

Adapting to online learning during COVID

Your UIW Cardinal community is here for you.

You're facing a lot of unknowns right now, and it may feel overwhelming. Take care of yourself, and be as patient as you can with yourself and others during this time. This guide will help you get started in making a plan so that you can adapt to your new learning environment.

Guide contents:

- Get organized
- Plan a schedule
- Adjust study strategies
- Avoid multitasking
- Navigate video lectures
- Work with groups

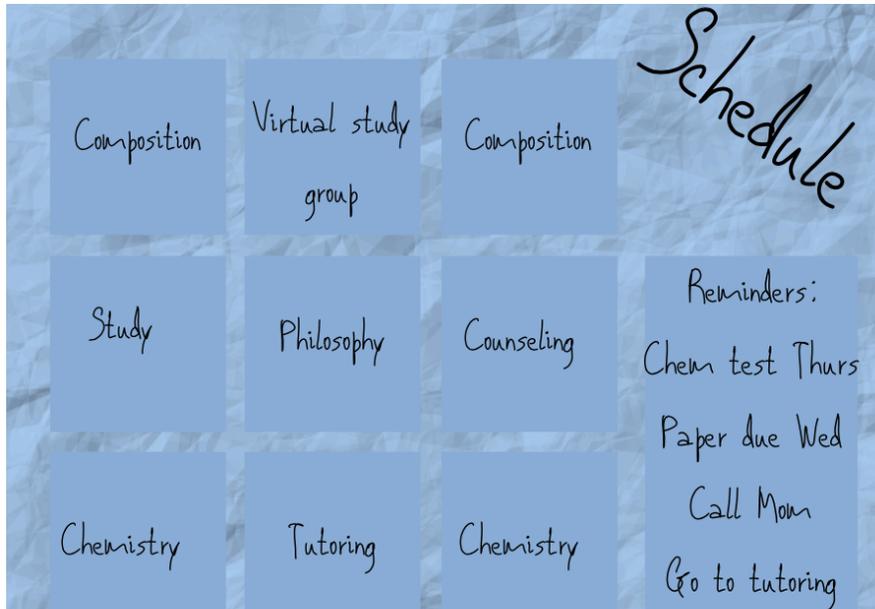
Get organized:

We know you are facing a major adjustment in the middle of your semester, and it can be really confusing. Here are a few things you want to make sure you are paying attention to as you make the move to online learning:

- What parts of each course are staying the same? While the delivery format is different, your courses will still have the same learning outcomes, and at least some of the assignments are likely the same. Make note of what *isn't* changing.
- Check instructions for each course to see how class time will work. Are there video lectures or online group meetings? Where do you access them? Are lectures synchronous, or can you watch at any time?
- Are due dates staying the same, or are they moving? Make note of any differences in assignment requirements, due dates, formats, and so on.
- How are you expected to submit your assignments? By email, uploading to Blackboard, etc.?
- Are there virtual quizzes you will be taking?
- Make note of any virtual office hours your professor will be holding. Be sure you have saved your professor's email or other contact information in case you have any questions.
- Check the Tutoring Services and Writing and Learning Center websites for updates on tutoring: www.uiw.edu/tutoringservices and www.uiw.edu/wlc.

Plan a schedule:

During this time, you likely have fewer social commitments and more open, unstructured time. While in some ways that can seem advantageous, it has some drawbacks. Sometimes when time is too open, it can be hard to stay motivated and focused. Plan out your schedule, and stick to it as much as possible to maintain a sense of structure in your days. Enter set times and try out different ways to organize your open time to see what works best for you.



Adjust study strategies:

- Ask yourself what kind of study environment helps you to learn. Do you normally study in the library? In the Student Engagement Center? In a coffee shop? Think about what it is about your preferred environment that helps, and try to adapt your home study area as much as possible.
- If you can, try to set up your study area away from places you normally relax or sleep.
- If you typically study in groups, try setting up virtual study groups.

Avoid multitasking:

When studying in an informal environment, with a lot of open time, it can be tempting to try to multitask. A lot of us feel like we can successfully work on several things at once, but research has shown that we're not effective at multitasking. In fact, it may hinder learning and slow down task completion.

A few common downsides of multitasking:

- Assignments may take longer to complete, as you find yourself having to refocus and go over material you've already seen.
- You're likely to make more mistakes. Switching back and forth between topics too frequently wears out your brain.
- You typically will remember less because you aren't concentrating in a way that allows your brain to properly encode new information.

What should you do instead?

- Organize your study schedule.
- Focus on one thing at a time.
- Take short breaks periodically. Consider taking a 5- or 10-minute break every hour or so of studying.

Navigate video lectures:

- Keep up with the adjusted schedule your professors have provided as much as possible so that you don't fall behind.
- As you would with in-person classes, communicate with your professors as soon as you realize that you are having a hard time keeping up.
- Look at the format ahead of time to see how to comment and ask questions. Are there discussion boards? Do you know how to use the chat feature in Zoom?
- Studying at home has its perks, but there can be a lot of distractions to derail your efforts. Make sure that you set yourself up to focus by closing out unneeded tabs and apps.
- Take good notes. Summarizing new information is a good way to assess what you've understood, what questions you have, and what new material is related to information you already understand.
- If a video lecture is prerecorded, be sure to watch it at normal speed.

Work with groups:

- Maintaining a sense of community can help you make it through this challenging time. Consider getting in touch with classmates you know and scheduling virtual meetup times.
- With a lot of unstructured time on your hands, it can be tempting to procrastinate on assignments. Work with classmates to hold each other accountable for staying on top of course tasks.
- Use video during virtual meetings with classmates. It can help build a sense of connection to see each other's facial expressions.
- Support your fellow Cardinals. Check on each other if you notice that someone is missing group meetings or not keeping up with assignments.

Remember that your Cardinal community is here for you! This is a challenging time, but we can all help each other to get through it. If you find yourself struggling, reach out to your faculty, your Student Success team, Counseling Services, and your fellow students.

Coronavirus/COVID19 updates

UIW services:

Counseling Services

University Advising Center

Information Resources

Student Disability Services

Career Services

Financial Assistance

Health Services

Student Success for School of Professional Studies

Support Services for Feik School of Pharmacy

Support Services for Rosenberg School of Optometry

Support Services for School of Osteopathic Medicine

Support Services for School of Physical Therapy

Other resources:

Tips for transitioning to online learning

Tips for learning from home

Tips from students