DEALING WITH PROCRASTINATION

Here are some strategies that can be helpful. Try them, and develop those that work best for you.

1. USE THE PARETO PRINCIPLE
   - 20% of your effort will bring you 80% of your results; in any task, go after the essentials
   - Focus your effort on the 20% that will make a difference, instead of on the 80% that won’t add much
   - Prioritize your effort

2. MAKE THE TASK EASY
   - Break it down into parts
   - Start with an ‘warm up’ task
   - Say you will work on it for at least 10 minutes – set your timer, and don’t stop
   - Sandwich hard stuff in between pleasant stuff
   - Vary the learning activity: put ideas in/pull ideas out
   - Distribute learning over time
   - Substitute “I should” with “I’d like to”
   - Take short breaks

3. DEAL WITH WORRY AND ANXIETY
   - Find out what you need to do & know to do this task
   - Use resources: see the professor, TA, visit the Student Success Centre
   - Get help: get a tutor, see a librarian, use another text, talk to classmates
   - Join or make a study group
   - Better to do it less than perfectly than not at all. Just get it done
   - Believe in yourself. Think of a time when you made it work

4. SET ARTIFICIAL DEADLINES
   - Break down tasks into parts and set specific time limits for each
   - Make a timeline for the project, with parts due on certain days/weeks
   - Tell someone what you plan to do, and when you will be finished
   - Reward yourself if you finish on time

5. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR ALL THAT YOU PLAN TO DO
   - Use a planner like the Finding Time to Study grid (see SLS Online handout)
   - Plan out how you will use your time; use quality time when you are most resilient
   - Use an agenda; make to do lists
   - Play fair! Discipline yourself to work at planned times

6. STUDY SMART (IN ORDER TO STUDY LESS!)
   - Use ACTIVE LEARNING techniques for reading and studying (see SLS Active Learning handout for ideas)
   - Know your distractors, and control for them (turn off your phone)
   - Learn as you go, do all that you can so that you don’t fall behind!
   - Learn from your mistakes
   - Try a new learning/study/writing/problem-solving strategy and see what results