Avoiding Procrastination

Procrastination is an obstacle for every college student, and we all procrastinate from time-to-time on certain tasks. The key is for procrastination not to become a routine part of your academic life. When it does, it can create a "snowball effect" where work and deadlines pile up and pick up speed as the term progresses. It can end up putting you in a worse position than you would have been had made time to complete the task.

**Keys to Success**

In order to help you **avoid procrastination**, follow these keys to success:

**Avoid unhelpful self-talk.** We often find ourselves in a procrastination cycle because we talked ourselves into it. Repeating things like "I'm busy," "I don't have time," and "I work better under pressure" are all ways that we talk ourselves into procrastinating. If you hear yourself saying these types of phrases, you should replace them with positive self-talk: “I can do this,” “I can make time,” and “I need resources and assistance.”

**Name the problem.** Procrastination is often a symptom of a problem rather than a problem itself. Get to the heart of the situation by asking yourself: why am I procrastinating, what tasks am I procrastinating on, and what things am I using to procrastinate with? These questions will bring you to what is causing the procrastination and will reveal what you need to do (or avoid!) to fix it!

**Breakdown projects.** Sometimes, we procrastinate because we are feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, or anxious. Looking at an entire project can be daunting, and you can feel that you are long way away from finishing it. Instead of looking at the entire course or project, break the course or project into smaller actionable tasks and focus on immediate next steps. Once you complete a step, it is okay to give yourself a small break or reward before starting on the next one.

**Minimize distractions.** It’s easy to get distracted when working on a tasking that we have little interest or motivation to complete. In these cases, we need to find ways to unplug from things that want to pull our attention away. If working on your computer, avoid websites that may be distracting. If you can’t stop yourself, download an app that will block them. If your workspace is distracting, find a new place where you can work quietly and comfortably.