

Adjustments for Studying in an Online Learning Environment

Academic Support Center - Spring 2020

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Claim a Study Space

- Look around your residence to find a particular PLACE to claim as your own study nook.
- Have good light and work surfaces available.
- Find a place conducive to video and audio conferencing without environmental distractions, including ambient noise.
- Dub your study space as your OFFICE and reserve it for coursework only.
- A conditioning effect with your space can become a cue it's time to [concentrate](#) and FOCUS on learning.

Manage Distractions

- Get rid of distractions (social media, TV, Netflix, other people, etc.) and just have the resources you need to study.
- Be sure you are comfortable, but able to STAY ALERT.
- Try these tips to improve/sustain focus: chew gum, hard candy, or sunflower seeds, rub a smooth stone or fuzzy rabbit's foot, squish a koosh or stress ball, pace and/or stretch.
- Plan to study during times of fewer distractions (i.e. early in the morning or when others are also studying/working).
- Try to AVOID doing coursework in bed!

Rethink Time Management

- Intentionally SCHEDULE [time](#) for each class during your prime time for peak efficiency.
- Make a new [weekly](#) ROUTINE that prioritizes your best time(s) for studying with your most difficult subjects.
- Use set meal times, planned breaks, exercise, hygiene, fixed sleep/wake times, social media, and relaxation times to STRUCTURE your days.
- Set timers or alarms to signal beginning and ending times for studying or breaks.
- Avoid marathon study sessions—you will accomplish more in four or five 2-hour sessions than in one 8-10 hour bout of cramming.

Organize Projects

- Start a list of upcoming TASKS for each course and put it all in one place → journal, planner, or Google calendar.
- Add new to-do items to a central list and cross off completed items to stay in control.
- Assign work time for each task to stay ACCOUNTABLE.
- Order courses by difficulty level or concern and set realistic goals.
- Break down tasks into clear, concise, and manageable steps—work backwards from final due dates.
- REWARD yourself for meeting goals and finishing tasks!

Keep Communicating

- Regularly CHECK your Gustavus email, Google calendar, and Moodle for course updates. Professors and advisors will likely be using Google Meet to schedule meetings with your class or advisees and will likely invite you to join the conversation in one of those three places.
- Phrase e-mail questions to require only a brief response—faculty members may be more likely to respond if they know they can answer quickly.
- Create email folders for each course and dump any communication into that folder to MANAGE the huge influx of digital information.
- Be a self advocate. It might take multiple emails to figure out how to solve a problem.

Stay Motivated

- Do not underestimate the sustained effort needed for [online classes](#)!
- Engage with your courses and materials EVERY day.
- Select an attentive and encouraging study buddy or two for frequent chat sessions.
- Cooperate with your professors and classmates—be polite and patient, encourage and SUPPORT one another with questions, suggestions, praise, and good humor.
- Develop the habit of positive thinking to increase confidence, meet your goals, and enjoy learning. Self-determination is a key factor to success.

Study Strategically

- Because content will be delivered in new ways for you and your faculty, you may need to spend more time independently learning systems and material than usual.
- ANTICIPATE more reviewing/comparing of [notes](#), more independent [reading](#), and more formal and informal writing.
- Utilize ACTIVE [study methods](#) to stay engaged while learning independently.
- Consider using mind maps, visual organizers, charts, graphs, flash cards, apps, colors, timelines, and creating your own outlines to organize information.

Request Equal Access

- Accommodations needed due to disability should still be available with online classes. As necessary, remind instructors of your access needs.
- Students are responsible for creating distraction-reduced and private spaces when completing online exams. Professors should allow for 1.5x testing within Moodle.
- Any questions or concerns related to accommodations should be emailed to the Accessibility Resources Coordinator, Katy Clay, at clayk@gustavus.edu



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