

Weekly Goal-Setting Sheet (a.k.a. Life Map)

Wherever you are in your graduate years, it is helpful to set realistic writing goals by reflecting on the time you actually have available to work on writing. The reverse side of this page is a chart that you can use to map out your daily/weekly responsibilities. This chart will help you figure out when to block out time for writing.

Note that setting weekly goals for your writing is good practice for when you start working on your dissertation. Since a dissertation will likely take more than a single semester to complete, you will likely have to revisit this chart as your schedule changes from semester to semester (or more often, if you have family obligations that tend to change).

Activity: Setting Writing Goals

Learning objective: To learn how and when to schedule time for tangible writing goals.

Directions

Step 1: On the chart, block off all times that you are occupied with things that are **non-negotiable**:

- a. Sleep
- b. Classes you are attending
- c. Classes you are teaching
- d. Lab work or other research you are required to do for your assistantship
- e. Required meetings
- f. Outside job, if you have one
- g. Family obligations
- h. Other

Step 2: Take a few minutes to think about yourself as a writer. How long does it take you to write a page? How many pages can you write per hour? Note that this writing time does **NOT** include reading, getting feedback, revising, collecting data, etc.

Step 3: Using the information gained from steps 2 and 3, look at the open time blocks on your weekly chart. What is the maximum amount of time you can spend writing each week?

- a. Start by considering how much of that time might be spent on non-writing aspects of your scholarly project, such as research, reading, data collection, etc.

- b. If you...
 - i. ...have too little time remaining in a week, consider what “non-negotiables” are really negotiable. Are there responsibilities you could drop or re-negotiate with relevant parties? Alternatively, consider whether you can adjust your schedule to allow more weeks to work on your document.
 - ii. ...have more time remaining than you need in a week, celebrate! Don’t add in more responsibilities because you may need that extra time when unforeseen events arise (like your advisor leaving for an international conference right when you were hoping to get feedback).

Goal-Setting Chart

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5:00 AM							
5:30 AM							
6:00 AM							
6:30 AM							
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	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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3:00 AM–5:00 AM							