MANAGING YOUR TIME

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WHAT IS PRODUCTIVITY?

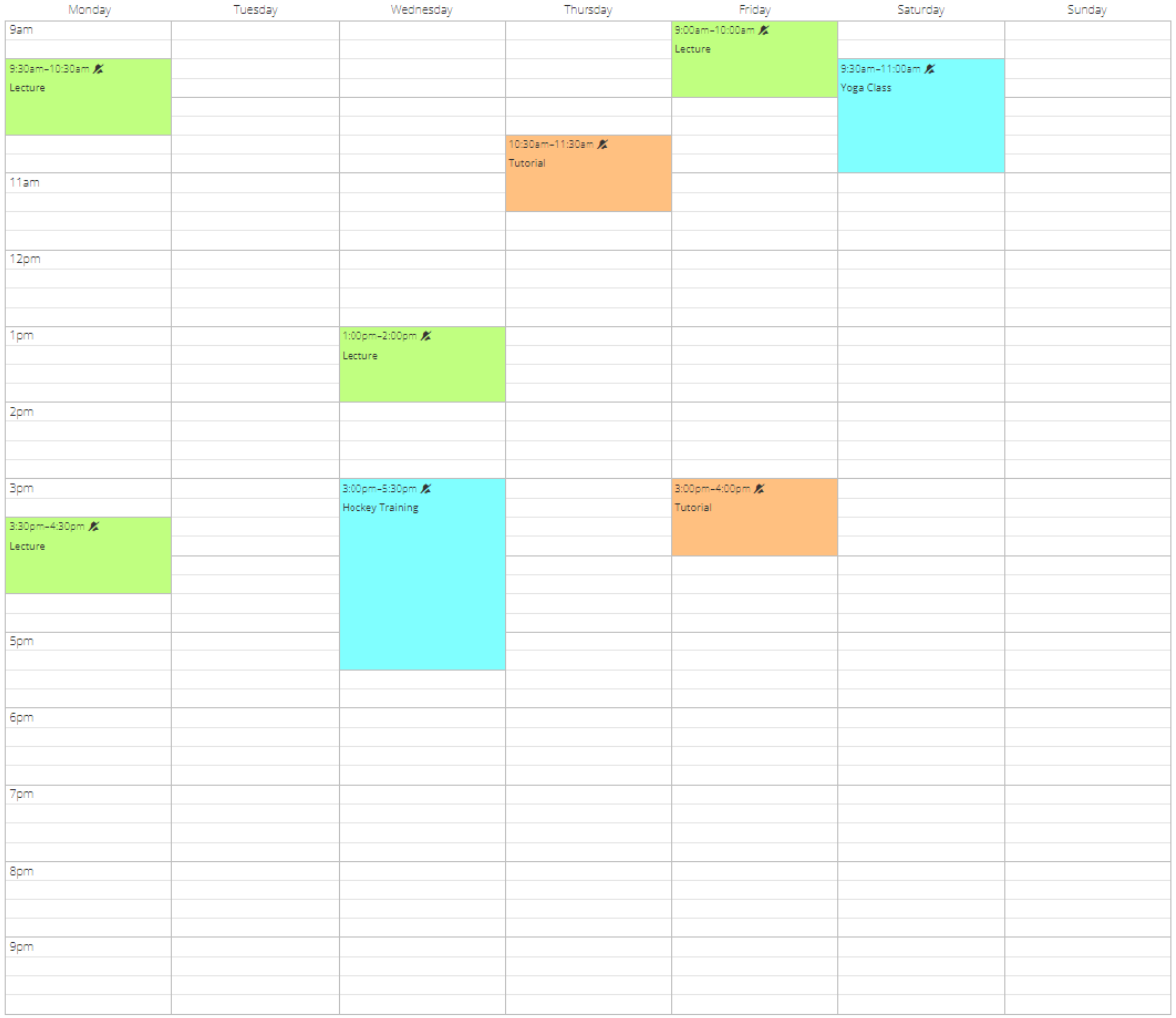
Productivity YouTube: Some Gripes

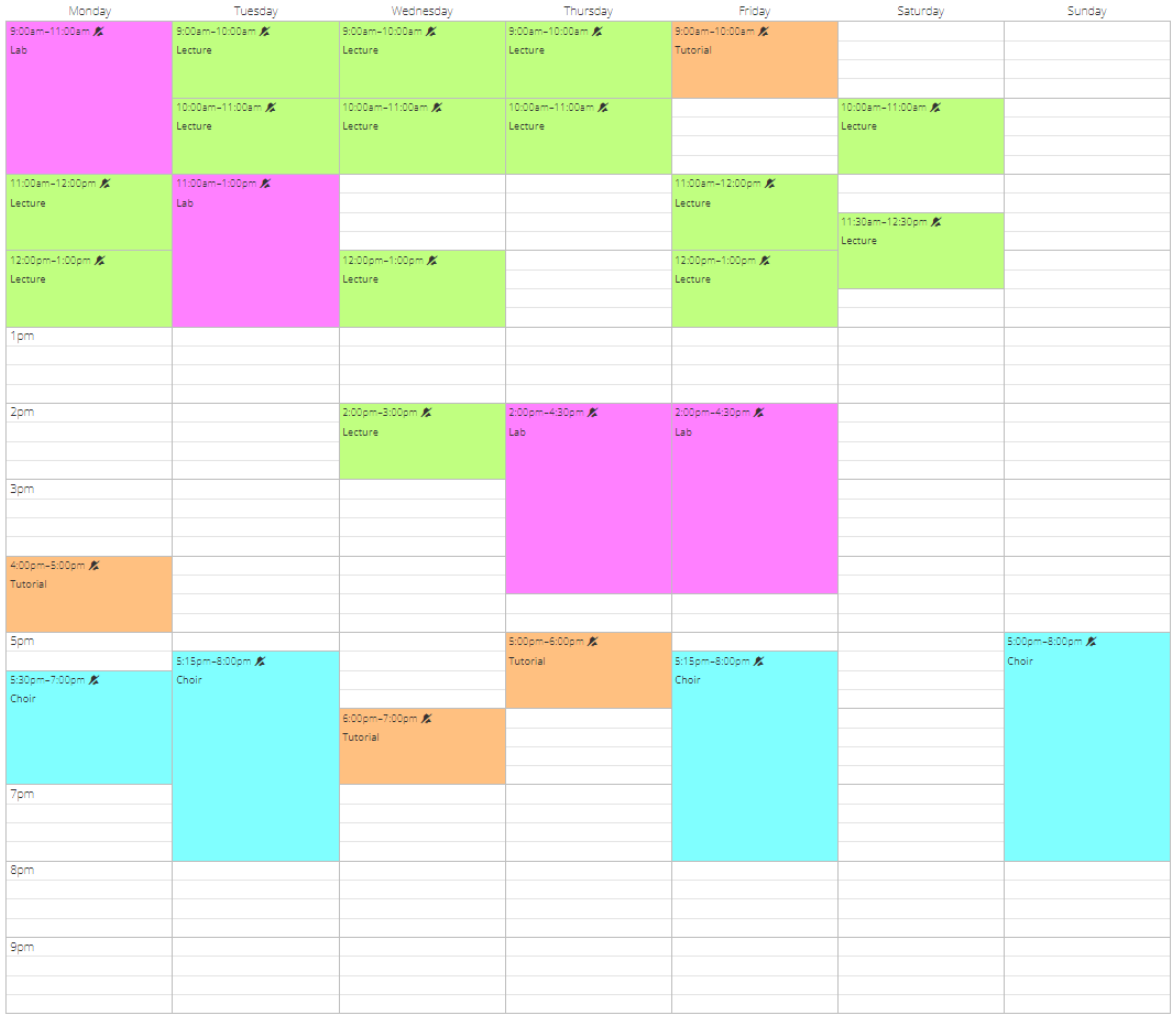
- Productivity at the expenses of <u>everything</u> else – sucks the joy out of hobbies, and induces guilt about taking breaks and time off
- Often quite rigid tips with little flexibility for individual circumstances (family commitments, your health, other life stress, etc.)
- Risks presenting the channel's "productivity" as the sole result of the presenter, when many of these YouTubers rely on teams of employees
- Makes your sense of self worth <u>conditional</u> on your productivity

MY VERSION OF PRODUCTIVITY

- You are the best person to know what will work for you
- Your study schedule does not need to look like that of your friends, classmates, or anyone else for that matter!
- Today is a list of suggestions – not a rulebook
- Try different techniques out, and don't give up if you don't notice immediate change

YOUR TIMETABLE LIKELY LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THESE...





SO... HOW DO I MAKE MY TIMETABLE WORK FOR ME?

PLANNING: THE MICRO VS. THE MACRO

- For many undergrads, the micro is the day; the macro is the week
- For those working on something longer-term (whether that's an undergrad project or dissertation, or even a postgrad project) – there's a third level: by day, by week, and by term, quarter, or even half-year
- Each of these phases requires slightly different time management techniques

THE MICRO: PLANNING YOUR DAY

- Track your natural circadian rhythm: when do you do your best, most focused work?
  - If you find you suffer from the “afternoon slump”, this is quite natural!
  - Sometimes, your lectures, classes, tutes, etc. will not be super compatible with your natural rhythm
  - Once you’ve worked this out, you <u>have</u> to allow your time off to be guilt free!

THE MICRO: PLANNING YOUR DAY

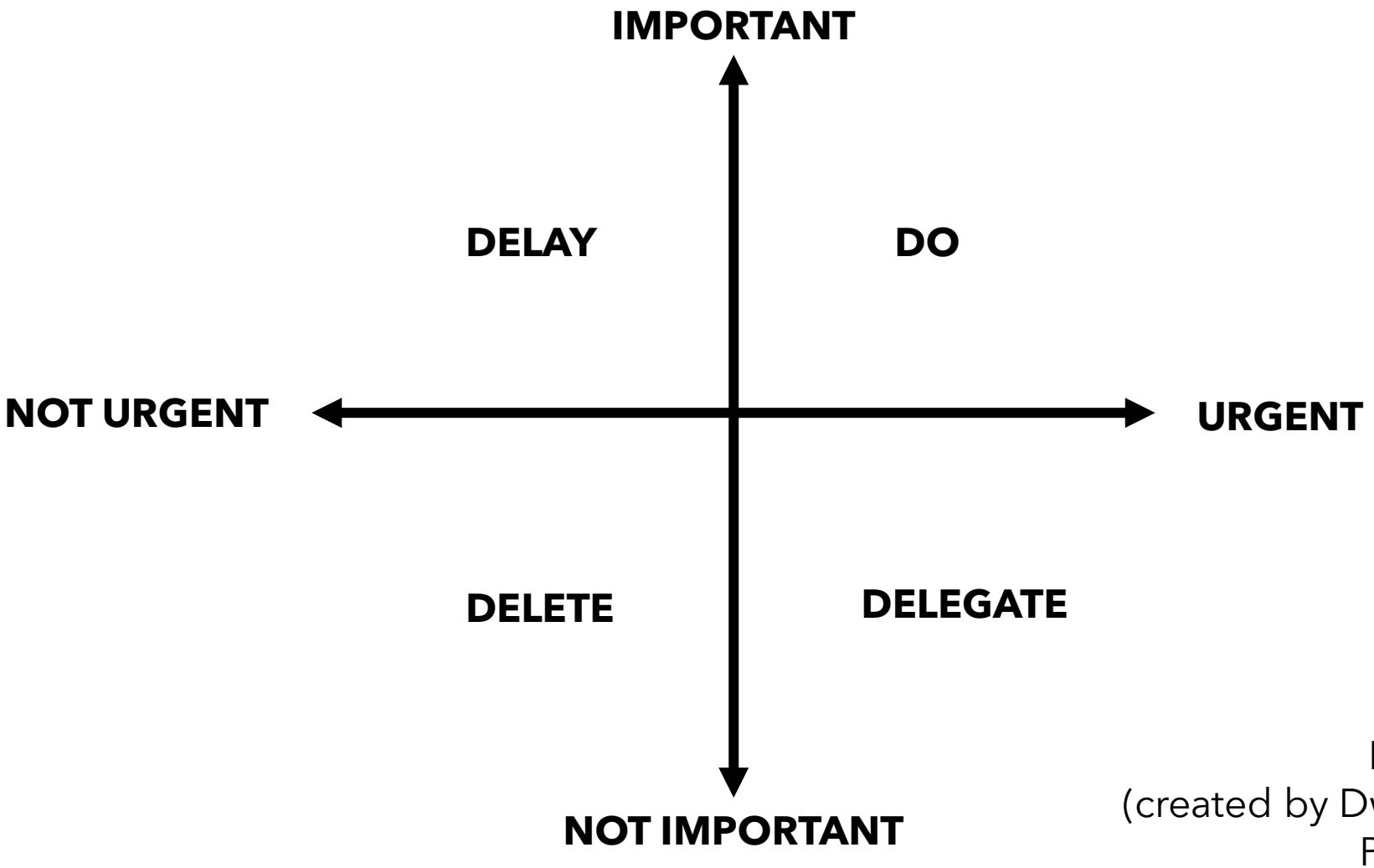
- To-do lists are good, but they can get overwhelming!
- Breaking things down makes them more manageable
- The Bento Method: Three Main Tasks (Small/Medium/Large)
- Pomodoro Technique
  - SHAMELESS PLUG: Shut Up and Work! runs every week on Wednesday mornings at Hugh's! There's free cake!

THE MACRO: PLANNING YOUR WEEK/TERM

- Whether you're working on tute essays or working on a long-term project, you will want to have some sort of sense of the big picture
  - This is how you'll know whether you're running to time, ahead of schedule, or behind

- One technique to do this is to build in a "review loop" at regular intervals – this can be quite mindful
  - Step One: Step Back
  - Step Two: Assess
  - Step Three: Accept
  - Step Four: Adjust

WHAT TO DO WHEN THINGS GET OVERWHELMING?



Eisenhower Principal
(created by Dwight D. Eisenhower,
President of the USA)

WHAT TO DO WHEN THINGS GET OVERWHELMING?

FRONT BURNER Immediate focus Prioritised, most important tasks	**BACK BURNER** Not an immediate focus Written down so you don't forget
VITAMINS Daily/regular tasks (e.g. email)	**OVEN** Scheduled tasks (e.g. backing up, your review loop)

"The Martin System"
From Thomas Frank, *Working from Home: How to Plan Your Day*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWW7Q4eJr8w&t=544s

WHAT TO DO WHEN THINGS GET OVERWHELMING?

- Change up how you define your tasks:

"I'm going to work on my problem sheet" → "I'm going to work on my problem sheet for two hours"

- Turns an output-based goal into an input-based goal

SOME APP RECOMMENDATIONS

- ToDoIst/Teux Deux: To-do list app
- Bento: Day management system (three tasks)
- Due: Schedules reminders for tasks and deadlines
- Forest: Blocks distractions on your phone and web browser, can also be used as a Pomodoro Timer
- Stride/Engross: Pomodoro Timer
- Toggl: Time tracker – see how much time you are spending on certain tasks, sites, etc.

FINAL POINTS

- “Productivity” is a concept that we need to always be slightly wary of…
  - Try not to fall into the trap of comparing yourself to others – it’s so demoralising and almost always achieves nothing!
- Organising your time is personal and unique to you
- Ultimately what I’ve tried to give you here are a few suggestions of techniques that allow you to figure out how much time you have and how you want to spend it – hopefully in a more intentional way!

THANK YOU

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