



University
of Windsor

Faculty of Arts, Humanities
and Social Sciences

First Year Transition Toolkit: Guidelines for Online Academic Success

The **First Year Transition Toolkit** is an online toolkit developed to assist incoming students make the successful transition to university.

Course Registration

Students can add and drop courses through UWinsite Student up until the 10th day of classes for the Fall and Winter terms.

When selecting courses, it is strongly recommended to seek an Academic Advisor to aid in the process. An Academic Advisor will ensure that you are taking courses that you are interested in to ensure your success.

Academic Tips for Online Success

- Develop a main purpose for attending University. Think of your long-term goal(s) and break it into smaller short-term goals will make it seem less intimidating. Write them out on paper and stick it somewhere visible as a reminder that you want to achieve these goals. Setting a deadline will provide motivation towards completion. Ultimately, you want to succeed in university and forming long-term goal(s) and breaking it into short-term goals will help.
- A major point of academic success is being **engaged**. Being an engaged student means that you are actively learning and not thinking about other things; you are also asking questions and contributing to the classroom. When you are engaged, you are more likely to understand concepts. Even though classes will be online, there are different ways you can still be active such as emailing your professors some questions from lectures, or if you are doing live stream, you can use the text function to ask questions.
- **Time management** and **priority making** are essential. Although classes will be online and you can do it from the comfort of your home, you need to make sure that you are still making good choices based on your priorities. If your long-term goal is to get a high average for your first

year, then that means your priority would be studying. When you established your priorities, only then you can allocate and manage your time. For time management, using a calendar or agenda to write down important dates would aid in organization.

- **Distraction** could be your worst enemy. Try to limit the number of distractions around you by finding a place within your house to do your schoolwork. Try to avoid using social media when you are studying or engaging in class. Online shopping should be also **avoided**. When you are distracted, you are not engaged, and you will miss important information.
- Studying - how you should study is to start by looking at the syllabus of each course. Each syllabus has "learning outcomes" that a successful student must achieve by the end of the course. When you are studying, use that syllabus as a guideline. Cross-reference with textbooks and lecture notes to see if you have answered each learning outcomes with confidence. It is strongly recommended to start studying at least two weeks before your assessment to optimize your time. Use the last three days as a review period to go over key concepts and terms.
- Sleeping - Most students find it difficult to maintain a healthy **7-8 hours of sleep** each night, but this is an important factor towards success. There have been studies that having enough hours of sleep helps with consolidation of learning. So, it works in your favour if you're sleeping properly. Try not to drink coffee before going to sleep.

Voluntary Withdraw

If you are struggling in one or more of your courses, then it might be in your best interest to do a voluntary withdraw (VW). A voluntary withdraw simply means that you will not continue with the course and you will not have to do the remaining assessments or receive a final grade. However, a VW will show on your transcript but there is no grade value associated with it.

Before you voluntarily withdraw, you should consult with an academic advisor to see how it would impact your academic progression. If you are an OSAP recipient, you should speak with someone from the Student Awards and Financial Aid to see how that might impact your provincial funding.