Quick tips for learning from home

1. Stick to a regular daily schedule of working on your classes just like when you came to campus. “Show up” to class.

All of your classes will have required learning activities each week. These may be synchronous at the same time as before the switch to remote learning or may be asynchronous which means you will have a window of time to complete the activity.

Even if your class is not meeting synchronously, you should block out that time in addition to the time you previously spent working outside of class meetings.

If you are not already using an online calendar, consider using Google as some college activities will load into it automatically.

Note that learning remotely may require more time so you may want to plan some extra study time in your schedule.

2. Set up a dedicated work space as free from distraction as possible.

Headphones can be helpful if you’re working around other people. If there are a lot of distractions during synchronous meetings and your wifi reaches, sitting in your car can provide a short escape.

If you have children around, set them up with their own activity and switch their activities throughout the day to avoid boredom. Kids like routine so find a pattern of activities such as tower building - then PBS kids show - then walk around the block - then snack - etc.

3. Access to a computer and the internet at home is ideal.

All functions of Canvas work on a computer. Mobile devices are useful for seeing communication and accessing some course content but don’t work for everything in Canvas.

If you do not currently have internet access at home, Charter Communications is offering free Spectrum broadband and Wi-Fi access for 60 days to households with K-12 and/or college students who do not already have a Spectrum broadband subscription at any service level up to 100 Mbps. To enroll call 1-844-488-8395. Installation fees will be waived for new student households.

If this is not an option in your home, Charter will open its Wi-Fi hotspots for public use. Other public Wi-Fi such as public libraries, McDonalds, Panera, and Starbucks may also be an option. Some can be accessed from your car which can help you maintain social distance. If you use a public computer or public space to access Wi-Fi, disinfect the space/equipment before you use it and wash your hands once you are done.

4. Check your course Canvas page and college email on a regular basis to stay up to date. See your syllabus for any other communication tools used by your instructor.

Make sure to confirm due dates and times for assignments. Online assignments are often open for a period of time so make sure you know when assignments open and close. Don’t plan to complete the assignment at the due date/time. Canvas will mark items late if they are submitted at the time listed as the due date and in some the assignment disappears after the due date/time.

5. Communicate with your instructor and recognize that they are also doing their best to adjust so may not get back to you as quickly as they did before. Take advantage of any question and answer discussion boards available through your course Canvas page.

Let your instructor know if you have any unique challenges during this time. This was not something any of us planned for. Your instructor won’t know what you are dealing with at home unless you reach out.

6. Consider setting up informal study groups with your classmates using videoconferencing or other tools.

This can be especially helpful if your class does not have much synchronous time. Create a regular group meeting time once a week for your group of 3-4 people. Use a Google Chat to share documents and start video meetings. Designate a group leader for each session that will help keep the study session focused. Group members should work together to make a plan for each study session ahead of time. Consider using study groups to cover the basic concepts, unit learning guides, and practicing problems covered that week. Assign each group member specific concepts to be responsible for helping the others learn. This member should develop a summary or outline that can be shared with the group. The session can focus on each member reviewing their part and answering questions for the group.

7. Make time for breaks during your day.

Spacing out your learning and studying and not spending too much time on any one topic at a time have been shown to be superior to cramming big chunks of material. Breaks don't have to be long. Even just a few seconds to stretch, take a deep breath and look away from the computer or book will make a big difference in your memory.

Research shows that you need mini-breaks every 15 to 20 minutes to have the best possible memory. Get up and walk around for at least 5 minutes every hour or two. These breaks help you focus and be more productive. They are also better for your eyesight, metabolism, and prevents developing blood clots.

8. Try to eat well and drink plenty of fluids.

Use your saved commute time to experiment with quick healthy breakfast options that you can continue once campus learning resumes. Avoid too much sugar so that you don't get a "sugar crash". During the day, make time for snack and meal breaks away from the computer and stay hydrated.

9. Plan time for leisure activities, exercise, and sleep.

Keep in mind that you will no longer have exercise build into your day from walking to class and up and down hills/stairs. Keep your sleep schedule close to normal and avoid upsetting activities before bed such as watching media coverage.

10. Stay connected to your friends and family via the variety of different media options you have available today. Even if you can’t be physically together, it is important to stay connected.

11. Focus on healthy ways of coping with stress such as meditation. Don’t use alcohol or drugs to help cope.

Just do your best under these unusual circumstances. Be patient with yourself and others.

Other Habits of Successful Students include:

* Distributed or spaced study time broken up across multiple sessions with breaks (no cramming or procrastinating)
  + Preview material before class/online participation
  + ENGAGE online
  + Review right after class/online participation
  + Study and Assess learning repeatedly over time before exams
* Plan for use of study time (know what needs to be done when)
  + Study Session Plan (<https://www.depauw.edu/files/resources/cook2013.pdf>)

1. Set a Goal (1-2 min) • Decide what you want to accomplish in your study session
2. Study with Focus (30-50 min) • Use effective learning strategies
3. Reward Yourself (5-10 min) • Take a break– call a friend, play a short game, get a snack, but keep it short.
4. Review (5 min) • Go over what you just studied using recall without looking at notes/book