

10 Study Tips for Succeeding in Online College Classes

Online college students have busy schedules. They balance their courses, their professional work lives, and even family or other social obligations. Finding time to study in between all of their other commitments can be pretty challenging.

Students taking courses through the University of Cincinnati Online are often working full time while earning their degree. Making it all work isn't easy, but it is possible. These ten tips help our online students find success in their classes.

1. Treat Studying like a Job

When you are enrolled in your online program, studying is part of your job. You need to commit to your studies as seriously as you commit to your career. If you do this, you'll stay on top of your schedule and be prepared for everything the semester throws at you. Take your online courses seriously and you'll find success.

2. Make a Study Plan

Sit down at the beginning of every semester and make a study calendar for the next few months. Write down all your major assignments, deadlines, and exams, then create a realistic plan to help you work steadily towards these important dates.

Use this study plan to make sure you don't fall behind on your online classes. Missed deadlines and last-minute assignments are stressful and unnecessary. If you stick to your schedule, you should be able to successfully get through each semester with a minimal amount of stress.

3. Create a Quiet Study Space

Dedicate a specific quiet space for your studies. Set up a desk with no distractions and turn it into a space that has everything you need for successful study time: empty flash cards, notebooks, pens, pencils, highlighters—whatever you need. Use this space for studying and only studying.

Tell yourself that when you sit at your desk, you'll turn off social media, disengage from your work or family, and for one or two or three hours, turn your focus completely towards your studies.

4. Make Studying Routine

Once you have a set space dedicated exclusively to studying, figure out what time of day and which days of the week are best for you and make it part of your routine. If you study at the same time, in the same place, week after week, studying will become habitual, and you'll have a far easier time finding the motivation to do it.

It's like taking a workout class. The first few times it's difficult to motivate yourself to go. But if you go to the same class week after week, pretty soon it becomes part of your routine and you look forward to your workout.

Do the same thing for studying, make it an essential part of your weekly routine.

5. Use Your Online Resources

Your online college courses probably come with additional resources. Many schools, like the University of Cincinnati, may give you access to an online library of academic publications. Your professor may post additional, optional readings to supplement the core course material. Take advantage of this!

Reading extra materials and conducting additional research will help firmly establish your knowledge and prepare you for success on your future exams.

6. Take Notes By Hand

Taking notes by hand can help you remember things better in the long run as compared to typing. When you're watching your lecture, write your notes out in a notebook. Then when you're studying the material again later, type your handwritten notes up on your computer. This repetition will help you study more consciously and ingest the material more fully.

7. Make Flashcards

Remember flashcards? These are actually a great tool for drilling complex information from your online classes, as well as simple vocabulary, into your brain. The simple act of writing out the flashcards will help you remember the facts more clearly, as writing facts down repeatedly has been shown to help retention.

Then you can carry your flashcards with you in your bag and take advantage of free time while riding the bus, sitting in a waiting room, or during any spare moment throughout the day when you can squeeze in some studying.

8. Change Topics

It can be hard to concentrate on one subject for several hours. Help yourself stay focused for the long haul and retain more information overall by switching up what you are studying. If you're

taking three classes this semester, try spending one hour on each class. You'll study for three hours and have covered everything you've learned so far.

Switching up what you're studying can help you stay focused for longer and remember more information than if you try to study the material for just one course for an extended period of time.

9. Take Breaks

Breaks are an important part of the studying process as well. The human mind can only stay focused for so long before it starts to run out of energy. Take a five-minute break every hour. Stand up, walk around the room, stretch, maybe go get some coffee, and come back to your desk refreshed.

While it is very important to take regular breaks, it is equally as important to be mindful about how long your break is. Five minutes is enough time to recharge. Half an hour to go watch a TV show is probably a little over indulgent.

10. Participate in Class Discussions

For online college classes, discussions take place in the online portal. Instead of talking about your thoughts on a reading, you have to write them out in posts and comments. This may at first seem tedious, but it is really a great way to get in some extra studying.

Writing down your thoughts about a subject or a reading will help you better understand and remember the course material. The act of writing is a really powerful tool for information retention. Participating in class discussions will improve your grade and your performance on your next exam.