COUGAR GUIDE TO
ACADEMIC SUCCESS
DURING COVID-19

Division of
Academic Engagement and Student Achievement
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Things may feel out-of-control right now. You may be facing a lot of unknowns and disruptions. Try to be patient with yourself, your classmates, and your instructors during this time. Take care of your wellbeing first. Making a plan and adjusting your studying may help you feel even a little sense of control. While more of your coursework and teamwork have to be online and remote, here are some strategies to keep you organized, engaged, and connected:

START WITH MINDSET

Begin your day with your normal routine as if you were heading to class. Otherwise you might find yourself in the mood for lounging on the couch in your PJs. Also, if possible, set up an ergonomic workspace to separate your sleeping and relaxing space where you can be productive.

TRACK CHANGES FOR EACH CLASS

Are in-person parts of the class changing?
- What are the in-person parts of this course? (lecture, lab, etc)
- Where can you find it or how do you access it? (live-stream, lecture capture, etc)
- Is it at a specific time or can you watch it anytime?

Are assignments changing?
- Are there new due dates?
- Is how you're submitting your assignments changing?
- Are any quizzes or exams being offered virtually?

What should you do if you need help?
- Is your course offering virtual office hours? When and on what platform?
- Is there an online forum for asking questions?

One example of a way you could keep track:

	Class A	Class B	Class C
Important Dates	Exam 4/22		Paper Due Friday
Big Changes	No Lab; Live Lecture	Recorded Lecture; discussions daily	Group meets for project on Zoom
Important Links	Tutoring & TA office hours Links	Lecture Link	Group project Zoom Link

Stay Organized

SET A SCHEDULE

As the situation unfolds, you may have fewer social commitments, group meetings, or work hours. Setting a schedule for yourself can help provide structure and keep you motivated. If you don't already keep a weekly or daily calendar, try something like the example below to organize your time. Include time for exercise and self-care.

When possible, inform family and friends of your schedule and workspace needs. Ask for their assistance in keeping you on track for success by giving you space and reducing unnecessary distraction during your "class" times.

Take advantage of downtime and allow yourself a break by heading outside, exercising, meditating, or other means of relaxing.

Schedule Template

	Scheduled Activity	Course Tasks	Personal/ Self-care
8am			Shower, Breakfast
9am	Call in for remote lecture		
10am		Read Ch. 3	
11am			Break - video call with friend
12pm			Lunch
1pm		Read Ch. 4	
2pm	Recap lecture with classmates		

TRADE YOUR STRATEGIES FOR NEW ONES

The situation has changed so your routines and methods may have to change during this time. There are many ways to study, and you can connect with an Academic Coach in WSU's ASCC to learn more about what may work for you. Adapting your usual habits will help you be successful.

If you…	Then Try To
Study at a library or coffee shop	Study in a chair next to a bookshelf, or at a table with some coffee brewing and music playing
Enjoy background noise	Play white noise or study music on your favorite music app
Study in groups	Zoom a group of classmates via phone or computer for study and socializing
Thrive on tight timelines	Work with others to set and keep yourself accountable to your schedule
Use in-person tutoring or writing support	Use the virtual tutoring and writing services offered through ASCC and the Writing Program
Need help finding resources with the library locations closed	Send an email or chat online with WSU library staff

AVOID MULTITASKING

If you're doing more work on your own and your time is less structured, you might be more tempted to multitask. Many people think they can do multiple things at once. But research shows us that only about 2% of the population can multitask. Even if you feel like you're multitasking, you're probably not… really, you're switching between tasks very quickly (some call this "micro-tasking").

The downsides of multitasking and microtasking:

Assignments take longer. Each time you come back to an assignment (from Instagram for example), you have to get familiar with it, find your spot, remember what you were going to do next, etc.

You're more likely to make mistakes. Distractions and switching between tasks tires out the brain.

You'll remember less. When your brain is divided, you're less able to commit what you're learning to long-term memory (because it doesn't get encoded properly into your brain).

AVOID DISTRACTIONS

Activate your phone's Do Not Disturb function, close your social media and email apps, put on some noise canceling headphones – use all of the tools you need to stay focused. This isn't always easy or feasible, but there are always steps you can take to decrease distractions from the world around you.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS
and those with young ones in the house -

Working around children can be difficult. Where necessary, working after bedtime or during nap time may be the only option. Ask for help: from instructors, from classmates, and loved ones. Use the resources you have available to do the best you can.

WORK WITH A GROUP OR TEAM

Remote collaboration will look a little different, but it is definitely possible.

Do your part and don't be afraid to hold your group mates accountable for their parts.

Communication is key. Connect early and often with group or team members about shared assignments and projects.

Meet Regularly. Schedule FaceTime or Zoom meetings regularly with your team members to stay up to date and on task.

Set purpose and share notes. All team members should have a purpose for each meeting and take shared notes so you can all contribute and follow along.

Keep video open while working. Zoom with teammates while working for optimum efficiency, ensure everyone is on the same page, and reduce likelihood of putting off work.

Check on each other and ask for backup. If someone has been absent from your group meetings or chat, ask them directly if they're still able to participate in the project. If you aren't getting responses within a day or two, let your instructor know. It isn't being petty, it's your team's responsibility.

MAKE THE MOST OF VIDEO LECTURES

Stick to your instructor's schedule as much as you can. Staying on schedule will help you have a feeling of normalcy and prevent you from falling way behind.

Find out how to ask questions. Is there a chat feature? Is there a discussion forum?

LEAN ON EACH OTHER

Even if we limit how much face-to-face time we spend with others on campus, connecting with family and friends might be more important than ever. And staying in touch with instructors, classmates, and group mates is still important for continued classwork.

Here are a few ideas:

Schedule FaceTime, Snapchat, and Zoom calls with family and friends.

Zoom with classmates to study, support each other, and keep up on your schoolwork.

Connect with your university resources virtually:

- Attend instructor office hours
- Participate in workshops and activities offered through WSU such as Cougs Chatting with Cougs
- Connect with WSU and dozens of departments and organizations on social media

PLEASE REMEMBER, THIS WILL PASS.
If COVID-19 has disrupted your travel plans, ended a lab experiment you were excited about, or for any reason feels like it came at the worst possible time, remember: **this is temporary.** You'll find your way when it settles down. You'll get back on track, and things will get back to normal. We don't know when, but it will happen.

Until then, take a deep breath, do your best, get some rest, and wash your hands.

COVID-19 INFORMATION UPDATES
WSU COVID-19 General Updates
WSU COVID-19 Student FAQ
WSU COVID-19 Resources
Guide to Preventing COVID-19
Consumer Food Safety

ACADEMIC RESOURCES
Tutoring and Academic Workshops from the Academic Success and Career Center
Writing support for any class, any paper, any draft from the Writing Program
Calculate your GPA
Find out how your GPA is calculated
Learn more about Pass/Fail options for Spring 2020
Connect with a peer mentor or find specific support from the Office of Academic Engagement

TECHNOLOGY
Distance Learning Resources
Crimson Service Desk

WELL-BEING AND ACCOMMODATIONS
Cougar Money Matters
Cougar Health Services
Access Center

COLLEGE-SPECIFIC COVID-19 RESOURCES
Carson College of Business
Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture
College of Education
The Edward R. Murrow College of Communication
CAHNRS: College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences
College of Veterinary Medicine