



HELPFUL TIPS FOR BEING A SUCCESSFUL ONLINE LEARNER

For many of you, online learning might be a new experience. While many of the exact same strategies you have always used will still apply, there are some additional considerations that are important to keep in mind. Carving out time to read through these suggestions and make a plan for yourself will make a difference. Here are a few helpful tips from us to help you continue to be the great Brandeis student you already are!

Suggestion 1. Think About Your Network of Supports

Online learning should not mean solitary learning. Just because you are learning online doesn't mean that you will or should lose your network of supports. Professors, TAs, friends, and other supports will still be available, but you might have to access them in different ways.

- Assess your current network of supports both personally and professionally
 - Who has helped you be successful?
 - Who has helped you most in the past?
 - Does your professor or TAs have office hours?
- Reach out to your professors as soon as possible with questions
- Schedule times to meet with professors or TAs
- Consider your Brandeis resources
 - Consider study groups
 - Access the [BUGS Tutors](#)
 - Connect with the [Writing Center](#)
 - Reach out to an Academic Advisor
 - Talk with an Accessibility Specialist from Student Accessibility Support

Suggestion 2. Invest Time to Take Stock of Each of Your Classes

An important thing to do once classes begin is to stop, take a step back, and take stock of each of your course syllabi. Here are a few things you might want to consider when thinking about each of your courses:

- What do you hope to get out of the classes you have chosen?
- Are you clear about the expectations set forth by the professor?
 - Do you know how to access all the course materials?
 - How is your professor handling virtual participation (Zoom, Google hangouts, etc.)?
 - Are you clear on how you will be assessed?
 - How will the professor communicate in the future?
 - How should you communicate with professors if you have issues or questions?
- What assignments/exams are expected and when are they due?
- Does your professor have a Latte page that you will need to access?
- What tech tools will you need to be successful ([Available Software from Brandeis](#))?

Suggestion 3. To the Best of Your Ability, Create a Daily Schedule You Can Stick To

It is important that you try your best to create a schedule you can stick to given any other commitments you may have. Creating an effective schedule is not only a way to help you keep organized and keep track of due dates, but it is always a way that you can help manage your personal time. One of the biggest challenges in online learning is time management, so think about:

- What times are your classes?
- What are your non-class commitments and priorities?
- When are your assignments/exams due?
- What are your key priorities?
 - What are your daily goals?
 - How do your daily goals relate to long-term goals?
- What times are you most effective?

- Do you anticipate there being certain times when you cannot work?
- Will there be times when there are more likely to be interruptions than others?
- Have you planned appropriate breaks?

Suggestion 4. To the Best of Your Ability, Prepare a Workspace

One of the challenges of online learning is that you might not have your usual workspaces like the library available. If you are able, it is helpful to prepare a workspace that you can consistently use to work. Here are a few things you might want to consider when preparing your dedicated workspace:

- Where can distractions best be minimized?
- Is it where you can be most effective and efficient in your studying?
- Do you have access to important technologies necessary for virtual participation (a computer, a microphone, headphones, camera, a stable internet connection)? Can Academic Services help? Can we connect you with IT?
- Do you have all the materials and books you need? Can Academic Services help?

Suggestion 5. Learn More about Etiquette for Virtual Participation

It is important that you think critically about etiquette for how to participate virtually. Overall, it is not that different than participating in a face-to-face class, but there are a few things to be aware of given the change in context.

- Prepare for the class/meeting
 - Access [Zoom Tutorials](#)
 - Before joining make sure your technology is working (microphone, speakers/headphones, stable internet connection)
 - Dress appropriately
 - Make sure you have everything you need to participate and take notes
 - Prepare your workspace (distraction free, quiet, organized)
- During the class/meeting
 - As you would in any classroom: be kind, be respectful, be understanding
 - Dedicate yourself to solely participating in the class time (no outside activities or distractions)
 - Join the class/meeting at least 5 minutes early
 - When not speaking, mute your microphone
 - Do not type when your microphone is on
 - Whenever possible, do not leave your workspace

- After the meeting
 - Make sure you are signed out appropriately

Suggestion 6. Keep Yourself Organized

Staying organized in a remote environment may take some contemplation or higher order thinking. Even the most organized student may be challenged by a completely virtual learning community. Here are some things to consider:

- Do you use a paper planner to list assignments and deadline, or do you prefer an online tool such as Google or Trello?
- Does your workspace lend itself to finding materials easily?
- Academic Services often uses the “[Semester Workload Calculator](#)” tool to help students visualize their workload on a weekly basis.
- Expectations and assignments may have shifted so revisit syllabi

Here Are Some Other Helpful Resources

- [Northeastern University Graduate Programs - 8 STRATEGIES FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF AN ONLINE CLASS](#)
- [John Hopkins Krieger School of Arts and Sciences – Five Essential Online Learning Strategies](#)
- [University of Illinois Springfield – What Makes a Successful Online Student?](#)
- [Purdue University- Online Student Toolkit](#)