— 10 Tips for Transitioning to Virtual Learning —

We understand that taking courses online may not be your preferred way to learn and that this trying time of transition may require you to make some changes to your normal class preparation routines. The great news is that we are here to support you! Academic Commons and the Office for Student Success have compiled some tips and tricks to assist your efforts.

1. Review technology requirements
- ✓ Check with each of your professors to learn about the **specific needs** for each class.
- ✓ Find a location where you can get a **strong connection to the Wi-Fi**.
- ✓ Contact the IT Service Center (202-994-4948 or ithelp@gwu.edu) if you need assistance with technology to start online courses.

2. Practice time management
- ✓ Being successful in online classes requires **discipline**, **dedication**, and **follow-through**.
- ✓ **Set time aside** each day for classwork and homework, much like you would with an in-person class.

3. Stay organized and hold yourself accountable
- ✓ **Set goals** for yourself for the remainder of the semester and check in on them frequently.
- ✓ Document deadlines and daily/weekly tasks in a **planner or calendar**.
- ✓ **Pair up with someone** (a virtual classmate, family member, roommate, etc…) and hold each other accountable.

4. Create a study space and routine
- ✓ Set up a **dedicated learning environment** for studying and completing coursework.
- ✓ Look for **potential distractions** and be proactive in finding ways to avoid them.
- ✓ **Establish a routine** (can vary by day, based on needs and preferences) and stick with it.

5. Reflect and adapt
- ✓ Based on needs and preferences, **identify your peak hours** and try to get your work done then.
- ✓ **Reflect** on the strategies that are working and those that aren't working, making sure to adjust along the way.

6. Communicate with your professors
- ✓ **Communicate with your professors** regularly, making sure to stay up to date on their announcements and updates.
- ✓ **Check in on your courses frequently** and look for opportunities to complete tasks throughout the day.

7. Avoid procrastination
- ✓ **Prioritize tasks** and **take action** based on the level of urgency and importance.
- ✓ **Check in on your goals**, think about what you are working towards, and remind yourself how each little step gets you closer to it.
- ✓ Contact your professor and **be proactive in asking for help**.

8. Leverage your network
- ✓ Most online courses are built around **the concept of collaboration**, with professors actively encouraging that students work together to complete assignments and discuss lessons.
- ✓ If you enjoy group learning, reach out to your peers to join a **virtual study group**.

9. Work productively with those around you
- ✓ Have a conversation with those sharing your remote space to **determine what time is to be dedicated to school**.
- ✓ **Take breaks** with one another, share tips and tricks that are working, and **support one another** through the difficult times.

10. Utilize campus resources
- ✓ For assistance **navigating the academic and campus resources available** online during the Virtual Learning period, contact Academic Commons (academiccommons@gwu.edu) or the Office for Student Success (studentsuccess@gwu.edu).
- ✓ If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed and would like someone to talk to, please remember that you can access **24/7 phone consultations for medical advice and counseling** by calling 202-994-5300. For more information on services offered by the Colonial Health Center, visit their website at healthcenter.gwu.edu.

Remember to always prioritize your health and well-being first and be patient with yourself as you adjust to this temporary format.

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Key Terms

It may also help to familiarize yourself with some key terms regarding online learning. This list is not exhaustive, but will give you some introductory knowledge to build upon as you continue in your online coursework.

- **Online Learning:** Online learning describes a form of learning in which at least 80% of all related activities are done over the internet and is a type of distance learning. In online learning, a student: may never be face-to-face with the instructor or the other students participating in the course.

- **Discussion Boards:** An online forum where students can interact with their classmates and instructor by posing and answering questions in the form of short posts. Participation in discussion boards is a requirement in many online courses.

- **Synchronous:** An online class structure similar to that in an in-person class, in which students meet with their instructor in real time and communicate with each other.

- **Asynchronous:** Learning in which interaction between instructors and students occurs intermittently with a time delay. Students in asynchronous courses are not required to log in at a specific time to watch a lecture or participate in a discussion, but rather can do their work on their own schedule.

- **Learning Management System (LMS):** The platform where students can view their syllabus, learn how to contact their professor and access most course materials, including online readings, videos, audio files and other resources. The George Washington University utilizes Blackboard as the LMS.

Works Cited

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UNI-Prep Institute (n.d.). *The ultimate guide to online education.* https://www.uni-prep.com/online-education/understanding-online-learning-terms/

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