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**University Learning Center:**

**Crash Course Study Skills #6**

**Procrastination**

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**Overview of the Online Academic Makeover Workshops**

Thank you for taking an interest in the Online Academic Makeover Workshops! The University Learning Center at California State University, Fullerton is passionate about helping students learn how to learn. The goal of the online workshops created by the University Learning Center is to help students understand the value of fundamental concepts that are vital to student success throughout the college experience. In addition to the high impact practice of peer-to-peer tutoring, the online workshops enable students to learn student success secrets virtually anywhere at any point throughout the academic year.

To better support student learning, a workshop packet accompanies each online workshop. Each packet has a pre-reflection, guided notes, and a post-reflection. We encourage students to answer the prompts of the pre-reflection before viewing the workshop video. There are no correct or incorrect responses since the pre-reflection serves as a tool to help the workshop participant to consider themselves and focus on the workshop content that is most relevant to them. The guided notes are intended to help the workshop participant focus on the big ideas presented in the videos. Additional notes are recommended! The workshops are most effective when participants create meaning for themselves. The post-reflection is meant to be completed after the workshop video has been viewed. This section allows the workshop participant to check and see if they understood the main ideas from the workshop and make more personal connections while considering ways to apply what was learned.

The University Learning Center appreciates your interest in our online workshop series, and we hope you learn something new!

Happy Learning!

**The University Learning Center Team**

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**Procrastination Online Workshop Pre-Reflection**

1. When was a time that you procrastinated? What was this experience like?
2. Why do you think students procrastinate? Explain.
3. What are some tools or techniques that you can think of that could be helpful when trying to focus on accomplishing tasks and assignments to combat the temptation of procrastinating?
4. What kind of emotions do you experience when you initially put off a difficult task? How do you end up feeling the closer you get to a deadline on such an assignment when you have procrastinated?
5. What are you hoping to learn from the Online Workshop on Procrastination?

**Procrastination Workshop Guided Notes**

Motivation = (Expectancy x Value) and (Impulsiveness x Delay)

1. ***The Procrastination Equation***

**The Procrastination Equation**: a useful mental model for pinpointing the specific causes of our procrastination

**Expectancy**: a term that represents how strongly you believe that you can complete a task

* Inverse relationship with procrastination
* If you feel competent at what you are doing, your expectancy will be high and that will increase your motivation to get to work
* If a task looks difficult, expectancy will be low, and you’ll be more likely to procrastinate

**Value:** the rewards you get for completing the task, as well as how pleasant- or unpleasant- the experience of doing it is

* Inverse relationship with procrastination

**Impulsiveness:** how susceptible you are to distractions and impulses to do other things

* Directly correlated with procrastination

**Delay:** the amount of time between now and when you will get the reward for completing the task

* The longer the delay, the more you will tend to procrastinate
* We tend to place more value on short-term rewards
* A reason behind cramming
* The hardest factor in the procrastination equation to control
* Increasing Expectancy
	+ Break the task down into smaller sub-tasks
		- Allows you to narrow your focus
		- Allows you to clearly define the specific actions you must take
	+ Example: Writing a Paper
		- Research Phase
		- Rough Draft Phase
		- Editing Phase
* Simply Ask for Help
	+ There comes a point when refusing to reach out to someone only slows you down
		- Office Hours
		- Study Groups
		- Tutoring
* Improving Value
	+ Improve the actual reward for completing the task
	+ Improve the experience of doing the work itself
		- Choose a study location you enjoy being in
		- Find a good study music playlist
		- Work with a friend
		- Go for a quick walk beforehand to raise your energy levels before you start
	+ Add additional rewards for completing sub-tasks

**Gamification**: taking elements from games and applying them to your work (Ex: Habitica)

* Set up small rewards for finishing sub-tasks
	+ Ex: Watch a movie, go out with friends
1. ***Low-Density Fun vs. High-Density Fun***
* A lot of students feel like they have too much work to ever let themselves do anything fun that takes a significant amount of time
	+ Students who are constantly denying themselves that high-density fun are also spending a lot of time engaging in low-density fun

**Low-Density Fun**: more attractive than doing work and it’s easy to convince yourself that you’re only going to do them for 5 minutes, but inevitably you do end up spending a ton of time on them

* Lots of websites and apps are designed to be as addictive as possible
* Distractions
* What are some forms of low-density fun that distract you while trying to focus?
* You need to let yourself have this high-density fun
	+ When you let yourself do these things, you create anticipation that can be used as focusing energy for your work
	+ What is one high-density fun activity you can reward yourself with for focusing?
1. ***Impulsiveness***
* Your Environment Really Matters
	+ If you are studying in a place where you have access to distractions, your attention is more likely to be pulled away by them
		- So, find a dedicated study spot away from distracting social situations and video games
* There is only so much you can do in a day before you exhaust your mental resources
* When you put off a challenging assignment in favor of doing a bunch of easy work first, it becomes easy to convince yourself that you have “done enough” for the day once that easy work is done
* One of the best ways to beat procrastination is to do the most difficult, unpleasant item on your to-do list first
1. ***The Pomodoro Technique***
* A simple hack you can use to stop procrastination
* Requires a timer and a piece of paper
1. Decide on one singular task you are going to work on
2. Set your timer for 25 minutes, and work as hard as you can on that task during that time
3. If a distraction or impulse to do something else comes up, write it down on the piece of paper and then get back to work
4. Once the timer goes off, take a 5-minute break
5. Repeat the process until you are ready for a longer break
* The act of reframing cuts down on the initial resistance you feel towards the task since 25 minutes of work doesn’t feel like a huge investment or effort
* The timer acts as an external motivator
* So now it’s time to take what you have learned from this workshop, apply it, and get back to work. Good luck!

**Procrastination Online Workshop Post-Reflection**

1. What did you learn from the Procrastination Online Workshop?
2. What was something from the Procrastination Online Workshop that surprised you or you found to be the most interesting?
3. Which of the concept, method, or technique discussed in the Procrastination Online Workshop do you think you would benefit the most from? Why?
4. Describe how you will apply what you learned from the Procrastination Online Workshop.