

Yearly plan

Suggestions for Use

Identify sub-goals

- Think of your courses, dissertation or thesis as a large project.
- Identify sub-projects or smaller steps that must be sequenced and accomplished.
- Reflect on every requirement, including skills that you need to develop, and then list all necessary tasks.

Break down large tasks into small steps

Use the 'little steps for little feet' principle: the smaller the steps, the more manageable the process.

Sequence the sub-goals and estimate time requirements

- Be realistic. Allow time for supervisors to read drafts, ethics committee processing, administration hiccups, etc.
- Identify and check the availability of resources.
- Plan backwards from the due date.

Using a Gantt Chart

A Gantt Chart helps break the process down, identify all the tasks, determine the sequence, establish duration and identify overlapping or simultaneous work.

- All plans need to include both the task and the due date.
- Your plan is never set in stone.
- Logistic problems may force changes.
- Plan some 'spare' time at the end.
- Use a cross symbol for tasks that must be completed that week and arrows across multiple weeks for longer tasks.

Example: A Gantt Chart for a masters thesis is shown on the following page.

Consider using the Microsoft Excel template to develop your own Gantt Chart - <http://office.microsoft.com/en-nz/templates/gantt-project-planner-TC102887601.aspx>.

Sample Gantt chart

