Time Management Inventory
(Courtesy of Penn State Graduate Writing Center)

Writing Session Time Management Inventory

Date: ______________________

I. Planning

How long do you plan to spend during this writing session?

What writing task do you plan to accomplish?

II. Time Record

Start Time: ______________________

Stop Time: ______________________

Total: ______________________

Interruptions

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Total: ________
Time Management Inventory, continued

III. Post Session Analysis

What writing task(s) did you accomplish during this session?

If you did not accomplish what you planned to, why? Could you have foreseen the obstacle? If so, could you have done anything to prevent it before you began your writing session?

If you experienced interruptions, did they affect your productivity? If so, could you have foreseen them? What might you have done to prevent them?

Projected goals for next writing session:
S.M.A.R.T. Goals
(Courtesy of the UVM Graduate Writing Center)

Goal Setting for Dissertation and Thesis Writers

Setting incremental, weekly goals will help you complete your dissertation or thesis. Try the SMART approach for goal-setting. Write goals that are:

**Specific:** Clearly articulate what you need to do. Vague aims are your enemy. “Write a lot” or “just get this done” are good intentions, but those aims are not specific goals. Determine exactly what you will write, when you will write, where you will write. Make decisions rather than hoping something good will happen.

**Measurable:** Your goal needs to be observable—something tangible that another person can see, count, acknowledge. Define your goal in numerical terms—the number of pages you’ll produce, hours you’ll stay on task, concepts you’ll address. Putting your goals in this form will help you gauge progress and help motivate you to move through the process. Take inventory at the end of each work session to develop a sense of what you can produce in a defined period of time when you are on task. How many pages can you write in an hour? How long does it take to format a table? How much time do you need to revise/ rework something?

**Achievable:** Consider the size of your goals this week. Set goals that you can realistically achieve in the time available. Determining what’s achievable may be challenging if you haven’t worked consistently to this point. If you haven’t worked with targets before, think in small, defined increments. If you reach your goal earlier than you expect, use the remaining time to work toward your next goal.

**Relevant:** When writing, goal-setting may be useful for a variety of purposes—producing texts, developing work habits, improving your writing style or knowledge. Consider which goals seem most productive and important for you at the moment and set goals accordingly. Are you trying to develop work habits? Experiment with new writing techniques? Produce pages? Gain facility with a new genre/disciplinary discourse? Choose.

**Time-limited:** In order to assess how well you are meeting your goals, set an endpoint when you will review, evaluate, and set your next targets. You’ll be most successful if you set small weekly or daily goals that lead toward your ultimate goal—a complete draft of your dissertation. Systematically evaluating what’s working for you and what’s not will help you celebrate, troubleshoot, and stay engaged with the task.

What is your SMART goal? Write it here: