Adjusting to Learning Online
Strategies for Student Success

Heidelberg UNIVERSITY
The Owen Center for Teaching & Learning

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ORGANIZATION AND TIME MANAGEMENT

Check out the Changes

Due dates and assignments in your classes have likely changed. Check out the updated course schedule for each class and note new deadlines and tasks. Make sure you can connect to and are familiar with Canvas, ZOOM, Google Meet and Hangouts!

Make a Schedule

Staying organized is especially important for online classes. HERE is a template in which you can build your new schedule.

Setting a schedule for yourself can help provide structure and keep you motivated- be sure to include self-care and exercise!

Begin right away

Give yourself time to figure out new software and online assignments. Be sure to plan for setbacks or technical difficulties by building in more time than you think you'll need for reading, class preparation, and assignments.

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STUDY SKILLS FOR ONLINE COURSES

Find a Regular Study Space

 If possible, choose a space that's comfortable and allows you to be focused on your schoolwork, and make that space your new classroom. Try to minimize distractions (social media, phone, etc.) while you're in the classroom space.

Interact with your Classmates

You've already met your classmates! Try to build on these relationships by forming study pairs or groups and by setting up regular study meetings with peers, for example, by using Google Hangouts Meet or ZOOM.

Get in Touch with your Professors

Email is a good start, but don't forget you can call or video chat with your professors. Office hours are even more important in online learning, and all faculty will still be holding their office hours in an online format.

Utilize Academic Support

Ask yourself if you are struggling with content, making a schedule, or transitioning to learning online? Your answer will influence which form of academic support you need. The Owen Center for Teaching and Learning offers the following:

> **Supplemental Instruction** is available for BIO 122, 123, 124, CHM 112, PSY 101. SI leaders hold weekly office hours and weekly instruction sessions.

> **Academic Coaches** can help you adjust to learning online, making a schedule (and sticking to it), studying for exams, and taking notes.

> **Writing Center Consultants** can help you with all types of writing assignments. They can help you with any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming and drafting to revision.

> **Subject Matter Tutors** support student learning in Math and Computer Science classes by providing individual tutoring.

Check HERE to see all the available resources and times available for help. Sign up and add it to your new schedule! All academic support is available remotely, using Google Meet and Google Docs.

Watch Video Lectures Carefully

Online lectures are likely to be focused on the most important content for classes. If your instructors offer narrated slides or videos, take notes while watching just as you would for in-class lectures, but pause the video and rewind as needed, to focus more deeply on the concepts. A good rule of thumb is to spend 20-30 minutes watching and taking notes for a 5-10 minute video.

MOTIVATION AND PERSISTANCE

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Set Regular Goals

Goals can provide direction and help you measure your progress. Try to break any major assignments into smaller chunks so they feel more manageable. Then tell your study partners about your goals so they can hold you accountable for meeting them.

Reach Out if you are Falling Behind

Remember that your instructors are one of your most important resources. Reach out and let them know what support or accommodations you need. We all understand that you are continuing classes under extraordinary circumstances.

Enlist the Support of Family and Friends

Let people in your life know that you will need their help to be successful.

Ask friends and family to check in to see how you're doing with your work, help you make time to devote to classes, and try not to distract you during study periods.

Be Patient

Remember that as with all skills, learning how to learn online will take time. It may feel uncomfortable or uncertain, but it will become more familiar and comfortable with time. It may be helpful to keep track of what you've learned about online learning and questions you want to ask your instructors. In other words, don't expect yourself to instantly master and remember everything.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

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It's Ok Not To Be Ok

Whatever you're feeling is perfectly understandable. The COVID-19 crisis is stressful, and we tend to react to stress with many different types of emotions: anxiety, sadness, fear, worry, or perhaps nothing at all. It's important to recognize your own symptoms of stress so that you can take steps to manage them.

Try Out Different Coping Strategies

Stay active (e.g., take a walk outdoors, exercise, play music and dance)

Connect virtually with your support networks

Find meaningful tasks through which you can channel your anxiety (e.g., do a small home project, cook for your friends and family, tutor classmates or schoolchildren online, start a journal, reconnect with an old friend, foster a pet)

Try a mindfulness activity (meditation, deep breathing, yoga, or coloring are great examples)

Take a Break from the News

Although getting factual information about COVID-19 is important, limiting your intake of media to once or twice per day will provide a much-needed break.

FURTHER RESOURCES

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Academic Advising: Contact Lindsey Baumgartner - lbaumgar@heidelberg.edu

Academic Support: Contact Morgan Harrigan- mharriga@heidelberg.edu

Health and Counseling Center: Email - counseling@heidelberg.edu

Student Accessibility Services: Contact Douglas Stoll dstoll2@heidelberg.edu

CDC on Mental Health: Reliable resources on coping with anxiety and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Study and Learning Skills: Additional ideas about academic skills that are especially important in an online environment.
Time Management Guide: A detailed guide with ten strategies for successful time management.