

Time Management for Writing Assignments

Creating a Timeline

To manage the workflow of your paper, create a timeline that works backward from the due date of the paper giving each segment of your workflow an assigned date. If you notice that you're falling behind at any step of the process, adjust your priorities to ensure you complete the paper on time.

When creating your timeline, take into account your own realities.

- If you struggle with writing, leave more time for writing.
- If you struggle with research, leave more time for research.
- If you have competing assignments, factor that in and create timelines for all of them so that you can assess your priorities and manage the total work flow.

Write down your priorities and multiple deadlines on a large wall calendar or online calendar that pings you when your work is due.

Example: assignment for a 30 page paper APA style (double-spaced/1" margins/Times 12pt) **assigned on October 11 and due November 22**

Working Thesis Statement: Create this within 24 – 48 hours of receiving the assignment, in this case no later than **October 13th**.

Outline of paper complete: October 14th

Revise the outline as appropriate throughout the research process but ensure that you remain true to the thesis statement and research questions that guide the entire project.

Interview subjects identified and contacted by email or phone: October 15th

Major Source Materials Identified: October 15th

Research begins: October 15th – ensure that this date enables you to meet the *research complete* date so that your writing can begin in earnest.

During the research period, review the appropriate style manual and note how to refer to source materials. Then be sure to take complete notes about your source materials so that you meet the style standard when writing the paper. In your timeline, take into account the need to review literature and interview sources as necessary.

Interviews complete, interview notes transcribed: November 9th

Research complete, writing begins:

November 10th If you've taken good notes, part of the writing process has already begun. Structure the first draft to follow the outline you've created (and perhaps revised) during the research process.

First draft complete: November 12th this is a rough draft that will be refined multiple times over the next week or more. Ensure this draft follows the outline you created for the paper.

Second draft complete: November 15th have this draft reviewed by a mentor, writing center, friend, or writing coach to ensure that the work is well organized, meets style standards and assignment expectations, supports the thesis statement, and answers the research questions. If using an editor or writing coach, ensure that you've scheduled your draft review in advance to leave time for the editor/coach's review and consultation.

Final draft completed: November 20th put this draft aside for a day and re-read it one last time on November 21 to ensure no errors were missed.

Fix any errors; **turn in November 22nd**