



5 Tips for Success in Online College Classes

Create Self-Regulatory Behaviors

- ✓ Combat self-procrastination. Look honestly at your general habits and behaviors. Consider your strengths and limitations in your academic work.
- ✓ Take the SMART approach to combat procrastination in studying:
 - ✓ **S**pecific. Be specific in identifying your study goal for a given period of study, such as completing three math problems.
 - ✓ **M**easurable goals. If you only have long-term goals, such as graduating or getting an A in the class, you may lose sight of the path that will get you there. A measurable goal may be reviewing your notes and completing your homework on a given day. That makes you one assignment closer to getting an A in the class.
 - ✓ **A**ttainable. An unattainable goal would be to block out one evening to write a 5-page essay. Break up the assignment into smaller, *measurable* portions that can be completed over time. Use the Writing Café online or make an appointment at the Writing Center to support your process: <https://ollusa.mywconline.com/>.
 - ✓ **R**elevant. Make certain that your work during study time is pertinent to your academic success. For example, it is very easy to become swamped with internet information! Browse intelligently when you need to access information. A good way to achieve that goal is to contact a librarian: <https://library.ollusa.edu/>
 - ✓ **T**ime-based. Balance your study time with personal time. Setting measurable goals will allow you to take personal breaks that feel and are well deserved

Create a Space

- ✓ Designate a place for study where you have online access, few or no distractions, and course materials organized. Creating a space will allow you to form habits when you enter the space. Be certain to have earbuds or headphones to help filter noise.
- ✓ Choose your space carefully. Your bed is not a good option because you will have no place to “escape” for rest. Be aware that the kitchen may not work so well, especially if there is a tv or if you will need to clear out for every meal.
- ✓ Your space does not need to be a room, but rather a defined area where you can focus on your studies. You may opt for a table in the corner of your bedroom or of a shared office space. The quieter your space is, the more productive you will become.
- ✓ Avoid multi-tasking during your class and study time! Your space also should be a *no social media place*. Establish the discipline necessary to turn off your notifications. Use an app to help with this.

Communicate

- ✓ Contact your professor with any questions or concerns you have. Participate in classroom discussions.
- ✓ Network with other motivated and focused classmates and create study groups.
- ✓ Use the resources available at OLLU: visit with a tutor in the Academic Center for Excellence; participate in the Writing Café or a study group; talk to a librarian about your research.
- ✓ Build time into your schedule to talk to friends and family.
- ✓ Self-check: set short-term and long-term goals. Write them down and use them to motivate you

Complete Your Assignments

- ✓ Set up a calendar that includes your assignment due dates and check points. Seek support from your network of people (see above) whenever you “get stuck” on an assignment.
- ✓ Take notes during class time in a notebook. The activity of writing engages your mind and memory.
- ✓ Review your notes! If you review your notes after class, you will retain much more course material. Organize your notes in a way that makes reviewing materials easy and habit-forming. Try out this strategy called TSD after you read through your notes:
 - ✓ Title: What would you title the lecture for this class period? What was the big picture concept or concern covered?
 - ✓ Subject: What areas of information were covered in the larger context? Can you list a few?
 - ✓ Details: Under each subject area, can you list a few important salient details that will help you explain and understand the larger subject?
- ✓ Use your notes and the professor’s study guides to help you to complete your daily homework and to prepare for larger projects and tests.
- ✓ Read the book! If you absolutely cannot read before the class period, try this pre-reading strategy:
 - ✓ Look through the chapter that has been assigned. How long is it? What types of pictures and graphs are there? What do these images tell you?
 - ✓ Read the introduction, the bold-faced subtitles, the conclusion, and the questions. Is there a pattern of idea development? Are there key terms you will need to define?
- ✓ Complete your homework. If you feel uncertain about your homework, make an appointment at the ACE with a tutor: <https://ollusa.mywconline.com/schedule>.

Carry Through on Tests

- ✓ Have dedicated study time every day, such as note review, chapter review, or lecture review. Studying in shorter blocks of time leads to retaining more information.
- ✓ Connect ideas within the class. The more connections you see between and among ideas, the more you will learn. Memorizing can be torturous and does not lead to long-term retention.
- ✓ Join a study group. Go to an ACE exam review.
- ✓ Get a good night’s sleep.
- ✓ Answer all test questions. An intelligent, honest attempt at a question or problem that you really are uncertain about may lead you into an answer. Professors recognize and reward intellectual curiosity and hard work.