2024 National Order of the Arrow Conference

Session: Maintaining Your Grades While Serving in Scouting

Session Length: 45 minutes

Session Description

This session focuses on time management, prioritization, and organizational skills tailored to the unique needs of Scouts who are also dedicated to maintaining high academic standards. Participants will learn how to integrate their Scouting experiences, such as leadership and community service, into their academic life, leveraging these experiences to enhance their learning and personal growth. This session is perfect for Scouts who are committed to excelling both in their educational pursuits and in their contributions to their Scouting community.

Learning Outcomes

Outcome 1: Understand the importance of balancing academics and extracurricular activities.

Outcome 2: Learn effective time management strategies.

Outcome 3: Develop organizational skills to manage commitments.

Outcome 4: Recognize the importance of downtime and self-care.

Outcome 5: Create a personalized action plan for maintaining balance.

Theme Connection: Seek New Heights

Attendees will be challenged to think of 3 things they can seek to do TODAY to improve their academic and Scouting balance and achieve new heights.

Facility and Material Needs

Facility Needs

Is this session remote delegate-compatible? (ie. can the material be engagingly taught via live stream)	Yes
Does this session need audio/video (AV) capabilities? (ie. projector)	Yes
Are there any other specific facility needs for this session? (ie. movable chairs, panel-style seating, etc.)	No

Material Needs

Material	Quantity	Source
N/A		

Session Preparation Steps

Step 1: Update Template Theme and Slides 2, 11, and 12 for Content.

Step 2: Create notecards or other preferred presenter notes to assist with delivery.

Step 3: Review listed resource links and update with more recent sources, as needed.

Step 4: Prepare updated handouts with any new links identified in Step 3 and make copies for distribution post-session. The handouts used for the 2024 sessions are included at the end of this syllabus.

Additional Staff Members

Trainer Name	Email	Phone #
N/A		

Lesson Plan

Introduction **2 minutes**
Slide 3

- Welcome and Overview
  - Brief introduction to the concept of balancing academics and extracurricular activities.
  - Importance of balance for success and well-being.
  - Overview of seminar objectives and structure.

Topic 1: Understanding the Importance of Balance **15 minutes**
Slide 4

- Academic and Extracurricular Benefits:
  - How extracurricular activities like Boy Scouts of America enhance personal development, leadership skills, and college applications.
  - The impact of a balanced life on mental health, academic performance, and overall happiness.

- Balancing academics and extracurricular activities can be challenging, but it is possible. Here are some tips to help you find a balance that works for you:
  - **Prioritize your academics.** Your schoolwork should always come first. This means setting aside enough time each day to study and complete your assignments. If you are struggling in a class, be sure to get help from a tutor or teacher.
  - **Choose extracurricular activities that are important to you.** Don't join just any club or sport because you think it will look good on your college application. Instead, choose activities that you're passionate about and that will help you develop your skills and interests.
  - **Set limits on your commitments.** It's crucial to set limits on your commitments. You won't be able to accomplish any of them well if you take on too much.
  - **Manage your time effectively.** Use a planner or calendar to track your

schoolwork, extracurricular activities, and other commitments. This will help you stay organized and avoid feeling overwhelmed.
  - **Take breaks.** It is important to take breaks from studying and extracurricular activities. You'll be able to stay alert and focused if you do this.
  - **Start planning early.** Consider your interests and the times that extracurricular programs meet. You may start making time plans once you have a broad understanding of your schedule.
  - **Be realistic about your commitments.** Try not to attempt too much at once. Spreading yourself too thin is worse than concentrating on a few things you're enthusiastic about.
  - **Don't be afraid to say no.** It's okay to turn down invitations to extracurricular activities if you don't have time or if they aren't a good fit for you.
  - **Ask for help if you need it.** If you're struggling to balance your academics and extracurricular activities, talk to your parents, teachers, or counselor. They can help you develop a plan that works for you.
  - **Set priorities.** Decide which activities are most important to you and make sure to give them the most time and attention.
  - **Delegate tasks.** If you have too much on your plate, don't be afraid to ask for help from your parents, friends, or teachers.
  - **Take care of yourself.** Make sure to get enough sleep, eat healthy foods, and exercise regularly. This will help you stay healthy and focused.
- Balancing academics and extracurricular activities is an important skill that will help you succeed in high school and beyond. By following these tips, you can find a balance that works for you and achieve your goals.

Topic 2: Effective Time Management Strategies Activity **10 minutes**

Slide 5

Activity

Materials Needed: Handouts
Length of Activity: 10
Activity Description: Participants will work through one of two prioritization tools to assist with better understanding the importance of prioritization when managing time.

Based on timing, select either the Eisenhower Matrix or Time Squared as an in-class activity. The other tool not practiced in session can be briefly introduced and its use encouraged post session.

- Prioritizing Tasks: The Eisenhower Matrix
    - Explain the concept of the Action Priority Matrix and how it helps prioritize tasks based on their urgency and importance.
    - Discuss the Eisenhower Matrix: categorizing tasks into urgent/important, important/not urgent, urgent/not important, and not urgent/not important.
- Time Management Analysis: Time Squared
    - Use a 24-hour grid to allocate time spent on various activities.
    - Identify time wasters and productive time to find opportunities to increase productivity.

Topic 3: Organizational Skills **5 minutes**

Slide 6

- Visual Tools and Planners:
    - Use planners, calendars, and apps to keep track of assignments, deadlines, and extracurricular activities.
    - Organize schoolwork and extracurricular materials systematically
- Deadlines and Reverse Calendars:
    - Use reverse calendars to plan for major goals like earning the Eagle Scout rank. Start with the end goal and work backward to set smaller, manageable deadlines.

Topic 4: The Importance of Downtime and Self-Care **3 minutes**

Slide 7

- Why Downtime Matters:
    - Discuss the significance of downtime for mental health, creativity, and productivity.
    - Encourage students to watch videos on the importance of downtime.
- Incorporating Downtime:
    - Plan regular breaks and leisure activities into your schedule.
    - Practice mindfulness or relaxation techniques to reduce stress.

Topic 5: Asking for Help and Utilizing Resources **2 minutes**

Slide 8

- Seeking Support:
    - Encourage students to ask for help from teachers, mentors, and peers.
    - Use resources like tutoring, study groups, and academic counseling.

Conclusion & Q&A **5 minutes**

Slide 9

- Q&A Session
  - Open floor for questions and discussion.
- Recap of Key Points:
  - Importance of balancing academics and extracurriculars.
  - Effective time management, organizational skills, and the necessity of downtime.
  - Seeking help and using available resources.

Takeaway Challenge **2 minutes**

Slide 10

- Personal Action Plan:
  - Ask participants to list three things they'll do to improve their balance going forward.
  - Encourage sharing this list with a mentor or accountability partner for follow-up.

Appendix: Resources and Source Material

Resource	Link
Princeton Review. (n.d.). 12 Tips to Balance Academics and Extracurriculars	https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/12-tips-to-balance-academics-and-extracurriculars
Trainers Warehouse. (n.d.). Time Management Activities.	https://blog.trainerswarehouse.com/time-management-activities
Mind Tools. (n.d.). The Action Priority Matrix.	https://www.mindtools.com/agst6d0/the-action-priority-matrix
School Planner. (n.d.). Organization Skills for Students.	https://www.schoolplanner.com/organization-skills-for-students/

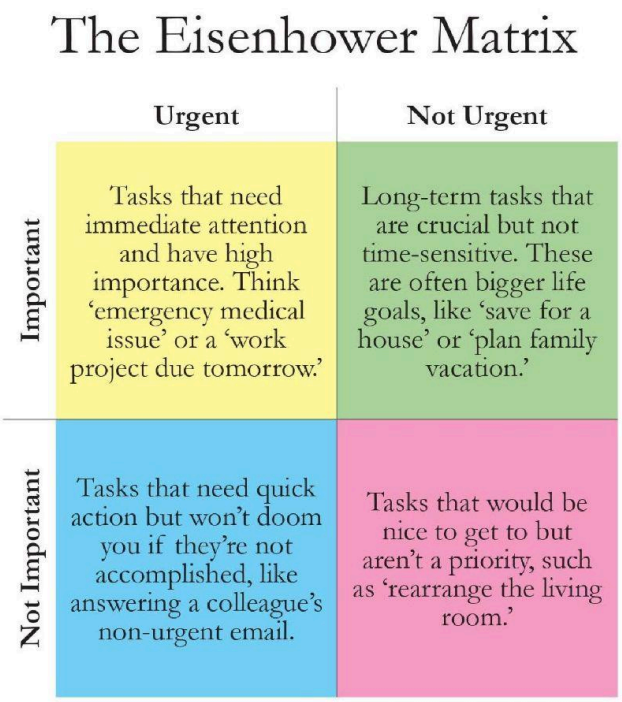
Activity 1: Time Management and Prioritization Workshop

Materials Needed:

- Printed copies of the Action Priority Matrix Worksheet
- Pens or pencils

Activity Instructions

1. **Introduction:**
    a. Explain the concept of the Action Priority Matrix and how it helps prioritize tasks based on their urgency and importance.
    b. Provide each participant with a printed Action Priority Matrix Worksheet.
2. **Task Identification:**
    a. Ask participants to list 10 tasks they need to complete in the next week. These can be academic assignments, Boy Scouts activities, chores, or any other responsibilities.
    b. Participants should then categorize these tasks into the four quadrants of the Action Priority Matrix:
        i. Urgent and Important
        ii. Important but Not Urgent
        iii. Urgent but Not Important
        iv. Not Urgent and Not Important
3. **Discussion and Reflection:**
    a. Have participants share some examples of their tasks and their placement in the matrix.
    b. Discuss how focusing on "Important but Not Urgent" tasks can prevent them from becoming urgent and help in maintaining balance.



The Eisenhower Matrix: Your Step-By-Step Guide

Step 1: The Brain Dump
Begin with a brain dump of all your tasks. Just jot down everything you need to do, no filter.

Step 2: Categorize Your Tasks
Based on your initial list, categorize your tasks into the four Eisenhower Matrix quadrants:

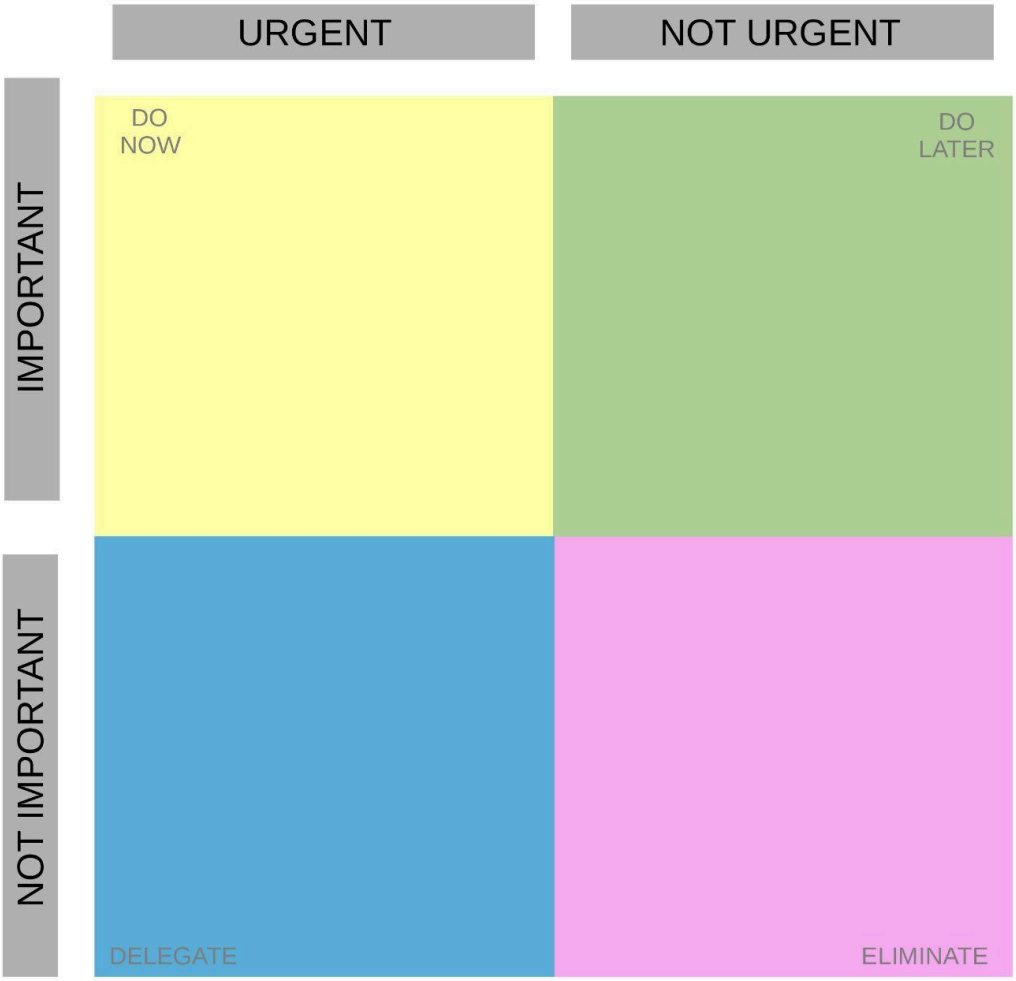
Quadrant 1 (Yellow): Urgent & Important
Tasks that need immediate attention and have high importance. Think 'emergency medical issue' or a 'work project due tomorrow.'

Quadrant 2 (Green): Important but Not Urgent
Long-term tasks that are crucial but not time-sensitive. These are often bigger life goals, like 'save for a house' or 'plan family vacation.'

Quadrant 3 (Blue): Urgent but Not Important
Tasks that need quick action but won't doom you if they're not accomplished, like answering a colleague's non-urgent email.

Quadrant 4 (Pink): Neither Urgent nor Important
Tasks that would be nice to get to but aren't a priority, such as 'rearrange the living room.'

Step 3: Prioritize Tasks in Each Quadrant
Now that your tasks are sorted into quadrants, it's time to prioritize within each list. Number your tasks in order of importance within each quadrant. This will give you a clear roadmap of what to tackle first.


URGENT
NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT
NOT IMPORTANT
DO NOW
DO LATER
DELEGATE
ELIMINATE

Activity 2: Time Squared Activity

Materials Needed:

- Printed copies of the "Time Squared" activity sheets (three pages per participant)
- Pens or pencils

Activity Instructions

1. **Introduction:**
    a. Explain the "Time Squared" activity and how it helps identify time wasters and productive time.
    b. Distribute the three pages of the "Time Squared" activity sheets to each participant.
2. **Filling the Squares:**
    a. **Page 1:** Ask participants to fill in the 24 squares with routine activities of a regular day, such as sleeping, eating, school, homework, Boy Scouts meetings, etc.
    b. **Page 2:** Next, have them fill in the squares with non-productive activities, such as social media, TV, chatting with friends, etc.
    c. **Page 3:** Finally, participants should collate the data from Pages 1 and 2 on the third page, highlighting productive vs. non-productive time.
3. **Discussion and Reflection:**
    a. Have participants look at their third page and identify any empty squares representing potential productive time.
    b. Discuss ways to reduce time spent on non-productive activities and reallocate it to more important tasks, including both academics and extracurriculars.

Activity: Time Squared
Sometimes the best way to manage time is to see how we use time. In this activity you get the opportunity to manipulate each hour of your 24-hour day.

Directions:
1. First grid: Think about the activities that you do on a regular day, these are considered **routine activities**. Some examples of routine activities include sleeping, bathing, eating, traveling (to and from school or work), television time, working out. Fill in the squares on this page based on the amount of time you spend each day completing these tasks. If you sleep eight hours a night, write "sleep" in eight boxes. If you spend 30 minutes a day bathing, then you can divide a square in half and write "bathing" on ½ of the square. **You do not have to complete all squares. Only label squares according to activities that you complete routinely.**

2. Second grid: Think about the activities that you do during the day that are not productive and do not contribute to your mental or physical advancement. These are **time wasters**. Some examples of time wasters are: long tea or water breaks, personal telephone calls, skimming social media watching videos on social media, texting friends, taking selfies, emails that do not pertain to your work, school, or specific recreational activities in your life. Fill in the squares on this page based on the amount of time you spend each day engaged in these activities. If you find that you skim Instagram for two hours a day, write "Instagram" in two boxes. If you spend three and a half hours a day answering and responding to needless emails, then you can write "email" in three squares and divide a square in half and write "email" on ½ of the square. **You do not have to complete all squares. Only label squares according to activities that could be considered time wasters.**

3. Third grid: Combine all the squares from the Routine Activities page and the Time Wasters page onto the **Collated Time** page. The squares that are left empty or uncovered represent productive time.

4. Consider the amount of time left for productivity. Are you satisfied with the amount of time that is left and used as productive time? Does the current use of your time allow you to complete all tasks in a timely manner to the best of your ability? If you feel that you are not using all the time you are given to advance yourself mentally or physically, try to remove some of the squares that are labeled beginning with the "time wasters."

Routine Activities

Time Wasters

Collated Time

MAINTAINING YOUR GRADES WHILE SERVING IN SCOUTING

Organizational Skills for Students (School Planner)

12 Tips to Balance Academics and Extracurricular Activities (The Princeton Review)

8 Time Management Tips for Students (Harvard Summer School Blog)

Manage Tasks with the Reverse Calendar Method (ClickUp)