

Supporting and Maintaining Online Learning (Slide 1)

Hello and welcome to this mini seminar on supporting and maintaining online learning. My name is Christian Loudon and I'm an academic development specialist at the University of Calgary.

Studying Online with Others (Slide 2)

Let's talk about studying online with others.

Common challenges of studying online (Slide 3)

In the live version of this seminar, the students I worked with identified challenges of studying with others. These included things like isolation, a lack of structure an environment that didn't work well, or even just asking questions. In my work with students one-on-one I've also found that these are very common.

How can we overcome these challenges? (Slide 4)

One of the ways we might overcome these challenges might be to form an online study group. So you may have noticed by now, students can hold their own zoom meetings. This provides a good opportunity to connect and discuss ideas with your classmates outside of lecture. You don't need to be in the same classes as your study buddies either. Study groups can be helpful for accountability because they make it easier to set a time and date to do something. If you're not keen on organizing your own study group, the Student Success Centre also offers a Virtual Study Hall, which offers is structured online environment that is open to all UCalgary students.

It's a good idea to start by setting a goal for what you want to accomplish during your study session because it will help you keep on track and stay focused. Before you begin working, try identifying what you want to accomplish during your study session, and if you feel comfortable, try sharing that goal with a study buddy.

If you need help getting started on a task, you can also try setting a timer. Planning to work on something for a small chunk of time, maybe 30 minutes, can help create milestones to focus on. A three hour study session will feel less intimidating if you're able to break it down into smaller chunks with mini breaks in between. This can also be helpful to give your eyes a rest from the computer screen. In the virtual study hall, students work for 25 minutes and then are prompted to take a five-minute break.

If a rigid timer isn't for you, try using things around your house to time your tasks. For example, I might throw a load of laundry in and work until it finishes before taking a break to catch up on social media or looking something up in Wikipedia that popped into my head.

How can we overcome these challenges? (Slide 5)

Another thing to try is creating a regular schedule to follow. Asynchronous learning means that you have more flexibility on when you access course material. And while that flexibility is nice, it's helpful to maintain a consistent schedule even if it's only loosely followed. In other words, it

doesn't need to be rigid, but it can be. Outlining a few achievable goals that you'd like to accomplish in a day and then getting started may be enough.

TIP: I always like to start each checklist with something I can cross off quickly.

How can we overcome these challenges? (Slide 6)

Another important consideration is your environment. If possible, try and find a space in your house that's just for doing schoolwork. This may not always be possible, so you might need to get creative. So for example, prior to working from home, I primarily used my computer for playing video games and browsing the web. This means I naturally associate my workplace with play, which can make focusing on work a little more difficult. I don't have the space in my house to set up a separate office. And at the same time, I don't want to give up using my computer for fun.

So to overcome this, I set up a second user account on my computer that's just for work. When I'm working, I login to my work account. My work account has a totally different look and feel from my play account. There are no shortcuts to the games I like to play and everything is worked focused. When my work day is over, I can log back into my play account.

Take a moment and consider your workspace. What's working well for the space? What are some of the challenges of working or studying in that space? Why are they challenging? What are some things you could do that might help?

Thank you! (Slide 7)

For more on this and other topics, check out some of the Student Success Centre's other videos. Thanks for watching.