

## HOW DO I MANAGE MY TIME EFFECTIVELY AS A TEACHER?

Learning to manage your time effectively and balance your priorities, for all of the teaching and research you want to accomplish in a given term, will serve you well as both a teacher and a scholar. Managing your time, prioritizing your responsibilities, and setting boundaries will help you stay motivated to meet your goals.

### ► How do I prepare for class, do my own research, and have a life?



Remember that there is an ebb and flow to academic life. While teaching and research may seem like separate activities, the skills you are learning in each domain will help you with the other. Follow your priorities and needs as they shift over time, and give yourself credit for all of your varied work.

Create a realistic schedule for yourself, allotting time for all of your activities: teaching, research, exercise, extracurricular activities, socializing, sleep... You might also make a semester calendar, noting when exams, papers, or problem sets will need to be graded, so you can plan other deadlines and responsibilities around those times.

Manage your energy. When are you most alert and effective? Track your productivity for a week to determine when you are at your best. Schedule activities that require the most focus for times when you are most alert. Take care of tasks which may require less cognitive load (such as checking email or formatting footnotes) when you are more lethargic.

Make time for self-care. Being well rested and maintaining a healthy lifestyle are integral to being an engaging teacher, productive scholar, and responsive colleague. Establish a consistent bedtime and exercise routine to keep up your energy and stay focused on your priorities for the day or week.

### ► How can I maximize my prep time for teaching?

Talk with colleagues who have taught your course before and see what course materials may be available. While it can sometimes be easier to start fresh, shared resources and feedback from other instructors may help you save time, and plan a more effective and engaging class.

Remember that being prepared does not have to mean knowing every detail of the content, but rather being ready to facilitate activities, pose thoughtful questions and help students think for themselves.

Plan ahead. If you need to read a long or dense text or if you want to prepare handouts for your students, do it early so that you're not stressed when it's time to teach it.



Get into a routine that includes a couple of days a week or a set number of hours each day devoted to teaching. It can feel like there are always more notes to review, one more reference to track down, or one more student to email; but if you give yourself a set amount of time to do the work, it can be easier to stick to it and help you prioritize what really needs to get done each week.

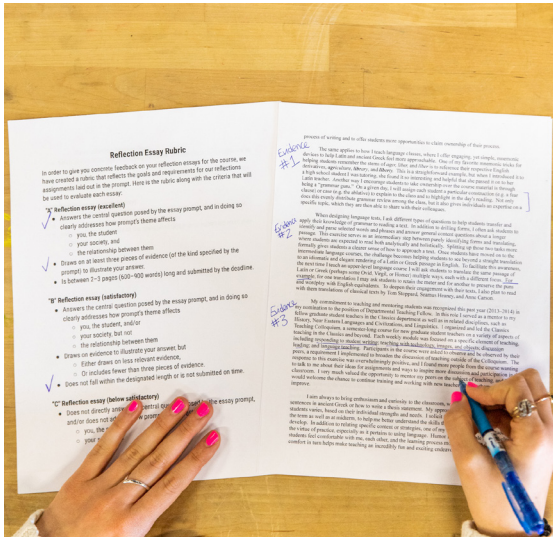
## ► How do I manage the time I spend communicating with students outside of class?

Be clear about your communication policy with students and commit to it, so that students have realistic expectations. For example, let students know that you don't respond to email before 9am and after 7pm, or that you'll reply within 24 hours. It also helps to be aware of assignment deadlines and to make sure you're more available to answer students' questions leading up to them.

Hold regular office hours and encourage students to bring their questions. If a student can't make your office hours, be available to meet them at a mutually convenient time. If there are multiple students who request additional meetings, you may want to consider changing your office hours to accommodate as many students as possible.



## ► How can I grade students' work efficiently?



Come to an agreement with your teaching team about how grades will be determined and be specific about the criteria you will use. Clearly worded assignments and grading rubrics will greatly improve grading efficiency and consistency.

Ask your department to arrange one of the [Harvard Writing Project's](#) workshops on responding to student writing (or attend one at the [Bok Center's Fall Teaching Conference or Winter Teaching Week](#)); you'll learn strategies for giving effective feedback efficiently. Students learn more from feedback that is concise and specific.

Identify the common problems or mistakes students made, whether in a paper or problem set. Preparing a handout addressing those problems helps you avoid writing the same comments multiple times, enables you to address material in more detail, and helps students realize that others have the same challenges, which normalizes the learning process and makes learning more collaborative.

## Additional Resources

- For additional support and coaching on time management, sign up for a workshop at the [Academic Resource Center](#).
- Explore the [Instructor Toolkit for Assigning, Teaching, and Evaluating Writing](#) from the Harvard College Writing Program.
- Check out the [Time Management Resources for Graduate Students and Post-Docs](#) from Duke University.
- Find more [tips on grading efficiently](#) from UC Berkeley.
- Read "[4 Ideas for Avoiding Faculty Burnout](#)" from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

