

# Adjustments for Studying in Hybrid/Online Learning Environments

## Academic Support Center

### Claim a Study Space

- Find a particular PLACE (or several spots) to claim as study nooks at your residence or on campus. There are many open classrooms and library spots.
- Find a place conducive to video and audio conferencing without environmental distractions, including ambient noise. Have good light and work surfaces available.
- Dub your study space as your OFFICE and reserve it for coursework only.
- Communicate with your roommate or family members about shared spaces and your needs.
- Conditioning effects with space can 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—early in the morning or when others are also studying/working is wise.
- 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; squish a koosh or stress ball; pace and/or stretch.
- Try to AVOID doing coursework in bed where you are conditioned to sleep instead.

### Rethink Time Management

- Intentionally SCHEDULE [time](#) for each class (both synchronous and asynchronous) 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/alarms or use the Pomodoros App 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, Google calendar, or use Apps like Trello or Evernote.
- 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 and give yourself intermediate goals.
- 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 use Google Meet or Zoom 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.

## Avoid Screen Fatigue

- Use SOFT light/lamps rather than bright overhead fluorescent lighting when possible.
- Dim the brightness on your devices, increase text size, minimize glare, position screen in a comfortable line of sight (slightly lower than straight ahead).
- Print off readings from Moodle rather than doing all screen reading—helps for highlighting, underlining, margin notes/questions, too.
- Get enough sleep, hydrate, blink/lubricate eyes, and take frequent mini-breaks.
- Consider using tinted screen overlays or wear a pair of blue light glasses.

## Request Equal Access

- Accommodations needed due to disability should still be available with hybrid and online classes. As necessary, remind instructors of your access needs.
- Any questions or concerns related to accommodations should be emailed to Accessibility and Retention Specialist, Corrie Odland, at [codland@gustavus.edu](mailto:codland@gustavus.edu).



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