SANTA
MONICA
COLLEGE

Chunking Large Tasks

What is Chunking and Why Is It Beneficial?
Chunking refers to the process of splitting up multiple time-consuming tasks into smaller, more manageable ones. For example, instead of trying to read 100 pages at all once or in two days, one may decide to equally divvy up the reading over the course of five days and read 20 pages per day. It can be an especially useful tool and habit for college students. Some of the benefits may include minimized stress and anxiety, lowered chances of procrastination, and improved grades.

First Thing's First!
1. Look over all the syllabi for all of your classes, taking note of due dates for exams, discussion posts, readings, and writing assignments.
2. Think about how long it will take you to complete each task and jot down which tasks are high priority, which are low priority and the hours/days you think you will need for each task.
3. Consider your schedule, including other commitments outside of school, and free time and begin to split up your tasks.
4. Use a calendar, planner, or even a notebook to create a "priority list." Consider online calendars you already have, "notes" apps, or even an old-fashioned paper notebook – whatever works for you! Begin to fill in your chunking goals.

Daily Chunking
1. Make a list of tasks you plan to complete in a day, prioritizing the most urgent.
   - Example:
     o Complete Math problems
     o Read Philosophy ch 3
     o Brainstorm ideas for Engl essay
2. Schedule your workday into 25, 30, or 40-minute segments or chunks. During each 25, 30, or 40-minute chunk:
   - Set a timer for 25, 30, or 40 minutes.
   - Spend the time working on a specific task or a batch of tasks.
3. When the timer goes off, take a five-minute break.
4. Repeat the sequence four times, noting how many chunks it took you to complete a task and crossing each one off your list.
5. Take a 15-minute break. Or, if you have the time and energy, do another round.

Weekly Chunking or Monthly Chunking Tips
- Base your prioritization on due dates and how long you think it will take to complete each assignment.
  - o Example: Say you have an English assignment due in two weeks and a biology assignment due in one week. You know an English assignment

due in 2 weeks will take you longer to complete than your biology assignment due in 1 week. Prioritize the English over the biology assignment during your first few days of the week.

- Chunk throughout the semester; do not feel pressured to chunk every single assignment at the beginning of the semester. Feel free to chunk your assignments on a daily, weekly, or even monthly basis.
- Revise chunking schedule as needed.
- Chunk small tasks / chunk large tasks.
- Set reminders to help you stay on track.
- Be realistic! Tailor the chunking to your own needs and capabilities.
    - Example: If reading more than 30 pages a day is stressful for you, do not assign yourself more than 30 pages of reading per day. If spending more than one hour solving math problems at once is unhelpful, save various parts of your day or other days for math.