Study Skills

ONLINE CLASSES EDITION
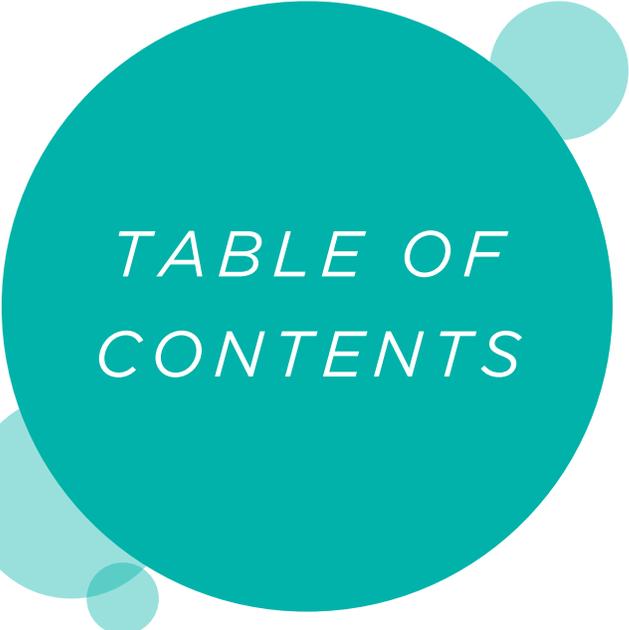
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACC | ACADEMIC COACHING
STUDENT AFFAIRS

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

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✓ Start of Semester Checklist ✓

Before the first class

- Log in to <u>Blackboard</u> to see what textbooks and resources you will need for your classes. Make note of any questions you may have, and present them to the instructor
- Review your syllabus for each class, and put all important dates into a planner of some sort (Google Calendar, hard copy planner etc)
- ACC offers a range of course options. Double-check to see if your class has real-time lectures. If it does, practice using the video conferencing platform before the first class
- Create a <u>weekly schedule</u> for yourself so you have a time management plan on day 1. <u>Book an appointment</u> with an Academic Coach if you would like assistance with this!
- Identify a quiet place in your home for remote learning
- It's critical that your ACC email is activated - you will receive a lot of important emails here. Click <u>here</u> if you need help with this
- If you do not have a digital device to complete your classes, please access the 'Technology Support' section on <u>this page</u>

During Week 1

- Start attending your classes. A lot of important information is provided in the first couple of classes, so email your instructor if you are absent
- Introduce yourself to your instructor(s) and note their office hours
- Connect with your peers to form study groups. This can be really helpful!
- Identify ACC resources that can support your success

During Week 2

- Make adjustments. Maybe your quiet study space is not as quiet as you wanted. Maybe you need to allocate more study time for math because it's challenging
- Make connections between Week 1 & 2 concepts. Start compiling a study guide of your own notes if it's an exam-based class
- *Important: Seek help early if you are struggling. Reach out to your professor, <u>schedule a tutoring session</u>, or meet with an Academic Coach

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Creating a Productive Study Space

It's not always easy to concentrate at home, however a dedicated study space will maximize your chances of success. Every student's space will be a little different, but you'll want to consider these suggestions.

Personalize it

- This is your primary learning space for the semester. Consider your desk/table, seating, lighting etc to make it an enjoyable place to work. Return to this space every time you study - this helps your brain get into a rhythm
- Warning: The couch or bed may be tempting, but those places are for rest!

Eliminate distractions

- As you begin your study session, it's a good idea to silence your phone and place it face down
- Close any tabs in your internet browser that may distract you from your work
- Headphones or ear plugs can help to eliminate background noise

Gather your supplies

- Try to keep all of the things you need in your study space. Your books, calculator, headphones, chargers, notepads, pens, and anything else you might need. This allows you to get working right away!

Create a schedule
Set goals

- Create a weekly planner and try to stick to it.
- Set SMART goals to keep yourself on track.
- Academic Coaches can help you with both of these things!

Move your body

- Try to get up and walk/stretch for 5 minutes every hour. This improves cognitive function and will prevent you from sitting all day
- Longer bursts of exercise are obviously really helpful too!

Look after your eyes

- Adjust the brightness of your computer display
- Use natural light/warm lamps where possible
- Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds
- Leave some space between computer time and bedtime to give your body a chance to wind down.

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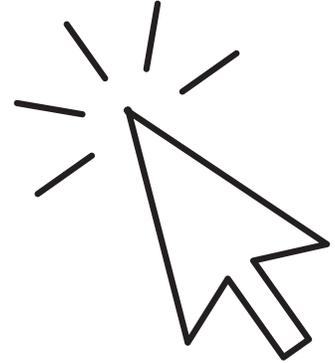
Blackboard Tips

ACCESSING BLACKBOARD

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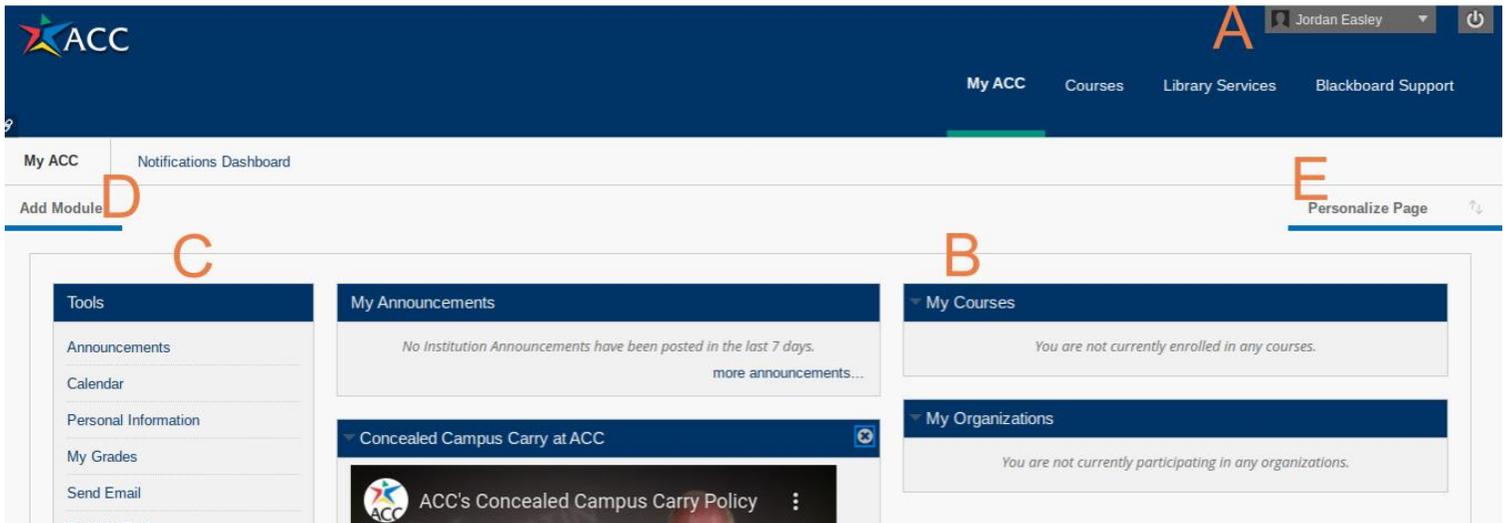
A User menu
Personalized settings: Make sure you see your own name

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

My Institution   **Courses**   Community   Servic

Discussion Board › **Forum: Wave Assignment: Energy From Waves and Tides**
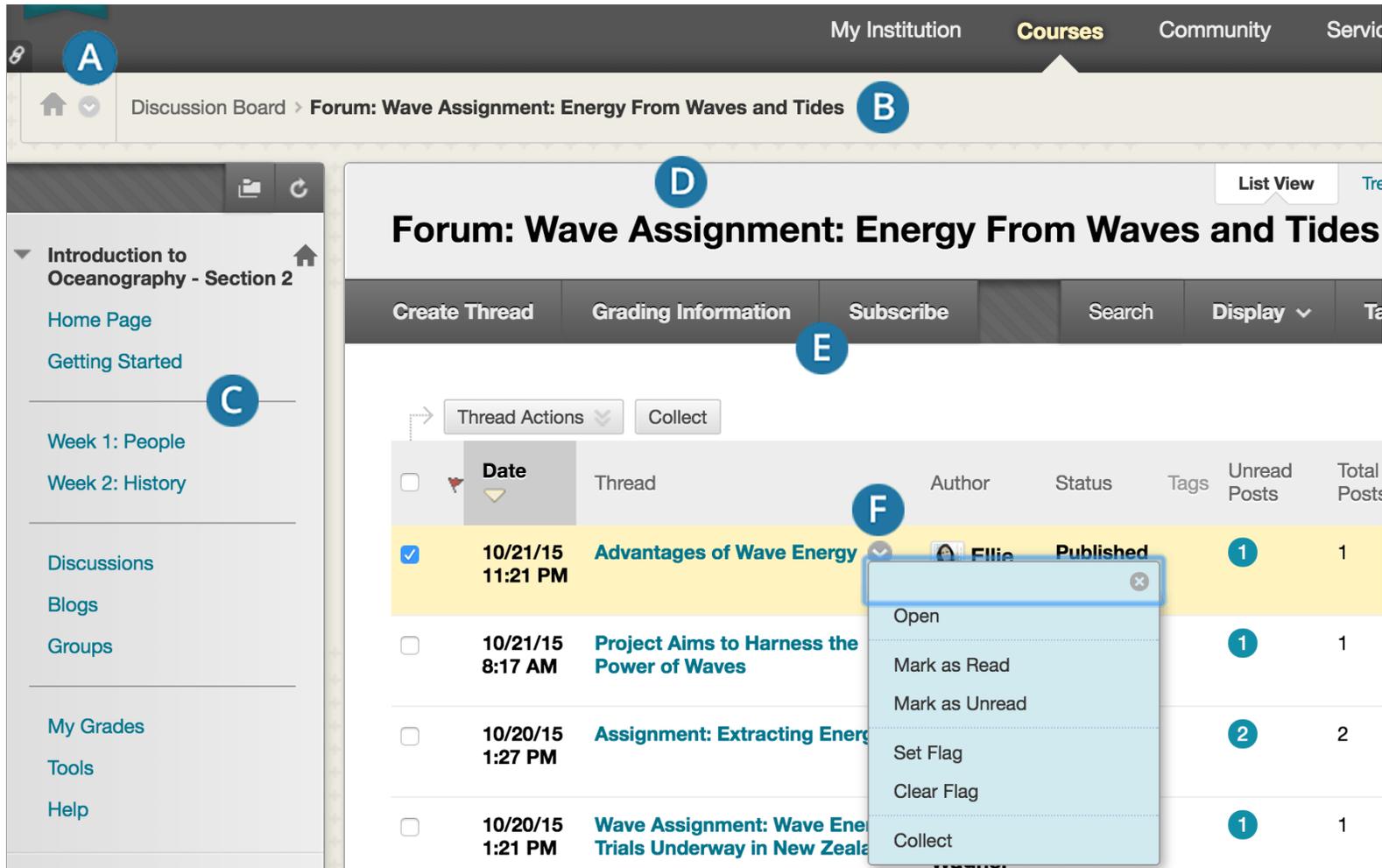
List View   Tre

Forum: Wave Assignment: Energy From Waves and Tides

Create Thread   **Grading Information**   **Subscribe**   Search   **Display** ⌄   Ta

Introduction to Oceanography - Section 2

Home Page
Getting Started

Week 1: People
Week 2: History

Discussions
Blogs
Groups

My Grades
Tools
Help

Thread Actions ⌄   Collect

	Date ⌄	Thread	Author	Status	Tags	Unread Posts	Total Posts
☑	10/21/15 11:21 PM	Advantages of Wave Energy ⌄	Ellie	Published		1	1
☐	10/21/15 8:17 AM	Project Aims to Harness the Power of Waves				1	1
☐	10/20/15 1:27 PM	Assignment: Extracting Energ				2	2
☐	10/20/15 1:21 PM	Wave Assignment: Wave Ener Trials Underway in New Zeala	Wagne			1	1

Open

Mark as Read
Mark as Unread

Set Flag
Clear Flag

Collect

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)

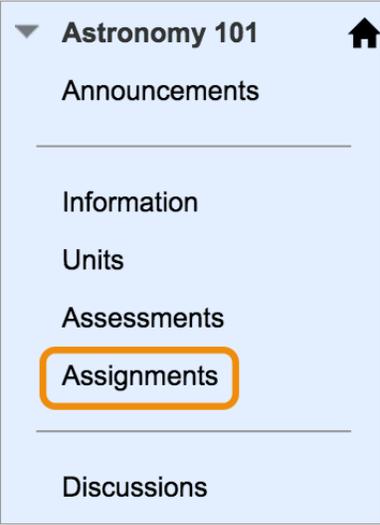B   Access previous pages you've visited recently

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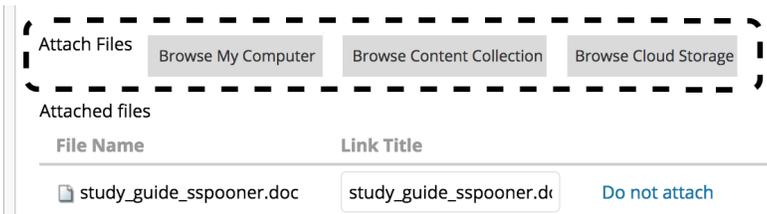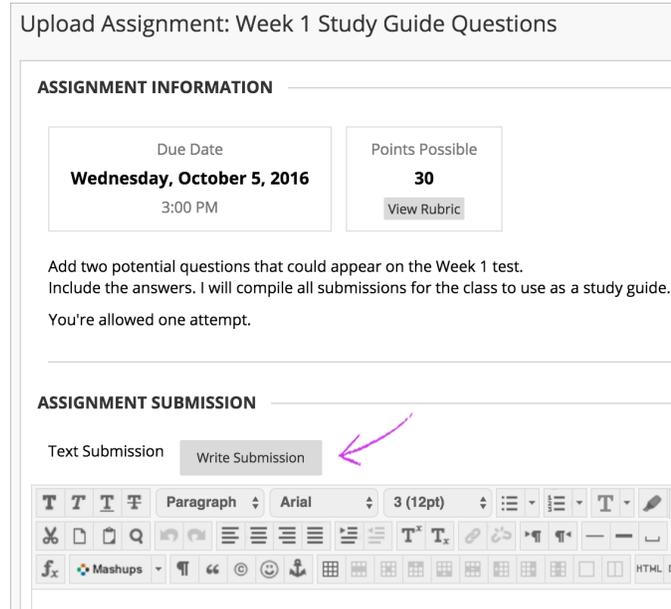
You can also upload a completed document using the toolbar. Use this if there are specific formatting restrictions (ex: MLA)

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.

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Sample schedule

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| Time	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	Break		ENGL		ENGL		S	Alternate subjects
2:00 PM		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		Work	Work	Work	Work			Math study
8:00 PM		Work	Work	Work	Work			Engl study
9:00 PM		Work	Work	Work	Work			Hist study
10:00 PM								Flex

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.
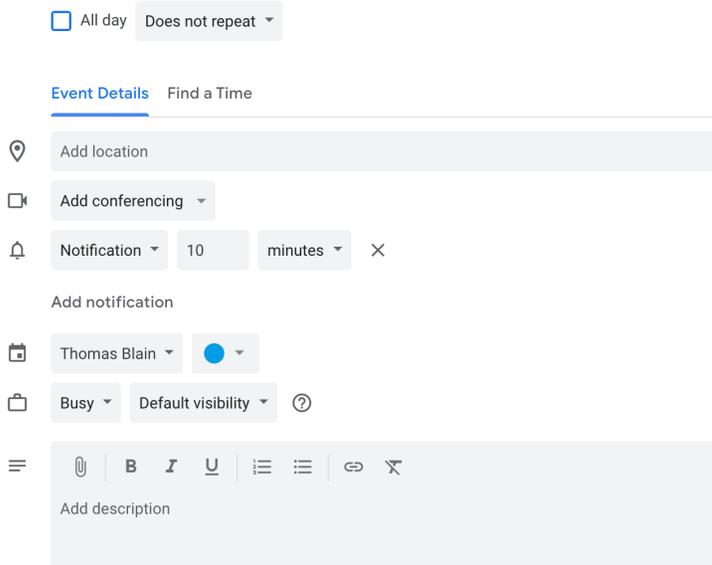
CREATING EVENTS

Step 1
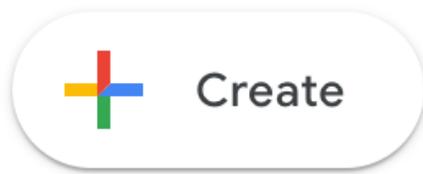
Find the Create button in the top left-hand corner of the screen.

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.

Add title

Event   Out of office   Appointment slots

Apr 7, 2020   9:30am – 10:30am   Apr 7, 2020

Add guests

Add rooms, location, or conferencing

Add description

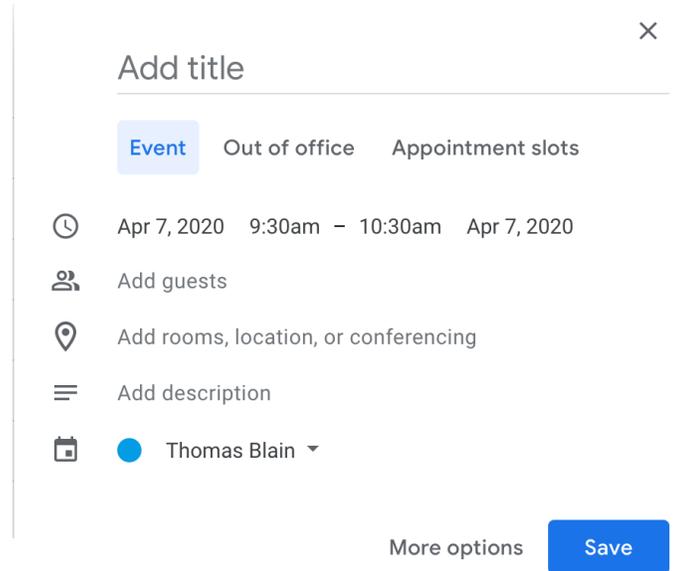Thomas Blain

More options   Save

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).

All day   Does not repeat

Event Details   Find a Time

Add location

Add conferencing

Notification   10   minutes   ✕

Add notification

Thomas Blain

Busy   Default visibility

Add description

Guests   Rooms

Add guests

Guest permissions
☐ Modify event
☑ Invite others
☑ See guest list

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EDITING EVENTS

To edit an event, simply click on it and this box will appear. Select the pencil tool to make changes.
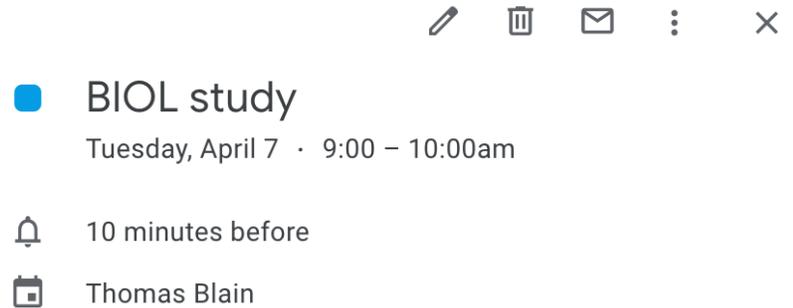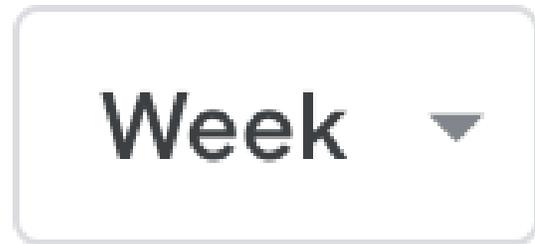
BIOL study
Tuesday, April 7 · 9:00 – 10:00am

🔔 10 minutes before

📅 Thomas Blain

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.
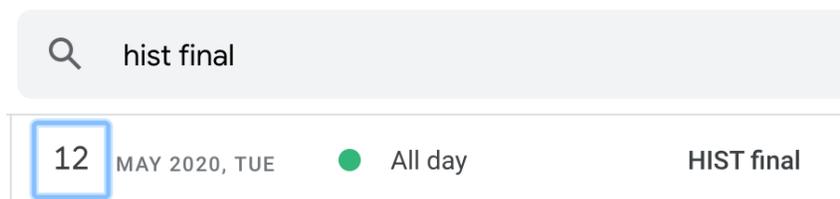
Week ▾

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.

🔍 hist final

| 12 | MAY 2020, TUE | ● All day | HIST final |

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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.

Prepare For Success

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

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.

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.

Online Study Cycle

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Study Smarter, Not Harder

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.

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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.

I'M A TUTOR

I'M A STUDENT
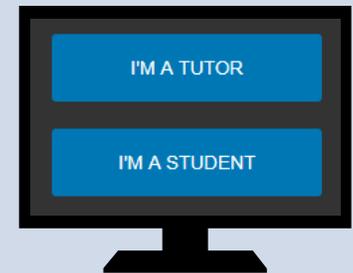
☑ Reading Textbooks

- 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).

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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.
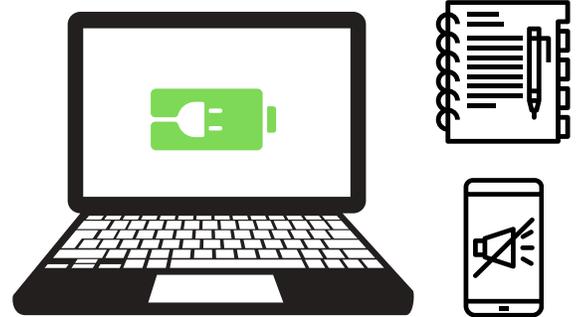
Before the Lecture

- 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: <u>ProctorU</u>, <u>Blackboard Assessments</u>, <u>Responsus Monitor/Browser</u>. 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.

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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

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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

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STUDENT AFFAIRS

Visit Our Website:

austincc.edu/coaching

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

Contact Us:

academiccoaches@austincc.edu