



The CETL Study Skills Guide to Mastering Remote Learning

The CETL Study Skills Counselors are help you end Spring 2020 successfully! We have put together this guide to help you take control of your remote learning and continue to achieve academic success.

For immediate assistance please email us at cetlcounselor@rochester.edu or the CETL front desk team at cetl@rochester.edu.

Step One: The Big Picture

One of the big differences of online courses compared to face-to-face courses is that you are more on your own. In online classes it may be harder to receive feedback. You will likely need to provide yourself with more structure and be more purposeful about finding support. Creating a realistic schedule therefore becomes critical as does seeking connections with your learning partners including your classmates and friends. ***Of course, CETL is here to support you too.***

Whether learning is online or face-to-face it's important to start with the big picture by asking yourself questions such as these:

- What do you need to be successful in your online courses? Who are your study partners? When are your instructors holding virtual office hours? What other resources do you need such as tutoring, study groups or time with your TA?
- What can you do to create a learning environment wherever you are?
- What are the tasks you need to complete for each course? How much time do you need to devote to these different tasks?
- Are you finding ways to take care of yourself by getting enough sleep, eating healthy and exercising? How are you keeping yourself connected with your family and friends?

Step Two: Create a Learning Environment

- In order for your work time to be productive, you need to get into “work mode.” This means getting dressed for the job. Don't stay in your sleep clothes all day. Getting dressed for the day is an important part of establishing a work routine!
- Build a schedule that allows for study time and non-study time. Everyone needs a break.
- Create a designated space where you study and reserve that spot only for studying. Just as someone in a studio apartment has a couch by day and a bed by night, make sure your study location is only used for this one purpose. The point being that you will establish a routine study area which will help you stay focused and learn more effectively.
- Do your best to eliminate distractions in your environment:
 - Turn off notifications and social media, sit at your study space, and shut off all unnecessary browsers on your computer



- If you need some type of background noise, check out study music or cafe/library sounds on youtube or make your own study playlist.
- Don't forget that appropriate lighting and a comfortable chair are important too!

Step Three: Create Your Study Plan

Once you have set up your space and are now in learning mode, the next step is to create a specific study plan. We suggest the following steps to ensure that you're ready for the tasks ahead:

1. Set and follow a schedule using the same principles as you would in the face to face environment.
 - Think of the rest of the semester as a mini online module or unit with a new format and some (possibly) new deadlines.
 - Use the [CETL Semester Grid](#) (PDF) or your calendar to write down your assignment deadlines and exam dates. Don't forget about time zone differences if you are not in the Eastern Time zone (EDT).
2. Establish a routine! Building structure into your day is vital when you are on your own. Get up and get ready for the day.
 - Specify and block certain hours for the tasks you need to complete (e.g., watch lectures, review notes, complete assignments, participate in ZOOM sessions or forums, etc.).
 - Use your calendar, or the [CETL Weekly Planner](#) (PDF), to help you monitor how you are spending your daily and weekly hours.
 - Be flexible and ready to adjust your schedule if your tasks take longer than you expect.
3. Be more deliberate about setting deadlines and how you manage your time.
 - Set weekly goals every weekend for the following week, using a calendar such as the [CETL Task & Subtask Planner](#) (PDF).
 - Be as specific as possible, indicating what you are going to study and when during the day you will do it, e.g., instead of writing "studying Chemistry" write "Acids & Bases" on your calendar or planner.
4. Continue doing all the things you would normally do to learn:
 - Read your text book
 - Attend/watch lectures
 - Take notes and review your notes
 - Do homework and practice problems
 - Attend Workshops and Recitations
 - Take part in a [CETL Study Group](#) or find a [CETL Tutor](#)
 - Email your professor or TA with questions



- Set up an appointment with a [CETL Study Skills Consultant](#) to help set up your new learning environment
- 5. Find someone to be your “study-buddy.” This person can be a friend, classmate or family member. You don’t need to be in the same course or program, but you can be there to support each other to stay on task and follow-through with deadlines.
- 6. At the end of every day, check on how you are spending your time and adjust as needed:
 - Are you giving yourself enough time to complete your tasks?
 - Are you connecting enough with your instructors and/or study partners?
 - Are you taking care of yourself by getting enough sleep, eating well, and exercising?

Final Thoughts – We are here to help!

Just as with face to face learning, you will have good and bad days with virtual learning. There are many virtual support options that CETL and the University of Rochester offers. We are here and eager to help you:

- CETL Study Skills Consultants - cetlcounselor@rochester.edu
 - One on one appointments to help you achieve your study goals.
- CETL support options - cetl@rochester.edu
 - Like Study Groups, Study Zone, and/or Tutoring
- Academic Advisors through CCAS - <http://www.rochester.edu/College/CCAS/schedule.html>
 - Individual appointments for students to talk with an advisor from their school
- University Counseling Center - <http://www.rochester.edu/uhs/ucc/>
 - Visit their website for more information or call 585-275-3113 to figure out your options