ACC | ACADEMIC COACHING
STUDENT AFFAIRS



Study Skills

ONLINE CLASSES EDITION



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prepare for Success	3	How To Be An Efficient Online Student
	4	Blackboard Tips
	7	Time Management For Virtual Learning
	8	Sample Weekly Schedule
	9	Google Calendar
Online Study Tips	11	Online Study Cycle
	12	Study Tips For Online Textbooks
	13	The Virtual Classroom
	14	Online Testing Tips
Contacting Instructors	15	Tips For Contacting Professors
	16	Email Etiquette
Stress Management	17	Overcoming Anxiety During Uncertainty
Virtual Coaching	18	How to Contact Academic Coaches

How To Be An Efficient Online Student

Treat the Class As If It Is an "In-Person" Class

- Dedicate adequate time each week to prepare for an online class (just like you did for an in-person).
- If you are transitioning from face-to-face to online, log in to Blackboard during class time to check in with classmates, read announcements, and work on assignments.

Create a Weekly Schedule

- Try to maintain the same schedule that you had before classes went online. Continue to follow the Principles of Time Management such as time boxing, 3-hour study rule, and distributing study throughout the week.
- Click here for the Principles of Time Management.
- Click here to set up your Weekly Planner.

Create a Dedicated Study Space and Stay Organized

- Set up a dedicated study space.
- Stay on top of assignments by checking your syllabus and Blackboard at least 3-4 times/week.

Actively Participate

- Stay engaged with classmates and professors through Blackboard and video conferencing apps.
- Follow these Email Etiquette Tips.

Eliminate Distractions

- First, identify your distractions and try to eliminate them by taking study breaks and setting goals.
- Use these apps to help.

What TO Do:

- Hold yourself accountable.
- Set SMART goals and reward your accomplishments.
- Start by creating a weekly and daily to-do list. This will keep you motivated and on track to complete all assignments.

What NOT To Do:

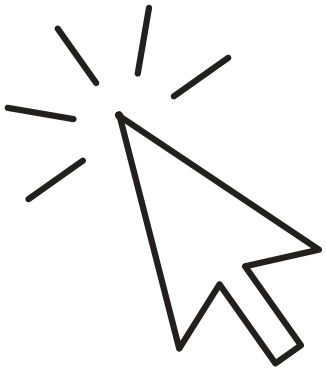
- Procrastinate
- Wait for the professor to contact you regarding your assignments/grades.
- Ask your friends for help instead of the instructor or other ACC resources.
- Give up

Blackboard Tips

ACCESSING BLACKBOARD

Desktop

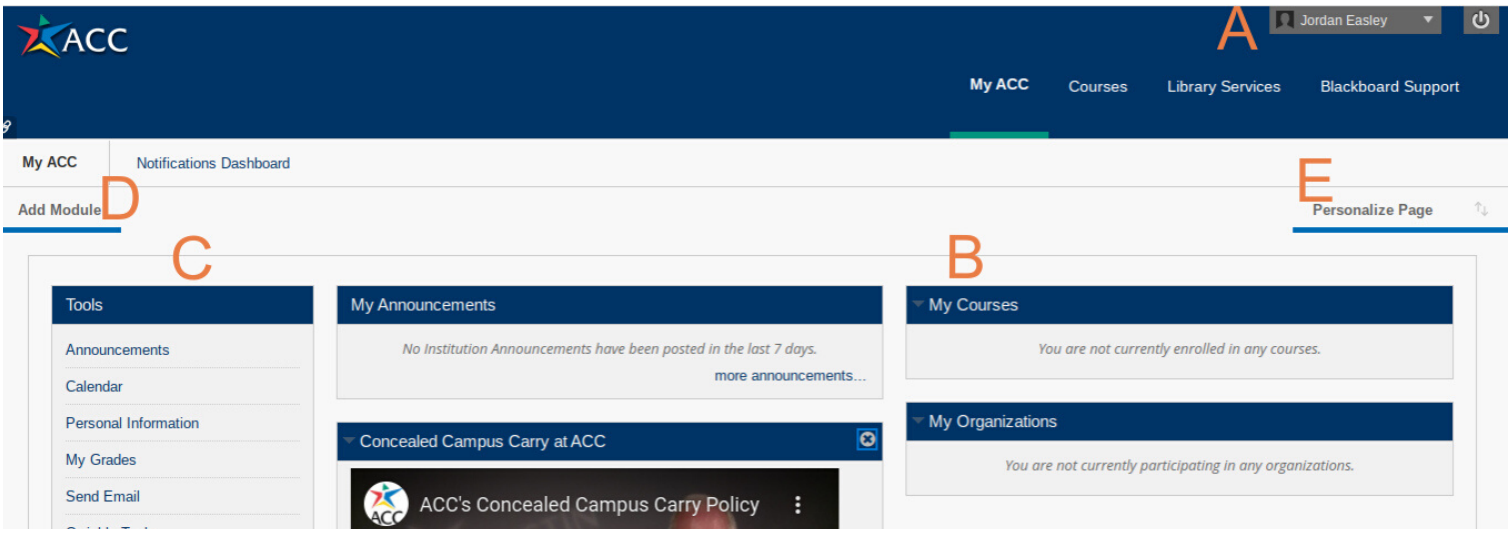
- Url link: https://acconline.austincc.edu/
- Visit https://www.austincc.edu/students and find "Blackboard" on the right side bar



iOS and Android

- iOS: https://tinyurl.com/uov7d4h
- Android: https://tinyurl.com/hsqabvq

NAVIGATING THE SITE



A User menu
Personalized settings: Make sure you see your own name

B Modules
Access your currenlty enrolled courses

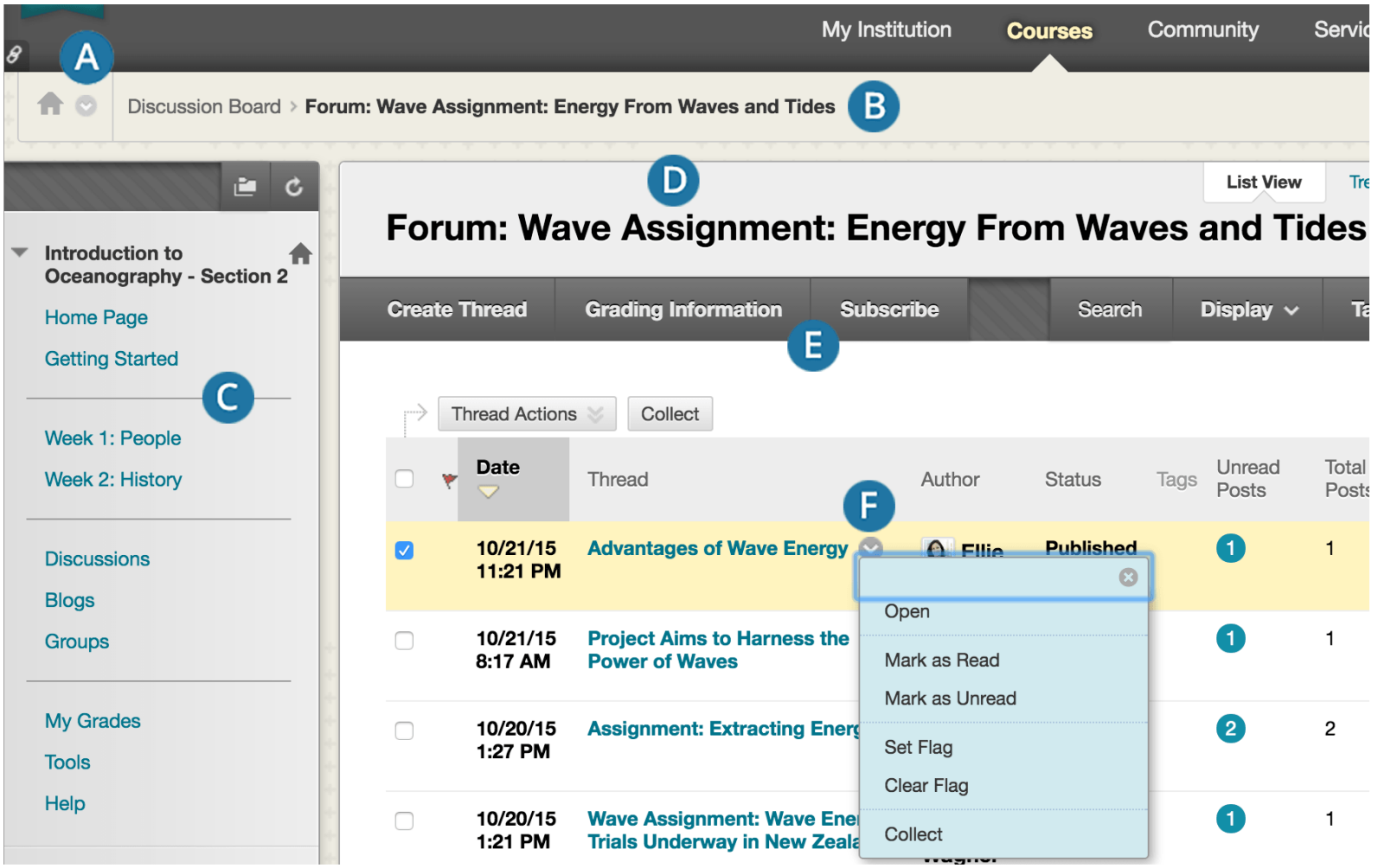
C Tools
Display information from your courses

D Add module
Add additional modules or tools to your homepage

E Personalize page
Change the color scheme or theme

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NAVIGATING A CLASS



A Navigate to another course

C Access all course content from the instructor

E Displays action options for the selected page. (ex: "Create Thread" for a discussion board)

B Access previous pages you've visited recently

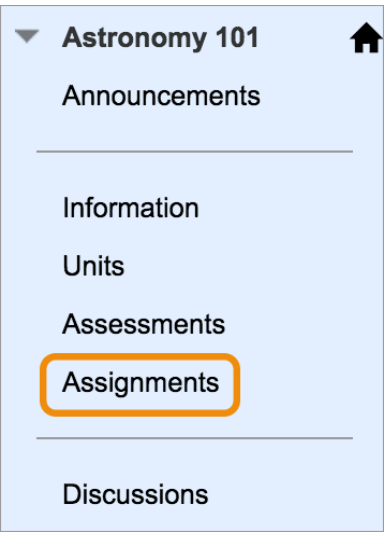
D Displays the content you've selected

F Menu options for page elements

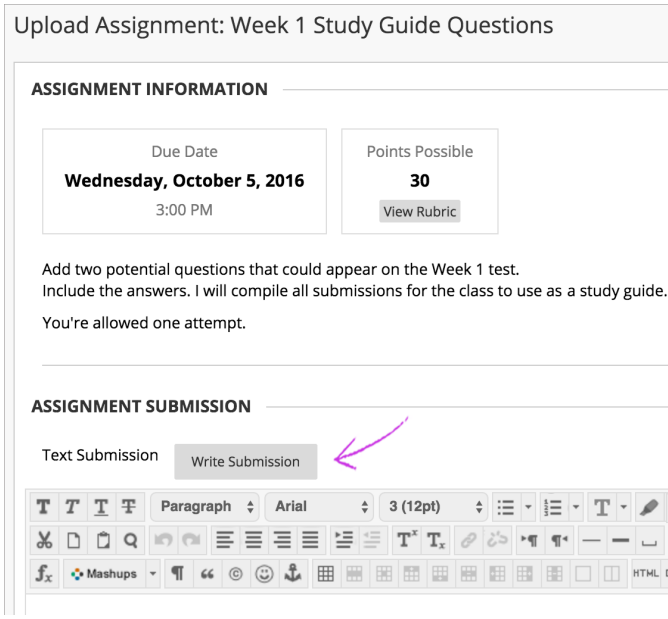
*Note: BlackBoard is customizable by instructors as well, and you may see a different setup. Contact your instructor for specific information about how their class is organized.

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SUBMITTING AN ASSIGNMENT

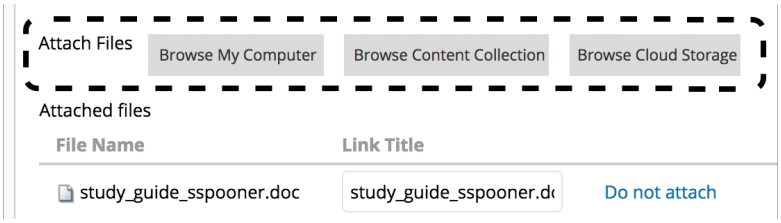


Navigate to the "Assignments" page using the left bar (note: instructors can customize the titles of pages. It could be called "course materials", etc.)



You can type a submission directly (ex: an essay or short answer response). The instructor should specify any format requirements for the assignments.





You can also upload a completed document using the toolbar. Use this if there are specific formatting restrictions (ex: MLA)

Tip: Check BlackBoard as often as possible, but at least once a day. Instructors will often post announcements or updates to the courseplan.

Remember to logout at the end of each session to protect your security. The logout button can be found in the top right corner.



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Time Management For Virtual Learning



Study Environment

The right study environment allows you to focus on online classes and eliminate distractions.

Structured Schedule

When days feel unstructured, create a routine. If possible, schedule study times before 6 p.m. to maximize your brain's ability to process and retain information.

Take Care of Yourself

Nourish your body and soul. Exercise, ideally outside, for at least 30 minutes each day. Eat healthy food if you can - your brain and body need nutrients to function at their best.

45-min Study; 15-min Break

Give your mind a break. Students often try to study for long periods of time. Research shows that taking short "brain breaks" allows you to stay focused and study more efficiently.

Check Blackboard Daily

Check Blackboard, and your ACC email daily for course updates and announcements. Spend time each day studying for every class to keep up with assignments and master the content.

Observe the 2 to 3-Hour Rule

Although you're not physically in class, you need to ensure you're setting aside time for both "class" and study. Block off 2 to 3 hours of study time per scheduled hour of class.

Set Aside a Planning Day

Make time in your week to plan for your upcoming academic and personal obligations.

Sample schedule

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	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Rules
7:00 AM								Create routine
8:00 AM		GOVT		GOVT				Every class every day
9:00 AM								Study then work
10:00 AM			MATH		MATH			Morning hours are best for retention
11:00 AM							R	45 min study 15 min break
12:00 PM		Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	E	Take lunch
1:00 PM			ENGL		ENGL		S	Alternate subjects
2:00 PM	Break	HIST		HIST			T	Observe 2-3 hour rule
3:00 PM								Plan to sleep at least 6 hours
4:00 PM							D	Take one rest day (Saturday)
5:00 PM							A	Set planning day (Sunday)
6:00 PM		Work	Work	Work	Work		Y	Govt study
7:00 PM								Math study
8:00 PM								Engl study
9:00 PM								Hist study
10:00 PM								Flex

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Google Calendar: Quick Start Guide

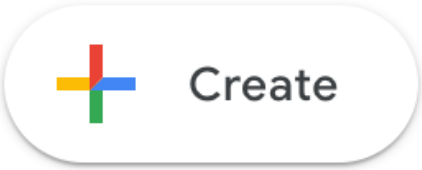
FINDING YOUR CALENDAR

In the top right-hand corner of your ACC email, click on these dots to reveal the Calendar application.



CREATING EVENTS

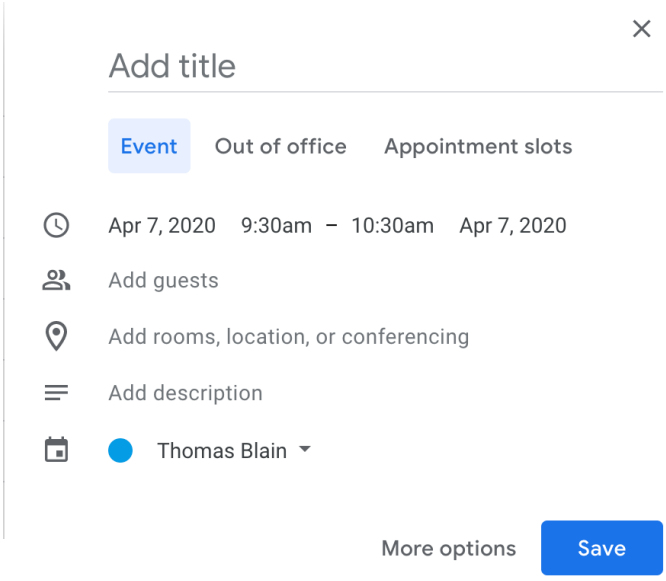
Step 1



Find the Create button in the top left-hand corner of the screen.

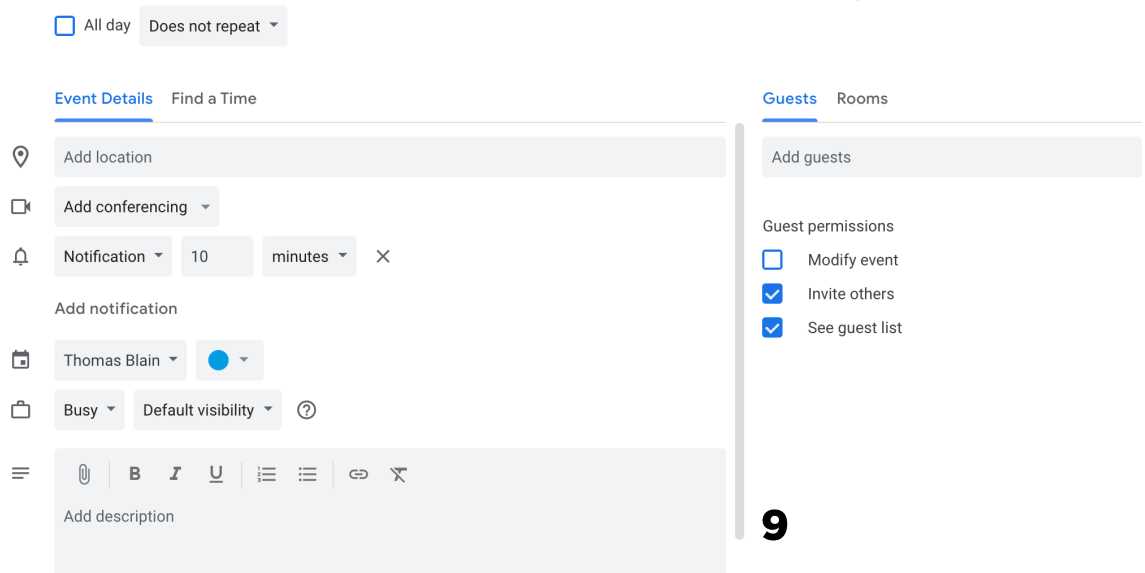
Step 2

Give the event a title. Set the date and time. Click the blue 'Save' button to finish, or click 'More options' to access more features.



Step 3 (More options)

Here, we can color code the event, add a goal in the 'Add description' section, invite guests in the 'Add guests' section, and make the event repeat. We can also make the event 'All day' (this is good for reminders).

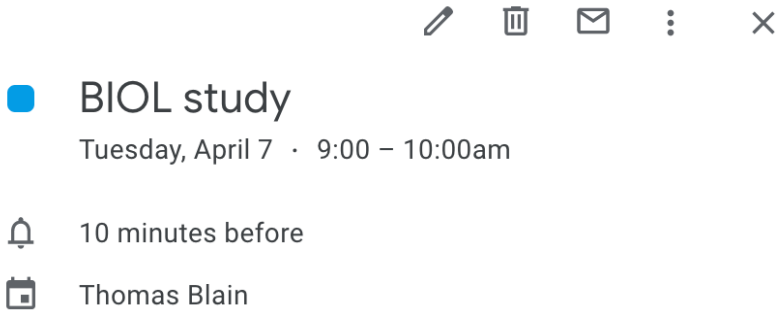


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Google Calendar: Quick Start Guide

EDITING EVENTS

To edit an event, simply click on it and this box will appear. Select the pencil tool to make changes.



CHANGING THE VIEW

You can change the view in the top right-hand corner of the screen. You can choose between Day, 4-day, Week, Month, Year & Schedule view.

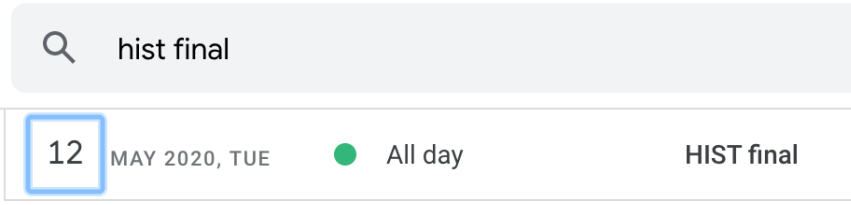


SEARCH AN EVENT

There's also a search function at the top of the screen.



If you've gone through your syllabi and entered all your assignments and exams, you'll be able to search them here.



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Online Study Cycle

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Study Smarter, Not Harder

Preview/Read

- Identify relevant text or notes.
- Scan chapter headings, keywords, and diagrams; read chapter introductions.
- Formulate questions you want to answer.
- Record your answers to the questions.

Attend Class, Take Notes

- Listen to add to your questions, find answers to your questions.
- Consider a note-taking system.

Review

- Synthesize lecture and reading material.
- Fill in gaps and correct misunderstandings; resources include your professor, other students, SI, tutoring, or your textbook.
- Put main ideas of lectures and reading into your own words.
- Rewatch lectures if able and necessary.

Create

- Organize your information into different formats: outlines, charts, diagrams, flashcards, timelines, flowcharts.
- Use structures that show relationships. within/between material: similarities, differences, comparisons, hierarchies, chronologies.

Self-Test

- Review questions from the original study guide and learning objectives.
- Create possible test questions, keeping in mind different levels of learning (e.g. do practice problems, put ideas into your own words, apply your knowledge to real-world situations).
- Contact a classmate or study group by phone, email, or video conferencing platform to discuss your questions.

Test

- Verify how to access/take the test beforehand to use time most effectively on the day of the test.
- Use appropriate test-taking strategies (e.g. for multiple choice questions, cover answers and generate your own response.
- Analyze returned tests.

Prepare For Success

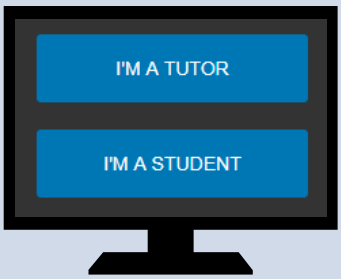
- Know yourself: Study when and where you are most alert.
- Plan your time with a schedule and calendar.

Study Tips For Online Textbooks

Learning to use online resources can be a huge adjustment, especially if you were not planning to do so. A growth-oriented mindset is important in any educational setting as you adapt to digital textbooks, new apps, and different websites. Be patient with yourself. With time, you will learn to use the new resources.

First Things First

- Determine what online textbooks & resources are required & where to find them.
- Alert your professor if you need a digital device, access to high-speed internet, or other tools.



Reading Textbooks

- Use PowerPoints or study guides to guide your reading.
- Use arrow keys to scroll.
- To improve your focus, use the cursor to "highlight" portions of the text; it's easier to read white text on a colored background.
- Use the "Search Keywords" function to make connections between sections.
- Open multiple browser tabs to access different sections of the book.
- Use Google to research unknown words.
- Do not read devices in the dark.
- Disable notifications to avoid distractions.
- Read slowly for deeper comprehension & detail recall.
- Break down long chapters & take notes to give yourself time to process (you may need to read certain sections more than once).
- Schedule breaks.

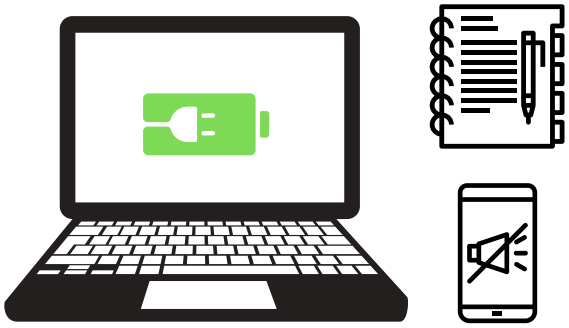
Taking Reading Notes

- Take notes as you read.
- Use pen and paper to create handwritten notes.
- Take your own notes rather than copying/pasting to increase retention.
- Quality over quantity - you do not need to record everything. Record the most important facts or summarize.
- Make note of your original resource (i.e. pg #) in case you need to refer to it later.
- Leave space in your notes to add new information from lectures & ideas in your own words. This will help you check your understanding.
- Use online resources (digital flashcards, practice tests & videos).

The Virtual Classroom

Set up your designated workspace: What do you need to be successful?

- ☐ Gather the necessary equipment and test audio/video BEFORE the lecture is scheduled to start.
- ☐ Gather any handouts you need, along with some paper to take notes.



Before the Lecture

- Read assigned readings and take notes.
- Review textbook notes, PowerPoint slides, and additional resources the instructor has shared.
- Review the class syllabus to stay on track.
- Connect with your instructor via email to establish a rapport.
- Connect with your classmates to share resources (ex: Virtual study groups).

After the Lecture

- Post responses to the discussion board and make meaningful comments.
- If you need assistance, ask to meet with your instructor and/or visit a tutor virtually.
- Use apps to organize your notes and create study aids (ex: flashcards).
- Get in the habit of writing a summary to synthesize the material after each session.

During the Lecture

- Devote your full attention to lectures, no matter if they are recorded or streamed live in real time.
- Watch the lecture at normal speed because faster speeds can lower your retention.
- Stop recorded lectures to take notes.
- Repeat segments that are confusing.
- Watch the first time to grasp the theme of the lecture, play again to focus on details.

Notetaking Tips

- Take notes as if you were sitting in class in-person, using your go-to format.
- Avoid copying directly from the text; Use your own words for better retention.
- Handwritten notes are more effective at creating stronger memories, as tempting as it is to type.
- Color code your notes to keep them neat and organized.





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Online Testing Tips

Know the rules

Common rules for online exams

- **Some exam setups may not allow you to resubmit or change answers. Be certain of your choice, or skip if you can**
- **If you are not allowed to open alternate tabs or take out your phone, DON'T. The monitoring and implementation of online exams is taken very seriously**
- **Make sure your computer meets the requirements for taking the tests. Check out the individual website for the service the class will be using. Here's a few common services: ProctorU, Blackboard Assessments, Responsus Monitor/Browser. VERIFY which method your instructor intends to use.**





Testing Tips



- **Write down the question on a sheet of paper, especially if it's long. Some tests will group subsequent questions under one main umbrella without repeating it**
- **Be conscious of your time. If it's a timed exam and there's no timer displayed, decide how much time you have for each response and bring a watch to keep pace**
- **Plan to study ahead of time. Just because it's online doesn't mean it's open book. And if it is open book, that doesn't mean you have time to look through all of the material while taking the test**



Set up your space!

Double check the date and time



Sit at a desk/table with scratch paper to write on



Have all your equipment ready and charged

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Tips For Contacting Professors

More helpful than you might think!

- Get study tips
- Receive clarification on material
- Gain test-taking tips
- Stay connected with professor & class
- Obtain a potential letter of recommendation

Successful students will:

- Find out when professors have virtual office hours
- Meet instructors biweekly/monthly
- Stay on top of the material
- Set up an online appointment if they can't make designated virtual office hours

What You Should Know

- Most high-achieving students know their professors. Visiting during virtual office hours is the best way to establish a personal connection with your professor.
- It's an extra hour of instruction; one-on-one with an expert! Some professor will even tutor you in the course material.
- Most professors find virtual office hours very enjoyable and rewarding. Some of them prefer the more personal time with students over lecturing large groups.
- Expect possible technical difficulties and delays in connections; set aside extra time for the appointment.

How To Approach Your Professor

- The earlier you "e-meet" your professors the better. Introduce yourself via email to make a connection.
- Express why the class interests you and what you've enjoyed so far. Explain that you want to do well in the class.
- Ask specific questions: Does the instructor have study tips? What has worked well for other students?
- Make notes of what is confusing or what you are having trouble understanding.
- Gather questions and email the professor and/or request a virtual meeting.
- If there is a study guide, work through it as best you can. If you get stumped, be sure to email the professor or request to meet online. Some students get insight on what will be on the test.
- Professors may seem unapproachable in lectures, but many enjoy a one-on-one environment. They can explain material again and offer new examples to assist you in understanding class material more clearly.
- If you are having difficulty with the class, ask the instructor if the pass/no pass option would be beneficial.
- Faculty can be great mentors for you and provide letters of recommendation.

Email Etiquette: Professional Communication

Proper Subject Line

- Include a specific topic.
- Keep it short; be clear about the email's topic.

Spelling & Capitalization

- Don't write like you're sending a text message; use formal grammar.
- Never write in all capital letters; it seems like you're screaming!
- Use spellcheck.
- Use a salutation and address your contact by name.

Re-read Before Sending

- Check your syllabus for the information FIRST.
- If you're feeling emotionally charged, do not send the email. Wait until you have a virtual meeting.

Signature Line

- Always include your contact information.
- Keep it brief: no drawings, etc..

Additional Tips

- Use your ACC email address.
- Use the "To" field for the person you're actually contacting.
- Use the "CC:" field for other people who might need to read the information.
- Don't "Reply All" unless everyone really needs to know.

What NOT To Do:

Subject: hey

From: Glitter420@yahoo.com

Yo,

can u tell me how to do number 4 on the problem set. I no u went over it in class but I have had a VERY LONG week lol tests ha ha ha and I lost my notes.
pleeeeease help

jill

What TO Do:

Subject: EDUC 1300-33131: Missed class

From: thomas.mcdaniels1@g.austincc.edu

Dear Professor Pittman,

I am sorry I missed class on Tuesday. I know I will miss out on the attendance points for the day, but I was hoping to still turn my paper in, even if it is for a late grade. Can I contact you during your virtual office hours Wednesday at 1:00 p.m.?

Thank you for your time,

Thomas McDaniels
thomas.mcdaniels1@g.austincc.edu
ACCeID: t1101565

OVERCOMING ANXIETY DURING UNCERTAINTY

- Read fact-based news and monitor your intake - reading everything can be exhausting and stressful.
- Working from home can be isolating - connect with friends and family regularly.
- Music can be distracting for some, but for others, it can help them relax and focus. Instrumental music is good for this purpose.
- Get dressed (sorry, pjs don't count) and take a shower.
- Move your body! Even a short walk can be refreshing.
- Eat nourishing food where possible.
- Be aware of your screen time.
- Journal your thoughts (resources below).

MINDFULNESS TOOL

A simple four-step process can be used during a brief break to determine the best course of action.

S = Stop
Stop what you are doing. Press the pause button on your thoughts and actions.

T = Take
Take a few deep breaths to center yourself.

O = Observe
Your body – What do you see, hear, taste, smell and touch?
Your emotions – What are you feeling right now?
Your mind – What assumptions are you making about your feelings?

P = Proceed
Proceed with whatever you were doing, making a conscious choice to incorporate what you just learned.

*Adapted from the UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center

USEFUL RESOURCES FOR ANXIETY AND STRESS

Websites

- www.virusanxiety.com/
- www.tenpercent.com/coronavirussanityguide
- www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations (ENGLISH/ESPAÑOL)
- medschool.ucsd.edu/som/fmph/research/mindfulness/mindfulness-resources/Pages/default.aspx
- www.calm.com/blog/take-a-deep-breath

Free apps for iOS and Android

- MINDFULNESS: Insight timer, Smiling mind, Stop, Breathe & Think, UCLA Mindful, 10% Happier
- EXERCISE: Daily Workouts Fitness Trainer, 7 Minute Workout, Freeletics, Daily Yoga, Nike Training Club
- JOURNALING: Day One, Diarium, Journey, Penzu, Five Minute Journal

How To Contact Us

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- Schedule a Virtual Coaching Appointment
- Check the "Live Chat with an Academic Coach" schedule
- See up-to-date coaching hours
- Download Online Resources

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