Completing Homework Assignments

In college, homework assignments (type, difficulty, frequency) will vary by course, but you are certain to have homework in all of your college courses. In some courses, homework will be separate grade in the course or part of an attendance and/or participation grade. It is important that you complete these assignments.

Why do professors assign homework?
Professors assign homework for many reasons, including:
- Providing additional opportunities for study and practice
- Reinforcing concepts, theories, and topics covered in class
- Offering alternative perspectives than those covered in class
- Providing additional information on difficult concepts

Keys to Success

Plan ahead. At the beginning of the term, carefully review the course syllabus to get a sense of the homework assignments and use the syllabus to create a schedule. Throughout the term, review the instructions on the assignments carefully and familiarize yourself with requirements. If you are unclear, ask questions about the assignments, so you’re ready to complete it before the due date.

Get comfortable! Find a quiet place to work, use ambient music to help you relax, and find a place where you can relax. Stay away from working in bed or you may be tempted to take a nap rather than complete your homework.

Get organized. Identify one space (a planner, notebook, app) where you can record all of your homework assignments. Set due date reminders a day or two before its actual deadline, so you aren’t scrambling at the last minute to complete it. Keep all of your materials together (box, drawer, shelf, folder) with everything you might need to complete any given homework assignment, so you don’t spend precious time searching for them.

Have an everyday approach. Get in the habit of saying to yourself you have homework in each class every day. If you do not have an assignment, your homework should be reviewing notes, presentations, and materials.

Adopt a “no zeroes” philosophy. If your professor is using homework as part of their grade considerations, it’s important that you don’t “give away” these points by not completing it. Adopt a “no zeroes” philosophy when it comes to homework. Decide that you are not going to miss out on these points by turning in homework assignments when they’re due—even if they are not completed.

Adapted from Central Penn College “Keys to Success”