



Academic Success in the Times of COVID-19

During these times where everything is rapidly changing, from settling into a new routine, not being able to see the people we care about as often as we would like and adjusting to a new learning environment, among many other adjustments, can have us feeling at a loss or overwhelmed. However, using this time to take care of yourself, staying connected to your friends and family and adjusting your study plan (or making a new one) can help you feel more in control of your day and academics.

To help you with this transition, the Academic and Learning Resources team is here with helpful tips and strategies to help you through this semester so you can regain control of your study habits and academic success.

This guide will provide you with information on:

- Staying organized and setting a schedule
- Adjusting your study habits for remote learning
- Working in groups
- Study tips for handling remote learning
- Staying healthy and connected to other people

STAY ORGANIZED AND SET A SCHEDULE

Now that all of your courses have moved to a remote learning environment, you will experience many changes happening at a very fast pace. Therefore, please be patient with yourself, your classmates and your professors. In addition, you may be doing a lot more work on your own and will find more blocks of time where you don't have anything scheduled. With that in mind, below are some tips that you may find helpful in keeping you organized:

1. Keep A Daily Routine

- Wake up at the same time you normally do to go to class. Have breakfast and get dressed as if you were going to class. Doing this will help you stay focused on the day ahead.

- If your daily routine includes practicing a sport, include training exercises as part of your routine.
- Take breaks to have all three meals to keep your brain functioning.
- Take breaks between classes and study time to recharge and refocus on your classes.
- Check your email or Moodle course at least once a day for each class to stay informed of any announcements or changes.
- If you meet regularly with campus resources staff, like Student Accessibility Services or ADHD Coaching, reach out to them as soon as possible to come up with a plan to meet remotely.
- Try to keep the same pace that you would normally have while being on campus.

2. Set a Schedule

- Keeping a daily, weekly and monthly schedule, it will not only help you stay organized but stay on top of all the items on your to-do list, especially course-related tasks. Setting a schedule will also help you stay motivated and avoid procrastination.
- Use your phone to your advantage by using the reminder app. Set reminders as you work through the day to know when you need to connect to classes or study/do homework.
- Have a calendar and mark all important dates so you don't miss any exams or turning in your work on time, especially if any assignment date changed when the class moved to remote learning.
- Have an agenda so you can detail all daily activities, and balance your day so that you have enough time to attend virtual classes and office hours, study time, as well as have leisure time.

Here's an example of how your daily schedule could look like:

WEDNESDAY			
	Class Time	Study Time	Personal Time
8:00 a.m.	SPAN 102 - Zoom		
9:00 a.m.		Recap SPAN content	
10:00 a.m.	RELS 270 - Moodle		
11:00 a.m.		HIST 152 Meet with group project team - Moodle Forum	
12:00 p.m.			Break- Lunch
1:00 p.m.			FaceTime BFF
2:00 p.m.		Laser Coaching - Zoom	

3. Keep Track of Changes in your Classes

- Be sure to read all of your professors' emails carefully and thoroughly to make sure you know what changes are being made to the course. Be sure to reach out to your professors as soon as possible, if there are any instructions, tasks or activities that you do not understand.

Here are some changes to look for:

- Will the course materials be posted on Moodle, uploaded to Box or will they be sent via email?
- Will the class have a live, face to face meeting time? If so, will the class meet through Zoom or other web conferencing platform? Will the class meet at the same time as the on-campus class?
- Have any of the assignments, projects, exams changed? If so, what are the new deadlines?
- Where will you upload/submit your work (i.e. Moodle, Box, Zoom, email, etc.)?
- Do you have the links and login information needed to connect to the platforms that your professor will use for the class?
- What are the professor's new virtual office hours and what platform will your professor use?
- Will there be an open forum or chat room where you can go and ask questions?

Here is an example on how to keep track of classes:

	SPAN 102	RELS 270	HIST 152
Deadlines	March 26 - Presentation	March 27 - Essay 3	March 30 - Quiz 4
Changes	Live meetings and Moodle	Upload to Box, live lectures on Zoom	Online quizzes
Links	Zoom lecture links, Office hours link	Box link, Zoon link	Google quiz link

ADJUSTING YOUR STUDY HABITS FOR REMOTE LEARNING

As you move to a remote learning environment, not only is it a good idea to keep a daily schedule to keep up with your course work, but you will also have to make some adjustments to the strategies you usually use to study.

4. Adjusting Your Study Routine

- Create your own study area. Make sure that you have a space to call your own where you can have all your tools and be comfortable enough to have a productive study session.
- If you like studying at the Middle Ground, Barrett Library or the Rat, try setting up a coffee or tea bar at home and sit in comfortable chair or use the kitchen table to study, instead of being in your bedroom. You can also put on some music, if you like to study with some background noise.
- If you prefer studying in groups, set up a Zoom, FaceTime or phone-based time with your classmates. Try setting up the meeting for the same time your group usually meets to keep the routine going.
- Avoid tight deadlines as much as possible. Give yourself ample time to do your work by following a schedule or have study partners to keep you accountable on your work.

5. Working in Groups

- Working in groups remotely can feel very different from when you meet on campus, but you can still meet with your group.
- Communication is key. Just like in-person group work, you must communicate with your group members often to know what everyone is working on and piecing the project together.
- Meet often, whether through group chat, phone calls, Zoom meetings, etc. Try to catch up every few days to check in on the progress of the project.
- When meeting through video conferencing, like Zoom; be sure to keep the video screen open so everyone can see each other's expressions and stay focused on the conversation. Avoid multi-tasking while on your computer or mobile device.
- Set an agenda or expectations for the meeting to keep the conversation on track.
- Reach out to group members that have not participated on a chat discussion or video/phone call to see how their part of the project is coming along. If you don't get a response from them in couple of days, inform your professor as soon as possible.

6. The Art of Multi-tasking and Procrastinating - Avoid at all costs!

“To do two things at once is to do neither.”

—*Publilius Syrus*

Multi-Tasking

- At times like these, where so many changes are happening quickly, we feel that we need to do everything all at once. However, multi-tasking may lead us to feel even more frantic.
- More often than not, when we multi-task we are jumping from one task or assignment to another, without fully completing one or the other. This is referred to as “micro-tasking”.
- Multi or micro-tasking will often make assignments take longer. This is because you have to familiarize yourself with the content and find the spot where you left off, every time you come back to the assignment you stopped doing to go do something else.
- Multi-tasking will also make you feel tired and less focused quicker than if you were doing just one task at a time, therefore you will be prone to making more mistakes.
- You will have a harder time remembering details, since your brain is being divided into doing two or more things without fully processing one before starting the other and then jumping right back again to the first task.
- Instead of multi-tasking, focus on doing one assignment or task at a time.
- Schedule breaks between classes, homework and other activities; so you can recharge and refocus on the next assignment.
- Break your study time into chunks, also known as the Pomodoro Method. Choose the subject you want to study first, then focus on studying for 25-minutes straight. When the time is up, take a 5 to 10-minute break; then come back to the assignment for another 25- minute chunk. Continue the cycle until you have completed your assignments.

Procrastinating

- Remote learning requires students to do a lot more independent work than what they would normally do with a traditional classroom-based class. Therefore, it's important to keep a schedule so that you don't fall behind in your classes.
- Do not wait until the last minute to work on assignments. Start working on assignments earlier to give yourself ample time to study the material and seek help if you need to, like asking course-related questions or troubleshooting internet connectivity or other technical issues.

TIPS FOR HANDLING REMOTE LEARNING COURSES

- Be sure to check your email at least once a day so that you don't miss important information from your professors, your classmates or the College.
- Carefully read all adjustments made to the course to avoid misunderstanding instructions.
- Ask the professor what is the best way to reach out and ask for help? Is it via a chat or forum in Moodle, during their virtual office hours, via email, etc.?
- When attending your class virtually or working on assignments, only keep the tabs you need for the class open and put your phone away to avoid distractions.
- Make sure that you have a strong internet connection, which is necessary for connecting to video meetings, downloading/uploading content, such as video lectures, online quizzes/tests, power point and other types of files.
- If you don't have a strong internet connection, talk to your professors and discuss alternatives for accessing the course content and submitting assignments.
- Online quizzes and test may have a specific time limit to complete, so be sure to read instructions thoroughly and keep track of the time you have left.
- When working on a paper, always include your name and save your work regularly on your computer, flash drive or Box before uploading to Moodle or emailing it to your professor.
- If emailing your paper to your professor or uploading to a Box folder, include your name as part of the file name. This way, your professor can quickly identify which paper is yours.
- Take advantage of your professor's office hours to ask course-related questions.

SELF CARE AND STAYING CONNECTED

- Maintain a daily routine and schedule. This will help you get accustomed to your new academic and personal environments.
- Take one day at a time and schedule your day by priorities. Work on the most important tasks first.
- Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner, drink lots of water and sleep. It is important to keep a healthy balance of food, liquids and sleep to nourish your bodies; which will help with better focusing and memorization, thus being more productive.
- Make time to breathe fresh air. This could be as simple as going out to your front or backyard, or opening a window. It will help you decompress and re-energize, especially if you are feeling overwhelmed.

- Exercise. You don't need to go to the gym to get moving. Go for a walk or run, or do some stretching exercises.
- Create a playlist and dance!
- Schedule daily phone calls or video chats with your family and friends or at the very least, text each other.
- Stay connected with your professors and classmates.
- Be in the know of what's happening in your community, nationally and of course, at Rhodes! Having accurate information will help you make informed decisions.

ADDITIONAL RHODES RESOURCES

Below you will find a list of resources that you can access remotely to assist you with your academic and personal success:

- [Rhodes COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [Academic and Learning Resources](#)
 - [Peer Coaching](#)
 - [Peer Tutoring and SI](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Information Technology Services](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services](#)
 - [ADHD Coach](#)

As we all continue to adjust to our new routines due to COVID-19, please know that this will pass. We don't know when it will happen, but know that it will. In the meantime, please continue to monitor the situation and take appropriate precautions.

Resources:

Adjusting your study habits during COVID, Center for Academic Innovation University of Michigan
<https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/rll-assets/rll-docs/Study%20Habits.pdf>

Note: Parts of this document have been adapted from the resource guide *Adjusting your habits during COVID* published by the Center for Academic Innovation, University of Michigan.