Students, whether first year or graduate, typically complain about a) the size of their workload and b) the amount of unstructured time. On the surface, these two issues appear to go together but it takes time management skills to resolve them.

TRY Keeping track of your time for one entire week. Account for every 1/2 hour by filling in your schedule every few hours. Add up totals for sleep, studying and recreation.

WHY? Because you need to know if you are putting in enough hours. Normal for sleep is 50-60hrs; students who are sleep-deprived have lower marks than students who are getting enough sleep. Normal for school work is 1hr homework for every hour in class plus overtime for studying; this varies from one faculty and program to another, and mature and part-time students may need twice these hours for homework, so check with your advisor. Normal for recreation is 10-25hrs, depending on your program.

TRY Planning your schedule in advance, to whatever degree you are comfortable, adjusting your hours to desired totals. Make clear contracts with yourself regarding time, place and study task.

WHY? Because you will work best with a clear sense of purpose.

TRY Writing everything down: long term goals (course requirements) on a calendar, short term goals (weekly requirements) on your schedule or "goals" sheet, daily goals (errands) on a "to do" list.

WHY? Because time management is about goals: clarifying them (on paper, leaving short-term memory free for learning), setting them, assessing them, developing methods for meeting them and rewarding them.

TRY Doing some work on a task the day that it is assigned, then developing a plan for finishing it by dividing the task into at least 5 "chunks" of work with established deadlines and rewards.

WHY? Because all of these activities help with motivation. First minute motivation is a powerful tool; after using it to gain momentum, set deadlines - with rewards - and chip away at the task to get it done.

TRY Doing your most difficult work during hours when you feel best. Save pleasant tasks for less productive times of the day.

WHY? Because this will make you more efficient. Most of us have high energy time each day (often in the morning), with two periods of medium and one of low energy (often in the late afternoon). Find these times for yourself and work with them - do difficult work during high time and easier work during lower times.