PATH 2: TAKE YOUR TIME BACK

Congrats on choosing Path 2: Take Your Time Back, Cutting Through The B.S. and Building Your Master Study Schedule.

Now, we all encounter obstacles when it comes to learning something new, especially in college-Level technical courses. The content is difficult. The tests can sometimes seem impossible. The assignments are long and tiring. But more often than not, if we just had more high quality time, organized in the right way, we'd be much better off.

Many of you said that one of the biggest obstacles that you have in school is making the time for the studying, the homework, the projects, going to class, while at the same time still having some sense of balance so that you have time left over for work, or doing an internship, or doing clubs and activities, or just time to enjoy yourself, hang out with your friends, and get the most out of life.

“The vast amount of material covered in the one term engineering physics intro is somewhat overwhelming, and easily drains me of any free time I might otherwise have.”

This unfortunate scenario is all too common when it comes to figuring out what to do with your time at school. But I also know a lot of you do try your hardest to maintain a sense of balance. Sometimes though, there’s this nagging sense of guilt that comes along with it – whether you're putting in the time studying that you really need to.

“I have this issue that only occurs when I'm at school. There's constant pressure to get things done even as a senior bio student at a university. I feel like whenever someone asks me to go out somewhere, it takes me
forever to reply because I don't know if what I'm doing will hurt my grades. I also feel guilty for not sitting down and studying/quizzing myself because I didn't do as well as I'd like on my first round of exams.”

This may sound familiar to you, or maybe it's just damn hard to figure out how to fit everything in.

“I work full time and struggle to find time for both. The next 2 weeks are going to be hell for me since I have about five exams. I want to keep up with both school and work, but it's difficult.”

Path 2 is all about applying a strategy to how we spend our time, and not allowing professors, or assignments, or whatever “thing” seems to come up, dictate how we invest our valuable time. It's about figuring out what to do and when to do it in a way that's sustainable, organized and intelligent.

**PATH 2 GOAL**

at the end of Path 2 you'll have a well-organized, customized, flexible study plan that will make sure that you stay on track without wasting time on unproductive activities, put in the work you need to, and still have time left over to enjoy life.

Our goal is this:
At the end of Path 2, you'll have a well-organized, structured, sustainable study plan that will help you stay productive and working on the right activities throughout the semester. You won't be wasting time on unproductive activities, and this will allow you to put in the work that you need to into your studies. At the same time, you'll still have plenty of free time left over to spend on whatever other things you have going on in life. You'll have a study guide that shows you what to focus on each week. You'll have an ever-growing list of useful learning resources that can give you immediate answers to the questions that you have. And finally, you'll have a Master Study Schedule that brings it all together, and shows you exactly what to do each and every week.

In terms of timeline, expect to spend one week making your way through each of the Levels of Path 2, setting up your guides, and making your Master Study Schedule.

**TIMELINE**

- **1 week** to go through the videos and Challenges (15-30 minutes each day), and set up your guides and Master Study Schedule (2-4 hours)

- **Maintain** your schedule and use your resources throughout the semester by implementing the Follow-Up Steps (30 minutes/week)

For this Path specifically, a large majority of the Follow-Up Steps are going to require a time investment up-front. You're going to be spending a few hours to get your guides and study schedule set up at the beginning, but this is going to pay off big-time down the road.
Once you've gotten everything set up, then all you'll have to do is spend about **30 minutes each week to maintain your study schedule**, keep everything updated, and review your guides to keep you on track during the week.

If you do this, you'll be more organized and prepared than you've ever been, ready to jump into your work.

Let's get started.
LEVEL 1: THE 80/20 STUDY METHOD

When we talk about time management and “taking your time back,” one of the most overlooked ways to do that is putting your focus in the right place. For Path 2 that's where we're going to be starting off with in Level 1: The 80/20 Study Method.

Why does it often feel like no matter how many lectures you attend, no matter how many homework problems you do, no matter how much time you spend studying, the exams still seem to kill you and you never end up with the grades you really want?

The sad truth is most students spend the large majority of their study time on activities that don't directly contribute to what they want to achieve.

For example, we tend to indiscriminately work through things as they come up throughout the semester, regardless of how relevant they are to us. We spend hours and hours and hours on homework problems that... Who knows what problems in there are actually going to show up on the exam? We spend hours reorganizing our notebooks and annotating things, highlighting textbooks, never quite sure which of these things are going to contribute to our learning process. But we're kind of just doing them because we think we “should.”

This is obviously not the best way to spend our time studying throughout the semester, but how do we know what to do otherwise?

That's what I want to introduce you to in this level – something called Goal-Oriented Learning.

Humans are goal-oriented learners. This means that we learn best when we have a specific outcome that we're working towards.

We talked bout this a little bit back in Path 1, but goals produce motivation and focus. Goals allow you to develop a strategy in order to achieve them.
A lot of students ask me, “How can I study more efficiently?” And I always respond to them in pretty much the same way, which is: “What's your goal? What are you trying to get out of it? What course are you taking or what exam are you working towards?”

GOAL-ORIENTED LEARNING:

learning something with a **specific outcome**
that we’re working towards

this is how humans learn best: **producing**
**motivation and focus**, and allowing you to
**develop a strategy**

This is the type of thinking that I'm talking about, because if you don't think in this way you'll end up like we talked about before: indiscriminately spending your time on things that may or may not contribute to the goal you're trying to achieve.

Yes, we can have both short-term goals – for example I want to get a 95 on my next test, I want to get a 3.8 GPA this semester – and long-term goals – I want to learn this material so well that I've mastered it and I can carry it with me for the rest of my life. But regardless, when it comes to earning better grades or freeing up time away from studying so that you can pursue other interests, or developing a deeper understanding of the material... **we need a laser-like focus on whatever our goal is so that we can use our time as wisely as possible.** As they say, “focus on the essentials and eliminate the rest.”
This 80/20 Study Method that I'm talking about is based on something called The Pareto Principle or The 80/20 Rule. This states: for many events roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes.

**THE PARETO PRINCIPLE (80/20 RULE):**

for many events roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes

This means that in our case, if you can identify the 20% of your course material that's going to determine approximately 80% of your grade, and you focus all of your time on those 20% of activities, then you can achieve the same grade as someone who studies all of the material in about 1/5th the time.

**Student 1:** studies everything indiscriminately  
gets an 85%  
studied for 10 hours

**Student 2:** studies the top 20% of assignments  
gets an 85%  
studied for 2 hours  
8 hours left over
The math there may vary from case to case, but in general this principle applies.

In most courses, the typical hierarchy is going to be something like this:

- Finals and/or big projects are going to count for 25 to 50% of your grade
- Midterms and quizzes are going to count for between 10 and 25% of your grade
- Homework, class attendance, other miscellaneous assignments that are probably between zero and 10% of your grade

**EXAMPLE ASSIGNMENT HEIRARCHY:**

1. **Finals/Term Projects (25-50%)**
2. **Midterms/Quizzes (10-25%)**
3. **Homework/Attendance (<10%)**

Again, it depends on the class, but in general you're going to have some sort of hierarchy like this that you can work off of.

And next, in our Level 1 Challenge, we'll run through an example to show how to apply this process to a typical technical course.
LEVEL 1 CHALLENGE

For your Level 1 Challenge, take a look at the sample syllabus that I've provided below.

Do an 80/20 analysis on the syllabus and lecture schedule below.

1. Review this syllabus and determine which assignments are worth the majority of our time and effort, and which ones we shouldn’t focus as much time and energy on.

2. Now take a look at the corresponding lecture schedule and identify the big topics that we’ll need to focus on during the semester. For this course overall, what will the big topics be that we should be focusing on?

By doing this, you'll have a guiding structure that you can look at in terms of: “If I focus my attention on these specific topics for this specific type of assignment, this is going to result in a better outcome than if I were to spread myself thin and work on everything equivalently.”
ENME 320- Thermodynamics-Section 0201, Fall 2007

University of Maryland, College Park
Mechanical Engineering Department

Instructor: [Redacted]
Office and Lab: [Redacted]

Phone: [Redacted]
E-mail: [Redacted]
Office Hours: [Redacted]

Class Location: [Redacted]
Meeting Times: [Redacted]


Course Website: Blackboard™ (bb.eng.umd.edu)

Course Description:
This course is designed to introduce the second year engineering students to the fundamental concepts of thermodynamics, to improve on problem solving abilities, and to prepare them for more advanced courses in thermal sciences and energy conversion field.

Prerequisites: MATH 41 and {PHYS 260 and PHYS 261 (Formerly: PHYS 262)}

Text Topics to be Covered:
1. Introduction, concepts, and definitions (chapter 1)
2. Properties of common substances (chapter 3)
3. Energy, work and heat (chapter 2 & 4)
4. First law of thermodynamics for closed systems (chapter 4)
5. First law for control volumes (chapter 5)
6. Second law of thermodynamics (chapter 6)
7. Entropy (chapter 7)
8. Thermodynamics of vapor and gas cycles (chapters 9, 10, 11)
9. Ideal gas mixtures and mixtures of air and water vapor (chapter 13 & 14)
10. Overview

Grading:

Class Attendance 3%
Assignments 8%
Quizzes (4) 24%
Midterm 25%
Team Project 5%
Final Exam 35%

Total (Read below) 100%

Tentative Grading Scale:

A*: 100-97    A: 96-93    A: 92-90
B*: 89-87    B: 86-83    B: 82-80
C*: 79-77    C: 76-73    C: 72-70
D*: 69-67    D: 66-63    D: 62-60
F: below 60

Note: The above grading scale is meant to serve as a guideline.

Home Work Policy:
Homework will be assigned and must be returned. From the collected problems, a few problems will be randomly selected for grading. Solutions to homework will be posted on the course website. You are urged to work on the problems yourself before looking at the solutions.

Quizzes:
There will be four quizzes in this course which are normally closed-book and closed-notes unless noted (necessary tables will be provided). Every quiz might involve some calculations. Therefore, you need to bring your calculator with you. I will drop the lowest quiz for every one. Every quiz usually takes about 20 min. You are urged to properly indicate the units of the calculated variables. There will be a grade deduction for not writing proper units.

Midterm and Final Exams:
Midterm and final exams will typically be consisted of two parts: the first part closed-book and closed-notes and the second part open-book and open-notes. For the open-book part you need to bring your textbook to the exam since no table will be provided. Besides, you need to have your calculator with yourself. The Final Exam will be cumulative and test the knowledge gained in the entire course.
The final exam has been scheduled for Wed., Dec 19, 2007, 8:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m.

Make Up Policy:
No make up will be given for Quizzes and assignments. However, I will drop the lowest quiz for every one. Make up for mid term or final exam will only be given in the exceptional cases when the individual can demonstrate with proper documentations that the emergency involved was beyond his/her control. In case of any religious observance, the student must personally hand a written notification of the projected absence within two weeks of the start of the semester.
**Academic Honesty:**
All students are expected to uphold the highest ethical and professional standards of academic honesty (see the University of Maryland Code of Academic Integrity). A violation of the UMD Code of Academic Integrity includes (but is not limited to) intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Please be advised that a failure to accept and exhibit the fundamental value of academic honesty may result in a course grade of "XD".

**Course Website:**
We will use Blackboard™ (https://bh.eng.umd.edu) as the primary site to archive lecture notes and course related materials and share information. If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard Learning System, it would be a good idea to familiarize yourself with its features now. In case of any technical difficulty, please send an email to bh-help@umd.edu, or you may visit the Help Window across from room 2039 Glenn L. Martin Hall. Should you prefer assistance over the phone, you can call the OIT Help Desk at 301-405-1500. You are required to check the course website on a regular basis.

**Reading Assignments:**
It is important that you keep up on the reading in this course. The reading assignment will be given in each class session. You are highly encouraged to complete the given reading assignment before attending the class.

**Arrangements for Students with Disabilities:**
The University of Maryland is obligated to provide appropriate accommodations for any student with documented disabilities. University policy objective is to maintain consistent program requirements and academic standards for all students while allowing flexible assignment of assignments for students with disabilities. However, it is the responsibility of each student to bring his special needs to the attention of the instructor.

**Path to Success in ENME 320:**
The key factors for success in this course are to stay focused and fulfill your responsibilities. The course material is inherently cumulative such that the material learned in one week will be used in the following weeks. If you lose your focus for a day or week, it will be extremely hard for you to come back to the track.

**Topics & Lecture Dates:**
Tentative exam dates are given in this table. If there is any change in the exam dates, students will be informed at least two class sessions in advance.

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Last updated: 8/29/07
**LEVEL 1 FOLLOW-UP STEPS**

Then for your Follow-Up Steps, do this for each of your courses. Get your syllabus, look at which assignments are going to have the biggest impact on your grade, and then look at the lecture schedule or the overall outline of the course and identify for the big picture what are the topics that I need to know really well in order to perform well on the exam.

**Go through this 80/20 process for each of your courses.**

1. **Review the syllabus and prioritize the graded assignments** you'll have to complete.

2. **Review the topic/lecture schedule and try to identify the big topics you’ll need to focus on.**

This is the key first step in order to work towards developing your Master Study Schedule.