

Semester Planning

With the increased workload of graduate school, having a strong semester plan can go a long way to ensuring you produce your best work, avoid procrastination, and reduce school-related anxiety. This handout will walk you through the initial steps of forming a semester plan. You should use this as your starting point, and then personalize and refine it to make it work for you!

1. The basic premise is to create a table that has your classes in columns across the top (with one extra column for notes) and the weeks of the semester numbered down the side.
2. Begin by inputting all assignments by due date for each class in the appropriate box week-by-week. These should include readings as well as small and large assignments. It might be helpful to color-code or otherwise differentiate between types of assignments so that it is easy to see what type of work is due for each week at the glance.
3. After this, input any self-assigned due dates, such as drafts of longer papers, outlines, annotated bibliographies, deadlines for extra reading, or anything else that is a part of your work process.
4. Finally, add any notes in the final vertical column that relates to any important details about your plan, such as important events that may limit schoolwork time.

One of the main ways to adjust this to your style is in how much detail you include in each box, how many self-assigned deadlines you include, and how exactly you use the notes. It is helpful to keep in mind how easily you will be able to create a weekly plan from looking at your table. Ideally, you should be able to use this as a guide to make ongoing weekly plans throughout the semester.

****This document should be one element of a time management system that you refer to and adjust as things change as the weeks pass. It is the birds eye view of the entire semester.****

Example Semester Plan

Weeks	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Notes
1	Read ____, pgs. ____			
2	Reading Response 1 Read ____, pgs. ____	Read ____, pgs. ____	Read ____, pgs. ____ Read ____, pgs. ____	
3	Read ____, pgs. ____	Read ____, pgs. ____	Read ____, pgs. ____	
4	Reading Response 2 Read ____, pgs. ____	Read ____, pgs. ____ Presentation Draft	Read ____, pgs. ____	Begin reading with final topics in mind
5	Read ____, pgs. ____	In-Class Presentation Read ____, pgs. ____	Read ____, pgs. ____ Read ____, pgs. ____	Visit CWR to brainstorm paper topics
6	Reading Response 3 Read ____, pgs. ____ Draft of Final Topic	Read ____, pgs. ____ Short Paper 1	Read ____, pgs. ____	Review topic draft or visit CWR for review
7	Read ____, pgs. ____	Read ____, pgs. ____ Draft of Final Topic	Read ____, pgs. ____	Review topic draft or visit CWR for review
8	Final Topic Due	Read ____, pgs. ____	*No Class*	
9		Final Topic Due	Read ____, pgs. ____	
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				

Example Semester Plan

Weeks	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Notes
1	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response 1	
2	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.:	
3	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	
4	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.: Presentation Draft Due	Read: Pgs.:	
5	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response In-Class Presentation	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	
6	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.:	*No Class*	
7	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Begin reading with final topics in mind Review short paper draft or visit CWR for review
8	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.: Short Paper 1 Due	Read: Pgs.:	Visit CWR to brainstorm paper topics

9	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	
10	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.: Final Paper Topic Due	Read: Pgs.:	
11	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	
12	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.:	Review final paper draft or visit CWR for review
13	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response Final Paper Draft Due	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	
14	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.:	Read: Pgs.:	
15	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Read: Pgs.: Reading Response	Polish final paper draft or visit CWR for review
16	Final Paper Due	Final Paper Due	Final Paper Due	