

## Top Time Management Tips from Faculty Panelists

1. **Research/Writing:** Carve out writing times/days where you dedicate time to pull your research together in a more cohesive manner. You should not interrupt these days or times with other commitments – treat it as you would if you were lecturing. In the middle of a lecture, you can't respond to emails, respond to a text message from mom, or call your best friend to check up on her.
2. **Teaching:** Use the end of the term (i.e. course evaluations and feedback from students) to prep for next teaching quarter (for the same course) – this saves time later since everything will still remain fresh and whatever ideas you have to restructuring the course will be in the forefront. Waiting until right before the next teaching quarter is not the most efficient environment to work in, especially when considering changing things that may not have worked in the past.
3. **Grant Applications:** Create internal deadlines with your collaborative team, and begin planning at least 4-6 months before the final deadline (this will vary depending on the funding agency and their requirements for grant proposal submissions). This internal deadline is actually before the internal deadline set by the University.
4. **Organizing Lab:** Organize research assistant meetings/collaborator meetings on the same day... i.e. "a meeting day". This meeting day will only consist of meetings with respect to your research lab; therefore, other days are not broken up, and you can work more efficiently on a particular task.
5. **Office Etiquette:** Designate days/hours per day where your door is slightly ajar/closed (to carry out some of the priorities listed in this document). Faculty, staff, and students love to congregate in hallways, and feel extremely comfortable including all within ear-shot of a given conversation. Although this builds a welcoming and collegiate environment, too many of these water-cooler conversation can take over your workday.
6. **Prioritize tasks, say no to tasks that are irrelevant or are just a waste of time, and delegate if possible.**
7. **Leave enough time for the unexpected when you need to meet hard deadlines -- plan on finishing it earlier than necessary, to account for potential delays. If you are working with others, give them an earlier deadline with a built in safety range.**
8. **Keep track of how you are using your time, and identify time sinks.**
9. **Fit tasks to the available time slots. Use short periods of time or times when you may be continuously interrupted (like office hours) for low-concentration or short tasks. Try to create larger time blocks that are free from commitment to make progress on bigger projects (like writing a paper/proposal). During those time blocks, limit distractions.**
10. **Remember to take care of yourself (sleep, exercise, etc.).**
11. **Work in short bursts and juggle multiple projects simultaneously. Academic faculty that do this, are more likely to be productive in the first five years of their careers (Bland CJ. Journal of Medical Education 1986; 61: 22-31).**
12. **Set priorities (and stick to them!) and eliminate non-priorities from your "to do lists."**

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13. Be present and attentive both at work and at home. Focus leads to efficiency and greater happiness.
14. Do not be responsive to email continuously. Set specific times to respond to email and honor that plan.
15. Work in high functioning teams (at home and at work) and don't be afraid to delegate to your trusted colleagues
16. Define your personal goals and have a plan – think things through. *Short-term goals* (items written into your weekly and monthly calendars; the small concrete finite tasks), *intermediate goals* (publishing a paper, curriculum, teaching etc) and *long-term goals* (faculty promotion, career paths, work life balance). Once you have set goals, you can identify the necessary steps to move toward completion and achievement.
17. Prioritize your work and set timetables for your work and goals. Establishing priorities depends on the goals you set for yourself and making such choices will allow you to focus on doing an outstanding job in what's truly important to you. Approach your prioritized tasks with the goal of making progress during the specific amount of time allotted.
18. Control your email by establishing an "*email-free zone*" and learn how to use email program features to prioritize emails and assign follow up tasks.
19. Create an environment conducive to productivity which will lead to more efficient use of time. Protect and set aside your most productive hours for writing, designing experiments, meeting with important patients, and other critical tasks; delegate tasks to dependable colleagues and administrators; build teams of highly efficient people to accomplish tasks.
20. Make time for family and time for self.
21. Hire someone to do the personal tasks that you do not enjoy.
22. Develop a balance between your professional and personal life that reflects your goals, not someone else's.
23. Try to decide your career aspirations early and become involved in institutional and professional committees that give you visibility.
24. Determine your circadian rhythm for work and try to schedule accordingly.
25. When you hire staff, hire individuals who will be able to understand how you operate. Together develop a strategy to maximize your productivity.

(Note: One strategy does not work forever; re-evaluate #22 through #25 periodically.)