading, review, practice, reflection) into habits, an automatic practice, then you can begin to manage your learning cycles.

You've heard the term "creature of habit," which implies the person performs the same exact steps, often in the same designated place. For instance, I always stop at Kwik Trip for coffee on my way to work. It's a habit, part of my routine. If you can assign a specific space (very specific), such as a specific desk in the library to a specific step in your learning cycle, you can begin to form that habit. Maybe that desk is where you review notes, creating flashcards and concept maps. Then for reading you find a chair in another part of the library. Combining a specific time, a specific

MANAGING YOUR LEARNING CYCLES

function, and a specific place can begin to form that habit, which becomes automatic. You sit down in that specific chair and you're ready to read. We are all "creatures of habit." Use that to your advantage.

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SEEING YOUR FUTURE

So far, you've mapped out your week then identified when you would work on reading, review, practice, and reflection. Finally, you also assigned a specific place to the times you assigned tasks you needed to accomplish so you could begin to establish habits. The next step is to be aware of your future.

To be aware of your future you need to map out the due dates for all your courses. The easiest way to do this is with a semester-long schedule like the one provided in your Saint Mary's planner or the wall schedule available at the Student Success Center.

First, gather together all your course syllabi and course schedules. Next look for all the due dates provided by your instructors. Copy those due dates, indicating the course and what is due, onto your schedule. Finally, update this schedule daily with new assigned due dates or date adjustments provided by your course instructors.

Being able to see what you have coming up each week allows you to plan your study time better. The time you originally scheduled and have established as a habit will not be sufficient every week. Some weeks will require additional study, reading, or practice time to successfully address all the due dates you have scheduled that week on your semester-long schedule.

Study Schedule

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
7:45 or 8:20			
8:45			
9:45			
11:30			
12:00 or 12:30 pm			
1:30			
2:55			
4:00 or 4:15			
5:00			
6:00			
7:00			
8:00			
9:00			
10:00			
11:00			

	Tuesday	Thursday
7:45 or 8:10		
8:50		
9:15		
10:45		
12:15 pm		
1:45		
3:00 or 3:25		
4:00		
5:00		
6:00		
7:00		
8:00		
9:00		
10:00		
11:00		

List all of your:
 classes
 regularly scheduled commitments (work, athletic practices, lunch, etc.)

Then identify blocks of study time for each of your classes.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Due Dates at a Glance: Fall 2012

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Week 9	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
Week 10	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Week 11	29	30	31	01	02	03	04	05
Week 12	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Week 13	26	27	28	29	30	31	01	02
Week 14	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Week 15	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Week 16	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
Week 17	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27

This calendar is brought to you by the Student Success Center, 67 Griffin Hall.

SEMESTER LONG SCHEDULE