

# "The How to ..." Series

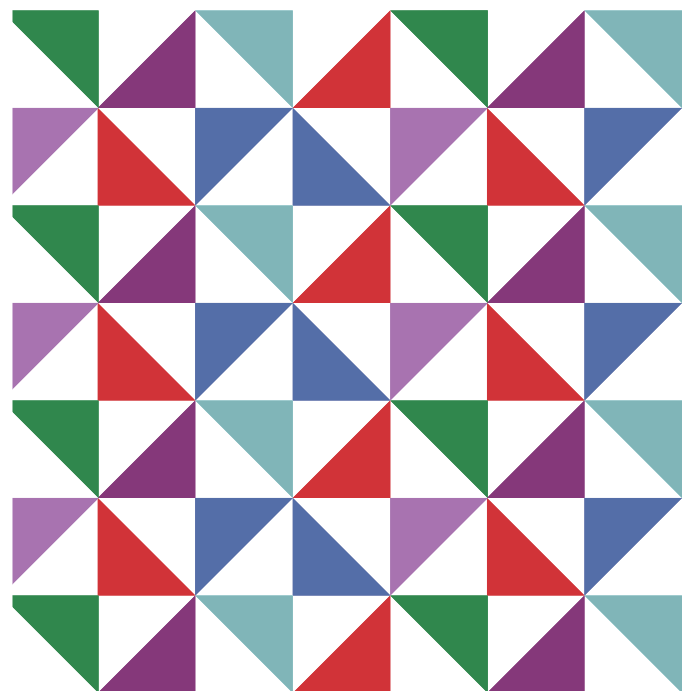


student  
counselling &  
Health

Your essential survival guide to coping with first year!!



The Student Counselling  
and Health Department  
is a student centered unit  
within the Student  
Services Division





# "HOW TO..."

## THE STUDENT SURVIVAL SERIES

The Student Counselling and Health Department is a proud unit within the Student Services Division

Contents	Page
How To ... Get The Right Help At The Right Time	1
Opening Times And Contact Details	2
How To ... Get The Emotional Support You Need	3
Our Annual Events	5
How To ... Get The Career Information You Need	6
Our Annual Events	7
How To ...Get The Medical Support You Need	8
Our Annual Events	9
How To ...Get The HIV/AIDS Support You Need	10
Our Annual Events	12
How To ...Adjust To Campus Life	13
How To ...Manage Your Time Effectively	15
How To ...Overcome Procrastination	16
How To ...Conquer Test And Exam Anxiety	17
How To ... Succeed in Tests And Exams	18
Facebook page link available at the back of this Handbook	

# "HOW TO..."

## GET THE RIGHT HELP AT THE RIGHT TIME

The Department of Student Counselling and Health is composed of a number of services. Use the checklist below to identify where your needs lie.

### Student Counselling

(Lower Library Complex, Steve Biko Campus, next to financial Aid)

- Individual counselling for personal and relational issues
  - Professional Assessment Services – psychological and career
  - Individual supportive counselling for chronic illness
  - Individual career counselling
  - Individual study skills counselling
  - Psychological crises/ emergency
  - Life skills and personal development workshops
  - Academic study skills and workplace preparation workshop
  - Leadership development
  - Peer Helper and mentor training
  - Student Mentorship
    - o Goldey Key International Honour Society – DUT Chapter
    - o Student Project Supervision
  - Academic advocacy
    - o Time Concessions/ Other
  - Food Security Screening
  - Psycho-education
    - o Self Help information
    - o Radio DUT: "All About You" Feature: Tune in every Thursday from 12:15

NB: SCC services are limited to psychotherapy and supportive counselling. Forensic/psycho-legal work is beyond our scope at DUT.

### Careers Resource Centre

(Lower Library Complex, Steve Biko Campus, inside Student Counselling Centre)

- Information on different career choices
- Company profiles, addresses and annual reports
- Information on educational institutions locally and internationally
- Information on bursaries
- Economic and job market information
- Job search information
- Assistance with CV writing
- Interview Skills and preparation
- Access to computer for CV writing
- Email and internet access for job information

Campus Health Clinics:  
Isolempilo/City Campus Health Clinic  
Isolempilo: (Gate 5, Steve Biko, Opposite Sports Centre)  
City campus: (Next to the Library)

- Primary health care
- Treatment of minor ailments
- Provision of emergency care
- Treatment of sexually transmission diseases
- Family planning
- Vaccination
- Voluntary HIV counselling and testing
- Blood tests
- Pap smears
- Health education and awareness
- Medical male circumcision
- TB screening and follow up treatment

HIV/AIDS CENTRE  
(First Floor, Open House Building, Steve Biko Campus)

- Design, review and implement DUT's HIV/AIDS policy
- Quarterly HIV/AIDS Committee Meetings
- Provides and support health education
- Peer education programmes
- Support groups
- Awareness campaigns
- Community engagement
- Support group and social networks
- Encouraging and supporting the integration of HIV/AIDS Curriculum
- Promotion of other preventative strategies: VMMC, HCT
- Ongoing counselling and support
- Conducting and promoting HIV/AIDS research
- HIV/AIDS resource materials

Opening Times and Contacts Numbers:  
Student Counselling and Careers Resource Centre  
Mon-Thurs: 8h00-16h30  
Fri: 8h00-15h00  
Tel: (031)3732266

After hours emergency contact numbers  
Lifeline : 0861322 322  
South African depression and anxiety 24 hours suicide helpline:  
0800 567 567 or 0800121 314

DUT Health Services:  
*Isolempilo Health Clinic:*  
Mon-Thurs: 7:30-16h30  
Fri: 7:30-15h00  
Tel: (031)3732223  
*City Campus Health Clinic:*  
Mon-Thurs: 8h30-13h30  
Fri: 8h30-13h30  
Tel: (031)3736002  
*Ritson campus Health Clinic:*  
Mon-Thurs: 8:00-16h00  
Fri: 8:00-15h00  
Tel: (031) 373 6014  
*Brickfield Campus Health Clinic:*  
Mon: 10:30-12h30  
Wed: 10:30-12h30  
*HIV/AIDS Centre:*  
*Open House*  
Mon-Thurs: 8h00-16h30  
Fri: 8h00-15h00  
Tel: (031)3732260/2287

# "HOW TO..."

## GET THE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT YOU NEED

### What is Counselling?

What do you think of when you hear the word counselling? Many people think that it means admitting that you are weak, helpless or even crazy. As such, people may be too ashamed to go for counselling because of a wrong perception of what counselling is about, or because they are influenced by peers who don't understand the benefits of counselling.

### Counselling is not...

- Someone else making decisions for you
- A sign of weakness
- A sign that you are crazy

### Counselling is...

A learning-oriented process which usually occurs in an interactive relationship with the aim of helping a person to gain greater understanding and knowledge:

- About him/herself
- About others
- About situations and events related to issues and conditions, and
- About how to apply such understanding to being an effective member of university and society as a whole.

Counselling is a **CONFIDENTIAL** process. The role of the psychologist is to display care, empathy and concern towards the person who comes to see them. The aim of the therapeutic space is to facilitate personal development, growth and positive change through self-understanding and acceptance.

### What does Confidentiality Mean?

Confidentiality means that all information collected about a client is kept private (not discussed with anyone else). In an emergency situation there are some limits to confidentiality, but these will be discussed with clients when they see their psychologist. Psychologists are governed by the ethical principles laid out by the HPCSA (Health Professions Council of South Africa).

The basic aims of counselling are to facilitate students:

Understanding of themselves in terms of their personality, ability, interest, motivation, emotions, behaviour and potential

Gaining insight into the origins and development of emotional difficulties, leading to an increased capacity to take control of their feelings and actions

Changing maladaptive behaviours into adaptive ones

Developing effective coping skills for traumatic life experiences

Moving towards the direction of fulfilling their potential

Learning skills, awareness and knowledge that will enable them to address interpersonal difficulties

Gaining insight into the world of work and how this relates to their specific area of study.

Developing decision-making and other important life skills

Developing skills that facilitate academic success

## Why consider going for counselling?

At any stage of development in our lives we can face difficulties with adjusting and coping. Because as humans we are fundamentally relational, when we go through struggles, we need support from those around us. Although it is good to have support from people we are close to, sometimes they are too involved and it helps to get an outsider's perspective. They might also have their own problems that they are dealing with and are therefore not always able to help.

Going for counselling is helpful because the psychologist's role is to listen to you and help you gain insight and find solutions. It is a professional, confidential and safe environment in which you can express your difficulties and explore solutions.

You might struggle with any of these personal or relational issues:

- Emotional distress – anxiety, depression, anger etc
- Actions that leads to negative consequences
- Grief over the loss of a loved one
- Difficulty making friends
- Adjustment concerns and stress
- Struggling with interpersonal difficulties
- Academic and study difficulties
- Personal development issues

You might need help with any of these career related issues:

- Career choice
- Career development
- Career indecision
- Job preparation

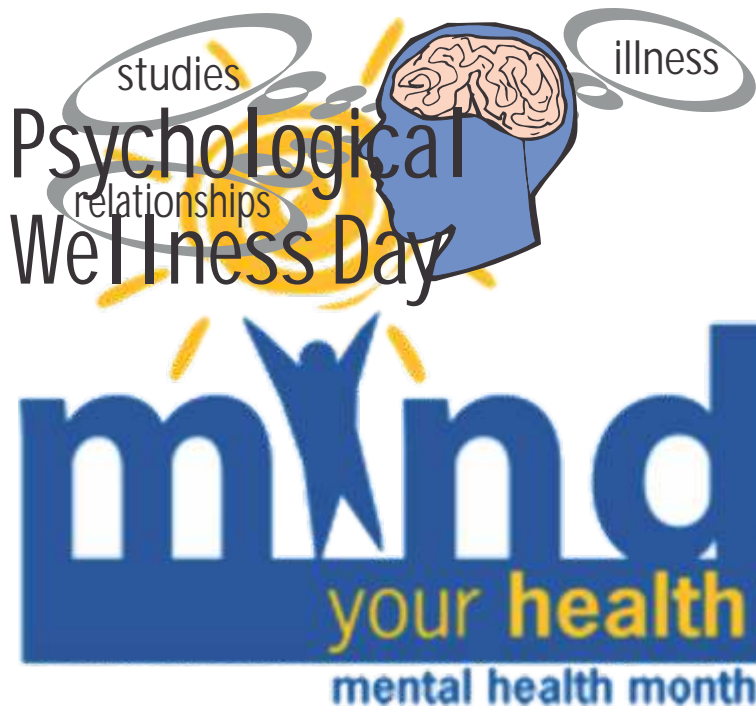
If you think you need counselling or that it may benefit you then contact the Student Counselling Centre and meet one of our professionally trained psychologists. We are in the Lower Library Complex, Steve Biko Campus and can be called on (031)3732266.



# OUR ANNUAL EVENTS:



## women's day



## My Human Rights Day





**The DUT Chapter of the  
Golden Key International Honour  
Society**

Coordinated by the Student Counselling Centre  
Steve Biko Campus

9 September 2014

## DUT Golden Key Chapter Member's Ceremony



# "HOW TO..."

## GET THE CAREER INFORMATION YOU NEED

### What is the Career Resource Centre?

The Career Resource Centre is a unique facility that is dedicated to housing updated and current career-related information. Its primary role is to provide critical support to registered and prospective students in their pursuit of employment. As such, its services include:

- Career information
  - Academic information and guidance
  - National and International courses and qualifications
  - Bursary and scholarship information
  - Work skills information
  - Company information
  - Economic and job market information
  - Computer access for CV writing and cover letters
  - Job search - E-mail and internet access for job information and applications
- If you think you need assistance around career-related issues contact the

Career Resource Centre. We are in the Lower Library Complex, Steve Biko Campus and can be called on (031) 3732571/2266 Or visit: [www.dut.ac.za](http://www.dut.ac.za)

# Our annual events:



Careers Fair



Career and outreach information evenings

# "HOW TO..."

## GET THE MEDICAL SUPPORT YOU NEED

### Campus Health clinics:

Isolempilo Health Clinic: Gate 5, Steve Biko Campus, Opposite Sports Centre

City Campus Health Clinic: City Campus, next to the library

Brickfield Campus Health Clinic: second floor

Ritson Campus Health Clinic: under staircase of hotel school building

The campus health clinic's primary purpose is to assist students with their medical needs in a professional and confidential manner. Effective health care requires a balance between preventive and curative services which are accessible to all students, with the availability of essential medicines. The campus health services promote individual responsibility for health, preventive care and informed decision making. The wide range of medical services offered by the clinics includes:

- Primary health care
- TB screening and follow up treatment
- Emergency services in partnership with Citimed ambulance
- Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Infections

### Reproductive Health:

- Contraceptives: pills and injections
- Emergency contraceptives-morning after pills
- Pregnancy tests
- Referrals for termination of pregnancy (TOP)
- Condoms
- Vaccinations (e.g. Hepatitis A and B)
- Voluntary HIV counselling and testing
- Blood tests
- Pap smears
- Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
- Rape management/ referrals
- Medical male circumcision
- Health education & awareness campaigns
- Referrals to and from other Institutions
- CD4 bloods taken at the clinic
- Referral to Communicable Disease Centre for ART treatment

## Who works at the Health Clinics?

The Campus Health Clinics at DUT are staffed by full-time/contract/part time nurses and sessional doctors. Your first point of contact with either of the clinics is via a nurse, after which you may be referred to the doctor on duty. All consultations are conducted in a confidential manner, which means that your privacy will be protected.

If you think you need medical assistance then contact either the Isolempilo Campus Health Clinic OR the City campus Health Clinic and meet one of our professionally trained nurses. Here's how you can do so:

Visit the Isolempilo Health clinic: Gate 5, Steve Biko Campus, Opposite Sports Centre which can also be called on (031) 373 2223 OR

Visit the City Campus Health Clinic: City Campus, next to the library, which can also be called on (031) 373 6002

# OUR ANNUAL EVENTS:

- Health fair



- Cuppa Cansa



- No smoking day





# "HOW TO..."

## GET THE HIV AND AIDS SUPPORT YOU NEED

### What is the HIV/AIDS Centre?

Our primary purpose as the HIV/AIDS Centre is to assist DUT community with Information and support for their HIV and AIDS concerns. We also promote and encourage confidential HIV counselling and testing and individual awareness of their HIV status. We facilitate HIV/AIDS integration through research and comprehensive health promotion. These are the range of services offered by the HIV/AIDS Centre:

#### Information Services

Development and distribution of information, education and communication (IEC) materials.

Publication of quarterly HIV/AIDS Centre Newsletter

#### Gender Diversity

The HIV/AIDS Centre works to create spaces and services that are supportive, informative and welcoming to all LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex) students within DUT. We work closely with the DUT LGBTI society "Shadows in the Rainbow" to make DUT an accepting and affirming environment for LGBTI students and their allies. We create awareness and educate the general DUT community on embracing Gender Diversity.

#### Design, review and implement DUT's HIV/AIDS policy

Organising quarterly HIV/AIDS Committee Meetings. HIV/AIDS Committee serves as the advisory to executive management on HIV related matters.

#### Provides and support health education

In our commitment to health education, the HIV/AIDS hosts seminars and dialogue sessions presented and chaired by experts in the field of HIV and AIDS.

#### Peer education programmes

Peer Education is our flagship programme that expands on HIV education by providing peer driven learning and awareness. The programme encapsulates the "Brother for Life" and "Zazi" initiatives. Over and above this, our Peer Educators facilitate HIV awareness and Prevention programmes with campus residential students.

#### Support groups

Our support group programmes mainly focus on providing care and support for students living with HIV and those students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersexed (LGBTI).

#### Awareness campaigns

Educating and informing staff and students about HIV & AIDS through awareness campaigns, training workshops, orientation programmes and individual consultations

#### Community engagement

As part of our commitment to support our DUT external community and the emerging of young leaders in HIV Prevention, we have designed programmes that train, mentors and facilitate the efforts of secondary school and TVET students in HIV and Gender-based Violence work.

#### Support group and social networks

#### Encouraging and supporting the integration of HIV/AIDS Curriculum

The HIV/AIDS Centre is part of the DUT General Education Task Team and the Peace Education Task

Team to ensure that HIV and GBV are integrated into the overall university curriculum and co-curriculum.

### Health promotion

Health Promotion is the spine that runs the Centre, through awareness and prevention campaigns.

Promotion of HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT)

Promoting and conducting HIV/AIDS Research

The HIV/AIDS Centre promotes, supports and conduct research on HIV/AIDS, Gender, Sexuality and other related aspects

### KEEP ON THE LOOKOUT FOR OUR HIV/AIDS RESOURCE MATERIALS

- Uvo Lwethu, HIV and AIDS Journals and books, Books on gender and sexuality Brochures, DVD's (intersexions, soul city and many other informative series), Pamphlets on HIV
- Monitoring and evaluation of HIV/AIDS programmes

### WHO WORKS AT THE CENTRE?

The HIV/AIDS centre was expanded due to the help from Higher Education

AIDS Programme (HEAIDS) funding. The HIV/AIDS centre is staffed by the specialist:

HIV/AIDS Coordinator, Health Promoters, Project Officer, Lay Counsellor, MSM/ LGBTI Programme Coordinator, Project Assistant and Administrative Assistance, all of whom are dedicated to offering a professional and confidential service that addresses your needs for support, information and advocacy. We also work closely with both the DUT Campus Health clinic's and the Student Counselling Centre, thereby ensuring appropriate and professional referrals where necessary.

If you think you need assistance around issues of HIV/AIDS then contact the HIV/AIDS Centre and meet one of our helpful staff. We are at the Open

House Building, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Steve Biko Campus (above standard bank) and can be contacted on (031) 373 2260/2287

# OUR ANNUAL EVENTS:

W  
o  
r  
l  
d



First things  
first campaign



Condom/STI  
week

A  
I  
D  
S



Candlelight  
memorial

D  
a  
y



Aids  
week



Graduate  
alive/  
Abstinence walk

(WAD)



# "HOW TO..."

## ADJUST TO CAMPUS LIFE

All higher education students face the task of adjusting to life on campus.

Entering a tertiary institution usually involves the first prolonged separation from home, and the first taste of responsibility for meeting life's problems without the benefit of parental/caregiver guidance. As a first year student you will need to learn to allocate your time between studies and social activities. You will also be confronted with the need to establish another set of personal relationships. Importantly, you must "find" yourself and learn "who you are" in this entirely new community.

Adjustment can lead to feelings of anxiety, indecision and stress. A period of sadness "home sickness" related to missing your family and friends is normal. You may even question why you are at DUT, if you have made the correct career choice and/ or should you go home. Before making any decision it is important to give yourself some time to adjust – at least one semester.

For most students, these problems of adjustment are naturally resolved over a period of time, but they are nonetheless very real problems for every student. For others, adjustment may be made more difficult for a number of reasons. It is therefore important to be conscious of what it means to adjust successfully so that you can actively ensure your own adjustment to this new stage in your life.

The transition to tertiary education can be challenging at many levels. You will be faced with demands and decisions that accompany this phase of life and requiring you to assume a greater degree of independence than before. Any change in life can be both exciting and daunting. Some areas in which you will need to adapt and may experience adjustment difficulties are:

### Academic:

You will be responsible for the independent study of larger volumes of work than in high school. You will need to develop an effective study routine and study methods to ensure academic success.

### Personal:

You will need to develop a firm sense of personal identity so that you can be secure and not susceptible to negative peer pressure in order to find belonging and value.

### Emotional:

You will need to develop more mature emotional responses and behaviour as you encounter relationships at a different level. Be wise about who you form emotional attachments with. You will find that adjusting to a new environment and phase of life can have an effect on your emotions and you will need to manage and deal with these appropriately. It is important to identify and acknowledge your emotions rather than ignoring or suppressing them.

### Social/Relational:

You will be in a position to maintain previous bonds of friendship, while also forging new associations, friendships and relationships. You will have to give careful thought to whom you choose to form close associations and intimate relationships with. There is a lot of pressure to engage in sexual relationships, make sure you weigh up carefully what you want for yourself and make this decision responsibly with consideration of the possible consequences. Also be aware of other influences to 'belong' such as drinking

or taking drugs, which may temporarily give you an illusion of adjustment and coping. Unless in moderation, these behaviours can negatively affect all areas of your life and spiral out of control.

## Suggestions for Adapting to Campus Life:

- Prioritise study as a lifestyle while you are at University. Develop personally effective study strategies.
- Live a balanced life. Make time to develop friendships, to get integrated socially and for extra-mural activities such as a hobby or sport. Find out about the facilities offered by the Sports Centre.
- Build a support system for yourself both academically and socially. Make regular contact with your lecturers with regards to your work. It is also important to have at least one close friend that you can talk to about your struggles and successes, both in your studies and in life in general.
- Decide beforehand what your personal goals are and let them guide your decisions and behaviour so that you won't be influenced negatively by the freedom. With independence comes greater personal responsibility for the consequences of your decisions and actions. You will need to take personal responsibility for the budgeting of your finances and also be aware of your personal safety on and off campus do something that goes against your values.
- Take personal responsibility for familiarising yourself with the campus environment and services. Get to know what services and resources are available to you as a student. Make use of the facilities such as the Careers Resource Centre; the Student Counselling Centre; the Isolempilo Campus Health Clinic and the HIV/AIDS Centre. Find out about which campus clubs and societies you can get involved in.
- Be proactive. Develop good habits from the outset. Don't wait for a problem before you put self-responsible behaviour into practise.
- Be committed to making the most of the experience of being a student. There are many opportunities for personal development while you are a student, which will benefit you both now and in the future, so take hold of them while they are available.
- Cultivate an attitude of accountability to those you can trust as a safeguard against burning out, dropping out, stress and mounting emotional difficulty. Don't ignore problems or be ashamed to talk about difficulties you may be experiencing. Staff of the Department of Student Counselling and Health are here to help you adjust to this new environment (see contact details in the front of this booklet).

# "HOW TO..."

## MANAGE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY

### Study Timetable Essentials:

- First get hold of a blank 7-day week timetable that encompasses your full day (from when you wake up to when you go to sleep). If you can't find one that suits your needs, a pull-out timetable has been provided in the last page of this booklet.
- Schedule in your daily routines in as much detail as possible (e.g. what time you wake up, what time you get ready in the morning, when you have lunch and dinner, daily chores and when you go to bed). Since these routines are essential and generally inflexible, they will provide the parameters around which you will eventually schedule your study time.
- Schedule in your essential leisure activities in as much detail as possible (e.g. gym, soccer practice, favourite TV programmes, personal commitments etc). These are generally more flexible than daily routines and can be forfeited in times of high stress (e.g. exams) - but this should not be the norm.
- Schedule in your work commitments (e.g. time spent at work or lecture times).
- Your timetable will now have a number of blanks in it. These are your potential study times. However before you schedule your study time in, first decide which time of the day is your prime time (i.e. time when you are feeling The management of your time is the most important skill in the attainment of academic success. It provides the grounding for all your studies and, if done correctly, gives you a flexible framework from which to balance your various (and often seemingly conflicting) commitments. In addition to this it enables you to keep focused and motivated. Although there are various tools of time management (e.g. diary, year planner etc.), the development of an effective Study Timetable will be the focus of this article. This may be different for each person and could include morning, day or night. Once you've decided this, you should concentrate most of your studies (and definitely your more challenging subjects) around this time.
- Now break the remaining blanks into study blocks. These study blocks should not exceed 50 minutes and should include regular breaks (generally not longer than 10 mins). Write these in a different colour pen so that you can, at a glance, see when you are scheduled to study.
- Try to stick to these study blocks, even if you don't have an upcoming test. Rather use them for assignments or review so that you get into the habit of studying at certain times in the day.
- Try and use non-prime time periods for study preparation and assignments (i.e. activities that don't require the same degree of concentration as studying).
- When you have an upcoming test - take the study material and break it down into manageable chunks, and slot these into your study blocks.

- Set short-term goals for each day - and evaluate your progress each day. If you are behind, immediately make plans to make up the work. This way you won't run out of time before the test.
- Never study the day before a test, this time should be used for revision only. As such, make sure your study timetable includes revision time.

NB: Remember that studying requires discipline, as it's rare that you would prefer to study than engage in leisure activities. As such, once you've written up your study timetable, and made the necessary adjustments to ensure it works for you, you must stick to it. Only by developing good study habits can academic success be guaranteed.

If you need further assistance in managing your time, please pop in to the Student Counselling Centre and see one of our professionally trained psychologists (see contact details in the front of this booklet).

# "HOW TO..."

## OVERCOME PROCRASTINATION

Overcoming procrastination usually involves better organizational and time-management skills. It is also important to have a clearer understanding of the personal or emotional meaning of your tendency to procrastinate. The former skills can be learnt and improved with practice.

Although there are some useful tips that can help you to improve, it is primarily a matter of finding the ways of working that best suite you rather than trying to rigidly follow someone else's model.

### SELF-HELP STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME PROCRASTINATION:

- Motivate yourself to work on a task with thoughts such as "There is no time like the present," or "nobody's perfect"
- Prioritise the tasks you have to do
- Commit yourself to completing a task once started
- Adopt the 5 minute rule, promise yourself you will work for 5 minutes and then for 5 minutes more and so on
- Reward yourself whenever you complete a task
- Break the tasks down into several smaller steps. Estimate how much time each step will take. Set a deadline for each step. Write your plan down.
- Get help from lecturers and other students when you find a task difficult.
- Eliminate distractions that interfere with working on tasks. These include: internal distractions (e.g. personal/relationships/emotional concerns), External distractions (e.g. cellphones, television and music)
- Take breaks when working on a task so that you do not tire.
- Work on a task you find easier after you complete a difficult task
- Above all, think positively and get going. Remain focused and motivate yourself to work on a task with positive self talk.

If you need further assistance in overcoming procrastination, please pop in to the Student Counselling Centre and see one of our professionally trained psychologists (see contact details in the front of this booklet).

# "HOW TO..."

## CONQUER TEST AND EXAM ANXIETY

Almost every student who takes a test feels anxious, but for some the feeling is so intense that it impacts on their performance. A sensible amount of nervousness and anxiety generated during a test is good as this helps academic performance by encouraging motivation. However, if this anxiety causes you to blank out during a test or exam or generally make a mess of the answers, you may be suffering from test / exam anxiety.

### Helpful Hints That Help To Curb Anxiety:

- Mentally shout 'STOP' when you start to feel anxious. Eliminate negative self talk, replace it with positive statements like "I've studied and I did well during the term and should do well in this exam". This may curb your anxiety and bolster your confidence.
- Understand that under test situations you will view questions that you can't answer. Don't feel anxious and upset.
- Focus. If you can't answer a question focus on answering what you do know.
- Don't do last minute cramming. This is guaranteed to increase your stress and anxiety which does little to improve your test score.
- Physical wellness - eat food with nutritional value. Never diet on the day of the exam.
- Limit your intake of harmful substances such as alcohol/nicotine/drugs as these negatively impact on your concentration.
- Get enough sleep - lack of sleep will impact on your concentration and memory.
- Focus on the task at hand, i.e. focus on studying for and responding to questions on the exam rather than potential negative consequences.
- Exam preparation - anxiety is often caused by inadequate or ineffective exam preparation. You should be well prepared if you study effectively.
- Consider joining a serious study group. Review old test scripts. You will know what to expect in the test or exam. If you prepare you will be confident, thus reducing stress.

### Reducing Anxiety In The Exam Room:

- Identify those questions you are able to answer with ease and answer them first - this will boost your confidence.
- Examine the marking scheme and divide your time accordingly. This will give you the opportunity to answer all questions.
- At all times focus on the goal of answering your questions rather than the end result.
- Shut out the world - If you feel an attack coming on during an exam, put down your pen, sit back and relax, close your eyes and shut out the world. Think of nothing. When you have calmed down sufficiently, resume your exam.

If you need further assistance, please pop in to the Student Counselling Centre and see one of our professionally trained psychologists (see contact details in the front of this booklet).

# "HOW TO..."

## SUCCEED IN YOUR TESTS AND EXAMS

Preparing for the approaching tests and especially exams can seem overwhelming even if you are up to date with your course material. A structured and organised approach to exam preparation can reduce anxiety and improve your performance.

- Draw up a study plan: (See article on How to ... Manage Your Time Effectively) Draw up a specific study plan for exam preparation. This is the most fundamental key to effective studying and will require you to be self-disciplined. You need to invest time in studying if you want to achieve well. There are no short cuts or magical solutions that will replace diligent, hard work.
- Assess how much of the course material you have read: Break your workload into systematic and manageable sections per subject. You can allocate specific subject sections to specific study blocks. By this stage you should know how long it will take you to work through a particular section. Be wise and disciplined with your time especially as exams draw closer. Evaluate the relative importance of different sections and subjects and allocate your time accordingly.
- Take a systematic approach: Ideally, you should have been studying continuously throughout the semester and should already have had an opportunity to 'interact' with the study material. This builds your knowledge in a certain subject over time and you will be more confident that you know your content material. This puts less pressure on you at exam time and you will perform better. If you take this approach to studying you will still be able to find time to relax in your exam preparation time and you will reduce your test and exam stress substantially!
- If you haven't been working throughout the semester, all the more reason to adopt a structured and disciplined approach to your studying. You will have to invest more time and effort into catching up with your work load.
- Don't procrastinate or cram. Don't rely on cramming or 'cross-nighting'. Cramming is the opposite of effective studying. You may need to revise the day or night before an exam to refresh your memory, but if you try to cram information that you haven't yet studied properly, you will at best only remember some of the information on a short-term basis. Learning is a process and not instant. You need to rest and get enough sleep during exams so that your brain can function optimally.
- Remember some of the information on a short-term basis. Learning is a process and not instant. You need to rest and get enough sleep during exams so that your brain can function optimally

## A Useful Study Technique:

A useful technique for studying, that will ensure an organised and disciplined approach to test and exam preparation is the SQ4R. This is an acronym that stands for the following:

Survey: Quickly look through the chapter to identify the main ideas or unifying themes. To do this, briefly look at the table of contents, the introduction and conclusions, headings, sub-headings and diagrams. This

should only take you a few minutes and will give a “snap shot” into what the chapter is about

**Question:** This will enable you to establish a purpose to your studying by forcing you to begin thinking about the material as you read it. To achieve this, create questions out of the material you've surveyed (turn headings and sub-headings into questions), and read the questions asked at the end of the chapter. Write these questions down and try to answer them as you read the material.

**Read:** Carefully read (in manageable chunks) the chapter you are learning. In so doing try to answer the questions you've already generated, identify the main ideas of the material read and note important details and relationships of ideas. Remember to reduce your reading speed for difficult passages.

**Recite:** Now you begin testing how well you've read by checking if you can answer your original questions with the book closed. Do this orally (say aloud) and state the key facts and concepts you've studied. Reread any areas which are unclear.

**Record:** This is what changes reading into studying, and where most of your work will be learned. Make sure you take accurate notes on basic concepts of things that you've read. These should be done as a brief outline of the material studied, and will later become your revision notes for exam preparation. You should do this as you are reading the material or after reading a small manageable chunk of material.

**Revise:** Long-term memory is improved with frequent practice (or revision). As such review your revision notes frequently (preferably at the end of each evening), answer all questions you generated (and review questions that you didn't know the answers to) and try to predict exam questions. Revision should be done throughout your studying, as well as just before a test or exam.

#### Techniques For Exam Preparation:

- Start with your lecture notes
- Using your lecture notes as a guide, refer to the relevant chapters of your text book and make your own notes
- Make summaries of your notes on key concepts and sections
- Refer to previous test and exam papers where available to become familiar with the style of questioning and to practice answering mock questions that you anticipate getting.

If you need further assistance in developing an effective strategy for studying, please pop in to the Student Counselling Centre and see one of our professionally trained psychologists (see contact details in the front of this booklet).

Compiled by:

Staff of the Department of Student Counselling and Health

(November, 2014)

Edited By: Philile Mtshali

(Intern Counselling Psychologist, 2014)



STUDY TIMETABLE

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
13:00							
14:00							
15:00							
16:00							
17:00							
18:00							
19:00							
20:00							
21:00							
22:00							
23:00							