Audio transcript

## Time Management issues

“I feel so tired all the time, I never get around to starting things”

Some full time students just don’t realize that their study is already their full time job. And they are just trying to cram in too much other stuff whether it is social life or paid employment. If you are staying up late with friends or staying up late to get your assignments finished, of course you will be tired. You are setting up a very bad pattern and it will be harder and harder to cope.

If late nights are not the reason, then look at diet and exercise habits. You’ve got to eat healthy food and you’ve got to play sport or go to the gym two or three times a week. If you sit studying all the time, your body and your mind will get slow and lazy. So, it is worth taking that three or four

hours out of your week for exercise. You will be more alert and cope with your study requirements much more effectively.  
If you are dealing with lots of other personal worries, or if you are depressed or not motivated to be studying at all, these emotional issues can transform into physical tiredness. In this case, I strongly recommend that you seek help from a health professional and / or talk things over with a counsellor at the Counselling Service.

“There is just always something else to do”

As I’ve said before, if you are a full time student, then your course is like a full time job. And even when you have finished your degree.... and you start a job, it is not going to be any different. That job needs to be given priority.

Now if a student puts in a disciplined 40 hours per week into their study every week through the semester, they should be managing to do whatever they have to do.

Unfortunately, many students think that going to 10 or 15 hours of lectures and tutorials is all that they have to do. And then study like mad before the exam at the end of the semester. For some international students in their home country this may have been the way to do things. But in the Australian system, this is definitely not the way to succeed.

If your study time is being taken over by other things, you need to learn to say NO. You need to organize your social life around your job,not the other way around.

It is important to set aside times when you are not available for people’s interruptions or phone calls.  
Your friends and your family need to understand that there are certain times set aside for your study and it is unfair if they encroach upon that time.

“Sometimes there is so much to do, I don’t know what to do first”

It is helpful to understand that IMPORTANT does not mean the same thing as URGENT. Urgent means that it has to be done soon. IMPORTANT means that it has to be done well; or at least it has to be done.

You should first deal with things that are both IMPORTANT and URGENT. Like a 50% assignment which is due next week. Ideally you want to do important things before they get urgent. Something that is important, but not urgent might be - rewriting out your lecture notes clearly for studying at the end of the semester... Or finding some past exam papers at the library... Or buying a present for someones birthday next week. It must be done, but it can wait.

If something is NOT IMPORTANT and NOT URGENT – then I would ask ......why are you doing it?? “I seem to spend all my time reading”

You need to stop doing this. At university level, you are given so much reading material. Nobody can be reasonably expected to read it all. Don’t try!!!! You’ll kill yourself. What you are expected to do is read selectively and actively.

You need to choose the books or articles that are relevant and important to what you need to know. Read with the purpose of getting some specific information. So skim and scan through the material. Look for key words, as if you are looking for names on a list. Read the first paragraph and last paragraph of a chapter. Read the first lines and last lines of paragraphs. If they are not relevant to your question, don’t bother reading the middle.

Concentrate on reading certain sections and skip those that are not relevant. Do NOT read every single word printed on every page....just because you feel you ought to. This is reading without a purpose... and you probably won’t retain very much of it anyway.

“I’m scared to go to my desk...it is such a mess” “I’m always losing things”

Organization issues can really hold you back. You need to get on top of sorting notes into files. It wastes so much time if you have to look for stuff that you have misplaced. Or worse still, you have to do things all over again.

This is partly habit. Get into the habit of putting things away in their right place.

It is partly having a place to put things as well. Get a filing cabinet, some document covers, boxes.... whatever you need to sort out a system. The time this takes will be more than worth it.

The same goes for your computer. Put your files into folders with names that tell you what is in them and keep them in an ordered directory.