PLANNING OF STUDIES, TIME MANAGEMENT AND LEARNING

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Todays topics

- What are university studies all about?
- Academic skills and learning
- Time management and how to use your time well
- Sudy techniques
- Wellbeing as a platform for learning

Slideshow will be found on the website later on.
Finnish university versus previous study environment

- Discuss with the person next to you:
- How in your experience do studies at the Finnish University differ from your previous studies?
- What kind of new study skills and methods does the Finnish study environment require?
Degree Graduation time and the length of the study time

- Both undergraduate and graduate degree students have the right to graduate in a period two years longer than the target time for the studies.
  - for example: bachelor degree (180 credits) target time 3 academic years + masters degree (120 credits) target time 2 academic years + 2 years = 7-year study right

- Undergraduate student has the right to graduate in a period one year longer than the target time.

- Graduate student has the right to graduate in a period two years longer than the target time.
Student financial aid

- Since 1.8.2014, you must complete 5 credits per aid month and at least 20 credits/study year, even though you might receive student aid for just 1-3 months.

- The maximum time for the student financial aid depends on the length of the degree and the starting year of the studies.

- Check the number of months you are eligible for student aid:
  - student financial aid decision from KELA

- KELA customer service for inquiry about duration of aid in months: http://www.kela.fi/web/en/students
# Study related goals

## INTERNAL

- Originates from within the self:
  - Why do I want to complete these studies?
  - What do I do with these studies? How do I benefit from studying in the future?
  - What meaning/value do these studies hold for me?
  - enhances motivation

## EXTERNAL

- Originates from the outside:
  - Compulsory courses
  - Time needed to complete a degree and the length of the study right
  - The preconditions of the study grant
  - A student might be unable to set other than external goals
How to approach your studies in a constructive way? 1/2

Achievement orientation:

- The desire to show that one is intelligent and capable. Studying is more about showcasing one’s abilities: ”I’m good” only if I reach my goal.

- Support one’s performance in easy tasks, but is lacking the support in more challenging assignments

- Exposes the student for quitting the work in progress when facing greater challenges
How to approach your studies in a constructive way? 2/2

Learning orientation:

- Focusing on the growth and the learning process.
- The student doesn’t look at the grade, rather the fact that one is progressing. “Becoming better” by learning new things.
- The student processes information deeply and is creatively searching for new alternative solutions instead of quitting.
- The work is pleasant and endures pressure.
- Supports challenging study situations that require long-term work.
Motivation (Deci & Ryan 2000)

- **Intrinsic motivation** involves engaging in a behavior because it is personally rewarding; performing an activity for its own sake rather than the desire for some external reward.

- **Extrinsic motivation** occurs when we are motivated to perform a behavior or engage in an activity to earn a reward or avoid punishment.
  - Other peoples needs, approval

- Motivation also arises through doing (inside out vs. outside in)!!
Me as a Learner?

- Lack of skill in studying is not a personality trait, but academic skills can be learned
- YOU can develop your studying skills
- How you perceive yourself as a learner and as a student guides your actions

→ Notice that learning skills are work life skills!
THE FACTORS INFLUENCING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

- HARD WORK
- ACADEMIC SKILLS
- IDENTITY

2.11.2017
FORMULA

\[ 8 + 8 + 8 = \]

STUDYING + FREE-TIME + SLEEP

WEEKEND \(0 + 14 + 10\)
Planning tools

- OodiPSP (Personal study plan)
  - The whole degree structure → courses and their timing (what and when)

- Tuudo mobile app for students
  - [http://www.oulu.fi/university/node/42359](http://www.oulu.fi/university/node/42359)
  - scheduling tool for students
  - your own updates are also possible.

- Paper calendar
PROCRASTINATION

(Counselling the Procrastinator in Academic Settings, 2004)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4P785j15Tzk
Finding balance in everyday life

- Combining studies with work and hobbies – prioritization!
- Splitting of goals into subgoals
- Finishing tasks instead of repeating courses
- Procrastination is exhausting, ”it’s not the work itself that exhausts us, it’s all the work undone”
- Shifting attention to what has been achieved
- Rewarding oneself, self-compassion
Efficiency in use of time, tips:

- **EFFECTIVE HOURS**: when are you most efficient?

- **CONCENTRATION**: silence or background music? The ideal time for concentrating is 20-50 min., after which a short break is needed.

- **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**: couch at home? or library? Not too many transitions!
Lectures?

- Up-to-date research information can be found in the lectures
- Knowledge found on the internet – can you evaluate if the information on the web is relevant? Have you found "all" the information relevant for your task?
- Enables participants to discuss the topic or phenomena in question
- Makes interpretation mistakes easy to find and possible to fix immediately
- Enriches the given materials
- Gives a useful platform for groupwork

- Focus on the lecture (switch off your mobile)
- Be active: ask, challenge, share thoughts, clarify
WHY MAKE NOTES?

Study: The Pen is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking (Mueller, Oppenheimer, 2014)

- The learner takes on an active role!
  → Information will be processed …already during the lecture

- structures thoughts
- helps processing new information
- supports recall
- useful when revising for an exam
- helpful in structuring written tasks such as essays
- forms a base for brainstorming
- can be used as a data source or data archive.
Cornell notes

Hints:
- questions
- observations
- keywords
- “core formulas”

Notes: Taken during the lecture or from a text in a personally suitable way.

Summary: Finally sum up your notes into a few sentences.
Mind map and concept map apps

- **Cmap Tools** ([http://cmap.ihmc.us/](http://cmap.ihmc.us/)): free service for non-commercial use, can be used for creating mind maps.

- **FreeMind** ([http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page](http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)): free service for creating mind maps. You can also convert a map, for example, into a website or a picture.

- **XMind** ([http://www.xmind.net](http://www.xmind.net)): free service for creating mind maps.

- **Google Docs** ([current Google Drive: [https://drive.google.com](https://drive.google.com)](https://drive.google.com)) With the Drawing service you can draw mind maps or concept maps.

- **Workflowy** ([https://workflowy.com](https://workflowy.com))

- **MindNode** ([https://mindnode.com/](https://mindnode.com/))
Electronic tools for taking notes

- GoodReader: reading program combined with file management, note taking and highlighting features
- Notability: application that allows writing, recording, drawing, etc.
- EndNote: application that allows writing, recording and taking pictures of notes, and marking them with keywords
- OneNote: notebook where you can save everything you need to remember or keep in order. Allows audiovisual recording.
Studying together

In class
- Asking questions and explaining things
- Informing
- Argumentation and feedback
- Inner meanings and new perspectives emerge
- Observing other peoples ways of working and adapting to it

Form your own studygroup! → peer support
- Group spirit helps you carry on, ”a positive must”
- Group workspace, quiet reading rooms, computer classes…

Studying together develops team skills

= work life skill
Reading

Every field of study has its own language, which needs to be embraced as a part of the learning process.

In time you will learn the core concepts and
- be able to read faster
- be able to pick up the essential parts of the content
- be able to more effectively build a meaningful whole from the content.
- comprehensive learning and revision promotes learning
Foreign-language text

- Avoid excessive use of the dictionary
  - search for the core vocabulary in the dictionary to understand the most essential parts of the content
    → trust your abilities, you will gradually learn to read foreign-language text.

- It’s important not to cling to difficult words
  → it’s sufficient that you understand what it’s all about

- When you embrace the core vocabulary of your own field, your reading of foreign-language text will become more fluent
Writing

- Writing skills are one of the most essential skills for a university student.
- tool for processing thoughts, brainstorming and expression
- writing can be learned; academic writing has its own style: fact-based writing
  - motivated facts, logical conclusions, consistency in the structure of the text and exact use of concepts.

TIPS:
- Start writing even if you don’t feel optimally inspired
- Read / study only to the extent that you are able to write
- Write for yourself at first, put your thoughts on paper even if they are still unclear or disconnected/fragmented, write uncensored.
- Start with the easiest part
- If you get stuck, find another part to continue with
Writing process

Remember, it doesn’t need to be perfect at once!

1. Brainstorming & planning: choice of topic (decide and start), defining and limiting the subject

2. Information seeking: what do you already know? Mark your sources immediately. Start writing while reading and searching for information.

3. Writing: start with the easiest part. Start with keywords or a few separate sentences. Divide your work into smaller parts and several days

4. Modification: evaluate and modify continuously, refine at the end.

5. Finishing: set a deadline (and sub-objectives if necessary). Let it go, "it's good enough".
From theory to practice: programming, designing, arithmetics 1/2

- Read the task -> identify the phenomenon -> make notes of what is known about it and WHAT WAS ASKED FOR
- Is the result in the right proportions or relevant for the outcome?

- Tutored exercises!
- Given times for exercise/tutorials (usually several groups during the week), students work independently → correct answers will be given.
From theory to practice: programming, designing, arithmetics 2/2

- One completed task is better than ten ready-made solutions.

- Practice is an effective means of learning and problem-solving.

- It’s more important to understand the process of solving the problem than get a single result.

- Practical skills can omly be learned in practice!
During the exam

- Attend the exam well rested, remember the importance of sleep
- Read the questions and notice the amount of time available in relation to the number of tasks.
- Make a mind map or a list of topics that you intend to write about in your essay. What is asked and how should you limit the answer?
- Start with the easiest task
- Focus on your own task and performance. If the presence of others disturbs you, select your seat in the front of the lecture hall.
- Use all the time that you need regardless of what the other students do.
- Before returning your exam make sure you’ve answered all the questions. You can also read through your answers.
- If you feel nervous during the exam, you can stop for a moment, close your eyes and take a deep breath. Think about something else for a while and then return to your task.

Research study:
Optimising Learning Using Flashcards: Spacing is More Effective than Cramming (Kornell, 2009)
Recall is easier when the information is processed in several different ways

A HUMAN BEING LEARNS
- 10 % of what she/he reads
- 20 % of what he/she hears
- 30 % of what she/he sees
- 50 % of what he/she both hears and sees
- 70 % of what she/he discusses with others
- 80 % of what he/she is experiencing
- 95 % of what she/he teaches others.

W. Glasser (1992)
Physical exercise and learning

- Physical exercise
  - Improves blood flow and oxygen supply in the brain, increases the level of neurotransmitters and the production of neutrophils (chemical that supports neuronal activity)
  - Increases connections between brain cells and structures and increase the frequency of existing neural networks
  - Regular physical exercise increases the number of capillaries in the brain and generates new nerve cells, particular in hippocampus, which is the center of learning and memory

- Learning potential increases:
  - develops attention and concentration
  - Improves information processing and memory functions
  - has a positive impact on academic performance, informational activities (memory, attention, general information processing and problem solving) and learning

(Liikunta – hyödyntämätön voimavara oppimisessa ja opettamisessa, Liikunta&Tiede, 2013)
Sleep and learn!

Robert Stickgold, Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmRGNunPj3c
Counselling services

- In degree programmes / faculties: degree structure, personal study plan (PSP), courses, etc.
  - Programme coordinator/tutor teacher in your study programme
  - Student tutor / fellow students
  - Study advisor (Faculty study affairs: http://www.oulu.fi/university/faculty-study-affairs)

- University level services:
  - Study Psychologist
    http://www.oulu.fi/english/studying/supporting-your-studies/student-counselling-psychologist
  - Walk-in service and scheduled appointments

→ Check the Student Center website for exceptions
  http://www.oulu.fi/university/node/34985
Thank you! Good luck with your studies!