

Getting Started with Online Learning (Slide 1)

Welcome!

This is the first in a series of videos created by the Student Success Centre to help students at the University of Calgary with their online courses.

My name is Jared Secord, and I will be leading you through this video, which offers some suggestions about how to get started with online learning.

Key Factors in Successful Online Learning (Slide 2)

From our research, we know that there are two key factors for successful online learning. These are basically the same as the key factors for successful face-to-face learning. We know that students who tend to do well in face-to-face classes attend them regularly and have good habits of keeping up with their work. We also know that students who tend to do well really engage with their course material, and keep in contact with their instructor, teaching assistant, and other students in the class.

This boils down to key factors: a consistent schedule and engagement with others.

The same two factors are key for online learning.

Self-directed Learning (Slide 3)

But there is a big difference between online and face-to-face classes. Online classes require students to think more about self-directed learning.

Self-directed learning requires you to take initiative for your own learning process. This includes organizing your time to study, asking questions to your professor, and reaching out for help when you need it.

Self-directed Learning – Questions (Slide 4)

Some basic questions can help you come up with a plan for self-directed learning:

How will you organize your time? Will you use daily to-do lists? Will you have a weekly schedule, or a monthly list of all of the assessments in your classes?

What are the main assessments in your class?

When are the assessments due and how much are they worth? All of this information should be available to you on your course outline, or on the D2L site.

Finally, what types of supports are available? Besides the Student Success Centre, there are also Student Accessibility Services and the Wellness Centre.

Self-Directed Learning: Checklist (Slide 5)

To help with your self-directed learning, you can also complete this checklist.

Make sure that you know how to access course lectures.

Confirm that you know how to get in touch with your professor, whether this is by email, during virtual office hours, or through D2L.

Review the course outline and other course materials to make sure you understand the expectations for the course.

Decide on a time-management system that will work for you. My colleague Heather will have more to say about this in the next video.

Finally, start breaking down your assignments into smaller pieces, and think about when you can do these. Add these to the calendar or to-do list that you will create.

Self-Directed Learning: Checklist (Slide 6)

Let's break the self-directed checklist down further.

Take the learning objectives in your course and turn these into questions to help you practice and test your knowledge.

Approach course readings with a purpose: don't try reading a textbook cover to cover. Look first at the summary or objectives and take notes on these before you start reading the chapter.

While you're reading, ask yourself questions. What do I know already? How does this relate to the major objectives for the course? You can turn headings in the textbook into questions and then answer them to test your knowledge.

You can also think about ways to improve and get feedback. First, make sure to keep and review feedback you get from your instructor or TA to help you with future work in the class. Asking questions to your professor is also a good idea.

If you're looking for additional support and structure, you can also join our Virtual Study Hall online. Visit our website for more details.

What next? (Slide 7)

Thanks for watching this video. If you're wondering what to do next, think about watching the next videos by Heather Thompson about time management and self care, two more important components of self-directed learning.

If you want additional help or support, you can also visit the Student Success Centre website to book a one-on-one appointment for Academic Support.