Student Guide to Remote Learning



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Table of Contents

2. Getting Tech Ready	3
3. How Do I Use Zoom for Class?	5
4. How Can I Be Successful in an Online Class?	3
5. Forming Online Study Groups1	2
6. Academic Integrity14	1
7. Feeling Stressed: 5 Tips for Adapting to Studying Remotely14	1
8. Conclusion1	7

1. Introduction: Learning Remotely

Welcome to your student guide and "roadmap" to the York University Student Guide to Remote Learning!

We hope that this guide will help you successfully navigate the many aspects of remote learning for years to come!

If you are an instructor, we hope that you will find this resource useful and include it in your course syllabus to enhance the remote learning experience of your students!

Here are a few key definitions:

□ What is the difference between a synchronous and an asynchronous class?

According to the Student Guide to Remote Learning:

A *synchronous class* is where everyone logs on at a scheduled time together for a "live" class online. There may be discussion, breakout rooms, or other interactive components in your class. An *asynchronous class* does not have a specified meeting time when you meet up with your class; you are responsible or working through the lecture material on your own time.

Note: Some classes may have a mix of both synchronous and asynchronous components. For more information about how to understand your course code, please see Current Student FAQs.

□ What is the difference between Remote Learning and Online Learning?)

According to YU Better Together:

Courses offered as **online** (designated as **ONLN**) have no specified meeting times. You may also see these courses referred to as "asynchronous."

All other courses, designated as **blended (BLEN)**, **lecture (LECT)** or **seminar (SEMR)** will be offered **remotely**. That means they will have some scheduled, synchronized meeting times. You may also see these courses referred to as "synchronous" or "remote." Corresponding **Labs (LAB)** and **Tutorials (TUTR)** for remote courses will also be offered remotely.

A small number of courses will have in-person components that require you to attend in-person for completion.

2. Getting Tech Ready

What technology will I need for studying at home?

As a rule of thumb, remote learning requires:

□ An Internet connection.

- □ A computer or mobile device with a camera and a microphone.
- □ A headset (either earphones or an earphones/microphone combination), while not required, may help you more effectively block out background noise to help you better concentrate on your studying.

If you need any more information on the different software platforms used by York, what you will need to get tech ready, and resources for getting set-up, visit the Online Learning Protocol for York University Students.

I don't have access to a computer at home - can York help?

Don't worry, we've got you covered! York University has secured 1,500 laptops for students, faculty and staff who don't have a home computer to learn, teach or work remotely through the Laptop Borrowing Program.

How do I set up my Passport York account and yorku.ca email address?

All official communication on behalf of York University is sent to your **yorku.ca email.** It is therefore essential that you activate your yorku.ca email address and consult it daily.

You also need your **Passport York account** and yorku.ca email address to have access to your courses on **eClass**.

So, without further ado, let's get you all set up!

- Go to Passport York & Manage My Services and create a Passport York account.
- To create a Passport York account, log in to Manage My Services with your student number for your username, and your date of birth for your password (in the format YYYY/MM/DD), then follow the directions to change your password after the first time you log in.
- To create a yorku.ca email address, you need to go to Manage My Services and create a york email account (if you just created your Passport York account, you should already be at a screen that lets you pick options such as creating a yorku.ca email account).
- □ Remember the email address, and the password that you have set for it (writing it down somewhere safe will make your life so much easier in case that you forget it!)

Do you need a little extra help with setting up your Passport York account and yorku.ca email address? No worries! We've all been there and we're happy to help you!

You can contact University Information Technology (UIT) Client Services at 416.736.2100 x55800, or email ithelp@yorku.ca, or submit a service request to the University Information Technology (UIT) Service Desk Counter. You can also check out the Passport York Frequently asked questions.

What is eClass and how do I access it?

Many of your instructors at York use the eClass portal to allow you to access all your course content online, participate in class discussion and engage in other learning activities.

You can access eClass through your Passport York sign-in username and password at eClass.

To give you a little bit of advice, check eClass regularly to make sure that you receive all your course announcements and reminders.

This portal is also your gateway to your Student Virtual Assistant, York's newest tool which was designed to help you connect with resources for academic success, health & wellness, student life and career development.

If you would like more information about eClass, you can browse the Student Guide to Moodle on recommended browser settings and how to use eClass to access your courses, submit assignments and view your grades.

How do I access my courses on eClass?

- Go to eClass
- Log in with your Passport York account.
- Once you are logged into eClass, your courses will appear in the "Your Course Overview."

Do you need a little extra help with logging into eClass and accessing your courses? No worries! We've all been there and we're happy to help you!

You can contact University Information Technology (UIT) Client Services at 416.736.2100 x55800, email ithelp@yorku.ca, or submit a service request to the University Information Technology (UIT) Service Desk Counter.

3. How Do I Use Zoom for Class?

Zoom has become increasingly used by instructors to hold virtual classes with their students. This platform is perfectly suitable for the virtual classroom as it offers different mechanisms for remote teamwork and file sharing.

How do I log into my YorkU Zoom account?

If your instructor has told you that your class will take place over Zoom, you can sign into your YorkU Zoom account.

To do so, go to Zoom at YorkU and use the "Sign in" button on the top right-hand corner to login with your Passport York username and password.

How do I join a class on Zoom?

Check to see if your instructor included a meeting ID and password. Fill in this information if prompted to join the meeting. Your instructor could also post the link of your Zoom meeting on the Moodle course page.

If you are new to Zoom, and would like to make sure that your first session runs as smoothly as possible, you can follow these tips from the Student Guide to Remote Learning:

- Try to find a quiet place, free from distractions for your session.
- □ Test your Zoom connection at least 24 hours in advance to ensure that your account is working, and that you have the necessary add-in.
- □ For regular synchronous sessions, log in 15 minutes in advance, to get used to the "look and feel" of the platform, and to make sure that your Internet connection, video, microphone, lighting, and sound are all working.

How do I schedule a meeting on Zoom?

- After signing into your YorkU Zoom account, click on the Meetings tab and then click on the Schedule a New Meeting button that is located in the Upcoming Meetings tab.
- □ You can customize the meeting's options by adding a topic, a full description of the meeting, or set the date and the time of the meeting.
- Zoom also lets you specify the duration of the meeting, but you don't have to worry about entering the exact duration since it will not end automatically after the specified period of time expires.
- You can also decide if a password for your meeting is mandatory, enable the host and participant video option, or allow attendees to join using computer audio, telephone audio, or both.
- □ You can also choose to mute all participants when they enter the meeting or allow them to join the meeting before you.
- □ Once you're done adjusting the meeting settings, you should click on the **Save** button and add the meeting to your Google, Outlook, or Yahoo calendar.
- □ To make sure that your Zoom account is synched to your chosen calendar, click on the **Profile** option, and locate the **Calendar and Contact Integration** option.

□ You can then copy the invitation to the meeting and send it to the participants via email.

What is the proper Zoom Netiquette?

Netiquette is a set of rules of manners, respect and politeness when using electronic means of communication. Here are some examples of proper Netiquette:

- □ Communicate with as much respect as in a face-to-face exchange.
- □ Use formal ways of greetings unless you are on a first-name basis.
- Proofread your emails carefully (check for mistakes, attachments, etc.) before sending them.

□ Make sure that you include the course code and a brief description in the subject line, and that you include your name in all your emails.

Since we are all very new to this virtual classroom environment, we are all still learning about the proper Zoom Netiquette, and it is OK to not be perfect!

We will all make mistakes along the way, and we must show a little bit of patience and empathy towards one another!

To give you a helping hand, and to make sure that you are on the right track, the Student Guide to Remote Learning has put together some great tips for ensuring proper Netiquette in a Zoom session:

- □ Conduct and present yourself in the same manner you would if you were attending an in-person class.
- Think about your background when you are on Zoom video. If you would like to use it, Zoom offers a "virtual background" feature. You can even use an official YorkU Zoom Background.
- Mute your microphone when you're not speaking so background noise from your location doesn't disrupt other Zoom meeting participants. You can toggle your microphone on and off using the microphone icon in the toolbar at the bottom lefthand corner of your screen. You could also use a headset microphone, if you have one available, to reduce echo and improve audio.
- □ Try not to speak over other participants. Remember, you can also use chat or use the raise your hand option. If your instructor has given instructions for how to interact in the session, follow their guidelines.

What is "Zoom Fatigue" and how can I manage it?

"Zoom Fatigue" refers to our current situation of physical distancing and how we feel replacing in-person interactions with video conferencing.

Although Zoom has proven to be a great platform for remote learning, it can also at times be quite draining, and you must learn how to manage it.

Not to worry, the Student Guide to Remote Learning has put together some great tips for how to manage Zoom fatigue:

- Manage your time. When you create your schedule for the day/week, think about balancing time to yourself and time at a video conference. What is your ideal for maintaining your energy levels? Consider blocking off times of day when you are most productive for study time.
- □ **Consider alternate methods of communication.** We have created new habits of turning everything into a video meeting. Consider when a conversation may work just as well over email or over the phone.
- Be kind to yourself. Practise self-care and be kind to yourself when you are not at your best. If you need to turn off your video for a while or reschedule, communicate your needs with the people you are meeting. No need to pretend that your computer is freezing to leave a conversation.

If you would like to find out more information on using Zoom at York, go to Online Learning Protocol for York University Students.

4. How Can I Be Successful in an Online Class?

Even as we all are in the process of adapting to our new learning experience, it is important to remember that we are going to be just fine!You will find down below a list of strategies suggested by the Student Guide to Remote Learning that will put you on the right track:

□ Take your class as seriously as you would if it were in person.

Remember that your instructor has put in a lot of effort to ensure that the course is running as smoothly as possible. Codes of conduct and academic integrity still apply, even while you are at home. You are an ambassador of your own learning, and you are in control - take your coursework seriously and make the best of your university experience!

□ Adapt your routine and create good study habits.

Now that you are at home, different events that used to be part of your school day (commuting, finding a quiet spot in the library), may not be a current factor of your online learning. This means that your remote studying is going to require you making a new schedule in order to effectively manage your time. Just as school is important, remember to set time aside for family, friends, and relaxation.

□ Stay on top of updates and information.

A big responsibility that comes with the freedom in online learning is your ambassadorship. You are in charge, so it is crucial to actively seek updates and information, as well as class announcements. Create a schedule that allows you to regularly keep up with eClass, your YorkU email, and the YorkU website.

D Be in constant communication with your instructors and classmates.

You are not alone; there are many students, and even professors, that feel a lot of pressure because of remote learning. Although online communication looks different, there are still ways to connect online. Check out your instructor's office hours, comment on your course's discussion group, or meet some friends on a Zoom call.

Whom do I contact if I have questions about my online class?

As a preface to a successful remote learning expedition, be sure to familiarize yourself with your course syllabus and your instructor's contact information. If your course has an eClass page, that is an ideal place to look for your syllabus and other details about the course.

Though you are in control of your own learning, keep in mind that there are individuals who are willing and ready to assist you with any questions you may have about your program or degree. Visit the Academic Advising Offices page in order to set up a virtual appointment with an advisor who can support your advising needs during the COVID-19 situation.

What is the etiquette for studying online?

When studying online, it is important to practise **netiquette**, the etiquette of communicating and participating when in an online environment. Here are some strategies suggested by the **Student Guide to Remote Learning** to exercise proper netiquette:

- □ **Be kind**. Although you are connecting with other tech users virtually, be mindful of the fact that there is a person behind the screen. Be forgiving when people make mistakes, and remember to give people the benefit of the doubt in sticky situations; in the age of advanced technology, we can all understand that it can be difficult to interpret tone and meaning online.
- □ Be ethical. Just as you would conduct yourself in person, your online presence should reflect the same moral code. If you are confused about whether something is inappropriate to post online, chances are it's probably not the smartest idea.
- Understand your audience. The way you communicate with your group of friends may be different than how you would vocalize your thoughts and opinions in a classroom discussion. Take your online surroundings into consideration and maintain your level of professionalism.

□ Pause, think, and review before you hit send/submit. Take some time to examine your work before submitting. Remember when you upload on the Internet, other users will have access, so ensure that they are making good use of their time when they are reviewing your work.

How should I study for an online exam?

- □ Understand the material. When you begin studying for your online exam, a good first step to take is to read your course syllabus. Take a look at the specific course objectives that your instructor intended you to learn by the end of the term. Do you feel that you understand all course objectives by now? Are you now able to meet them? As a tip, try not to memorize the course concepts that you have learned. When writing an exam, know that the questions do not always appear exactly how you had studied them in the textbook. In order to be able to connect and apply course concepts, focus on understanding rather than memorizing.
- □ Know your exam format. Make sure to read the exam instructions ahead of time and review them closer to the exam date. Having an idea of what is expected for the exam will help you feel more confident and prepared, and less stressed. Check if your instructor provided your class with information regarding the overall format and value of the questions and sections. If so, plan how much time that you will spend on each question or section as part of your final studying and if possible, don't forget to save time to review your exam before you submit it!

Where to find more help with research and writing?

Here are some resources suggested by the Student Guide to Remote Learning:

Workshops & Appointments (Registration Required)

- Consult with a Librarian Book a 30-minute Zoom consultation with a YorkU librarian for in-depth research help.
- □ Writing Centre Video Chat Meet with a writing instructor for a 50-minute one-on-one appointment via Online Video Chat.
- □ Writing Tips This Learning Skills Services Workshop will help you manage your time to plan out how you will approach your writing assignment.

Drop-In Services

YorkU Libraries Chat - Connect with a York Librarian through instant chat.

eTutoring Paper Submission - You will receive feedback from a writing instructor within 24 hours.

Resources to Explore on Your Own

SPARK - An online guide to successful academic papers.

Where to find more help with presentation skills?

Workshops & Appointments (Registration Required)

- Presentation Skills Learning Skills Services Workshop.
- Peer Academic Coaching Learning Skills Services 1:1 Appointment.

English as a Second/Additional Language Presentation Supports (Registration Required)

- □ ESL Tutorial Session 1:1 session when you work with an ESL OLC tutor to improve your individual English language and/or academic communication skills.
- ESL Presentation Practice Small group session when students can bring their presentation assignments for extra help with research, outlining, organization and delivery practice.

Resources to Explore on Your Own

- Learning Skill Services Resources for Success Presentation skills tips and resources.
- □ Video Interviews Do you have an upcoming job interview over video? The Career Centre has some tips and resources to help you present your best self.

Where to find more exam prep help?

Workshops & Appointments (Registration Required)

- **Exam Prep** Learning Skills Services Workshop.
- Learning Power Learning Skills Services Workshop.
- Peer Academic Coaching Learning Skills Services 1:1 Appointment.

Resources to Explore on Your Own

- **Tips for Online Exams (pdf)** A print-friendly version of the tips on this web page.
- Learning Skill Services Resources for Success Exam prep tips, resources, and worksheets.
- □ Academic Integrity Tutorial SPARK.

Where to find more help succeeding in class?

Workshops & Appointments (Registration Required)

Reading & Note Taking - Learning Skills Services Workshop.

Peer Academic Coaching - Learning Skills Services 1:1 Appointment.

Resources to Explore on Your Own

- □ Learning Skill Services Resources for Success Tips and resources on a variety of learning topics.
- Online Learning Protocol for York University Students Best practices and protocols to support you in your online learning success.

5. Forming Online Study Groups

We do understand that it may be harder to find study partners in an online or remote learning course; however, it is not impossible and there are ways to find them virtually!

You can use the discussion forums on your course pages on the Moodle portal to reach your classmates and create your own study groups!

How can I use Zoom to work with my study group?

Once you have found your study partners, you can schedule a meeting using Zoom where your study group can virtually get together at the same time to actively discuss and work through material. You should also encourage all attendees to use their webcam and their microphone to fully participate.

For Synchronous Study Groups:

To get the most out of your synchronous meetings, the <u>Student Guide to Remote Learning</u> suggests that you do the following things:

- □ Set up an agenda to structure your meeting, and goals for what you would like to accomplish.
- □ If there are many participants in the meeting, delegate a speaker who can assign speaking times to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak.
- Delegate a secretary who can take notes during the meeting.
- Encourage everyone to use file sharing, such as Google Drive, Slack, or Trello, to comment and work through material synchronously, rather than exchange successive versions of documents via email.

For Asynchronous Study Groups:

Some group members like to study independently from one another but like to keep Zoom in the background.

Tip: To make sure that you are still checking once in a while with your group members, the Student Guide to Remote Learning suggests to set a timer and use the Pomodoro Technique, where you study for 25 minutes and then interact with the others during a 5-minute break.

Zoom Features for Working Collaboratively suggested by the Student Guide to Remote Learning:

- □ Video conference: you can use your camera and microphone to interact through video conference. Adjust your video layout to change how many participants you see at once.
- Chat You can use the chat feature to speak with everyone in the group or to send a private message to another participant.
- Screen share Share your screen to show everything on your computer, a file, or even an interactive whiteboard. Remember to turn on the sound sharing option if you want to include audio.
- Annotation Allows participants to write, draw, and add stamps to the whiteboard or to a file that is being shared.
- □ File sharing Upload a file from your computer or share a collaborative file from Google Drive or One Drive that you can edit together.

Links to Instructions for Popular File Sharing Platforms:

- Google Drive
- **One Drive**
- Slack
- Trello

If you need more information on how to use Zoom for your remote study groups, you can always refer to the video tutorials on Zoom at YorkU, or browse the Online Learning Protocol for York University Students.

Where can I find more help with working in a group?

If you are feeling socially anxious or a little unsure on how to tackle group work in a virtual environment, the Learning Skills Services can offer you great workshops and resources!

Workshops & Appointments (Registration Required)

- Group Work: Learning Skills Services Workshop
- Peer Academic Coaching: Learning Skills Services 1:1 Appointment

Resources to Explore on Your Own

- Learning Skill Services Resources for Success: Group work tips and resources
- Learn to work well with others: Teamwork is one of the top transferable skills valued by employers.

6. Academic Integrity

It happens to all of us to worry from time to time about plagiarism. We all want to make sure that we are following the proper guidelines when researching and citing sources in our work.

Of course, you should never under any circumstances plagiarize someone else's work!

Here are a few tips to help you in avoiding falling into the trap of plagiarism:

- Be well prepared, read the instructions, plan, and manage your time well.
- □ Follow all the instructions, and only use what is permitted.
- □ Collaborate with other students only to the extent permitted by the instructors.
- □ Make sure to cite all the work (including translations) that came from others.
- Use previous work only if you have received permission from your instructors.
- □ While you work with others, make sure that your group also respects all the rules of conduct and academic integrity.
- □ When in doubt, don't be shy and always ask your instructors. They will be happy to clarify a few things, and make sure that you are on the right track!

If you would like to find more information about how to avoid plagiarism or how to properly cite your work, you can browse York University's rules of conduct and academic integrity.

7. Feeling Stressed: 5 Tips for Adapting to Studying Remotely

You will find down below a list of tips suggested by the Student Guide to Remote Learning that will help you manage your stress and allow you to enjoy your remote learning experience to the fullest!

Keep a Routine:

- □ Stick to a routine. When studying at home, having a scheduled routine will help establish some structure centred around your learning. Even if your online course does not have a designated lecture time, create one for yourself in your personal timetable.
- □ Stay balanced. Make sure that you separate study time from leisure. It is important that you set boundaries around your work time and to create a schedule that balances time for studying with time for other activities that help you relax and recharge. If you live with others, talk about each of your schedules and what they will look like in your home environment.

- □ Focus on one task at a time. Though this might sound counterintuitive, multitasking will likely cause you to take longer to complete your tasks, make mistakes, and remember less of the material. It is much wiser to break down your tasks into manageable steps to stay on track and get things done, especially because it is easy to feel distracted and overwhelmed when things get stressful.
- □ Space out your studying. While you may have already experienced the dreadful feeling of pulling an all-nighter, resist the urge to cram. Spread out the work that you have to complete for each class. For example, if you have 6 hours of work to do for one course, it will be more effective to work on that material for 1–2 hours over 3–5 days instead of all 6 hours in one day.
- □ Be aware of your energy levels. Ask yourself whether you work best in the morning, afternoon, or evening. Schedule your most challenging tasks at the time of day that you work best.

Create a Study Space:

- □ **Organize your materials.** Take some time to ask yourself what you will need to get your work done. Store all of your course materials and any supplies you need in your study space so that you have them nearby when you need them.
- Designate a space. Having a study space that is separate from where you sleep or play can get you into the mindset of working while in the space, but taking a break from thinking about schoolwork when you leave the space. Even if you don't have a designated area for studying, you can pack up your materials once you are done studying for the day to help create the division between work and play.
- □ Create your study environment. Think about your preferred study space. Is it outside of your home? If so, try to create a similar environment with the characteristics you like best about that space (e.g., noise level, temperature, lighting) at home.
- Leave your study area when you take a break.

Be an Active Learner:

- □ Keep up to date. Actively check your YorkU email, your course eClass site, and the York University website.
- □ Find out how you can communicate with your professors and your peers. Will there be designated times when the class logs on together? Is the instructor hosting virtual office hours? What platform will you be using?
- Participate in lectures and discussions. Take advantage of opportunities to participate in your courses. Engage in chats, discussion groups, and quizzes, and remember that you can create your own online meetings and chats with classmates to continue the discussion.

Find Your Motivation:

- Intrinsic motivation. Think about why you picked this course and what you find interesting about it. Getting excited about the course material and the outlined objectives will help you to stay motivated.
- □ **Extrinsic motivation.** Use breaks and rewards as extrinsic motivators. Treat yourself with something that makes you smile after reaching the goals that you set for yourself.
- □ Try using the **Pomodoro Technique** for scheduling breaks and rewards. Many students find using the Pomodoro technique helps their productivity. Experiment with the times that work best for you. It could be a 50-minute work time followed by a 10-minute break, or 2 hours, followed by 20 minutes it's up to you.

Maintain Balance:

- Stay in touch with friends and family. Create a plan to stay in touch with your loved ones if you are living apart. Activities like setting up a regular phone call with a family member or scheduling a virtual dinner with your friends can help you feel closer to home.
- Stay socially connected with YorkU and fellow students while physically apart. Make good use of video conferencing platforms such as Zoom for both studying and socializing. Look out for information about great events that many campus organizations (colleges, clubs, peer mentoring, peer tutoring, etc.) host online.
- □ **Talk it out.** It is completely understandable and expected that you will encounter a lot of emotions while you are adjusting to remote learning. Confide in a friend or someone that you trust and talk through what you are feeling. We're all in this together!
- Be kind to yourself and others. Stay considerate of yourself and other people. Different factors will affect your motivation, but practise empathy when dealing with yourself and others, and take some time to find self-care activities that make you happy.

Additional Resources

For more external support, take a look at the links below:

Workshops & Appointments (Registration Required):

- **Staying Motivated Working from Home** Learning Skills Services Workshop
- □ Time Management Learning Skills Services Workshop
- Peer Academic Coaching Learning Skills Services 1:1 Appointment

Resources to Explore on Your Own:

Adapting to Remote Learning (pdf) - A print-friendly version of the tips outlined on this web page.

- Student guide to Remote Learning YorkU information and resources for studying remotely
- Adjusting your study habits during COVID (pdf) University of Michigan
- Distance Learning Help: Success as a Work-from-Home Student University of Virginia

8. Conclusion

We hope that this guide helps you navigate this new journey of remote studying. Always remember that there are many individuals and resources at York that are ready and willing to support you! We wish you the best of success with your academic experience!

Check out these resources suggested by the Student Guide to Remote Learning for additional information:

COVID-19 Resources

- □ My Online Services A list of online methods for receiving YorkU services.
- □ YU Better Together Information, announcements, and FAQs about YorkU's phased return to campus.
- COVID-19 Resources A curated list of academic, career, social, and wellbeing resources.

Academic Support Resources

- □ Finding Scholarly Materials Online Finding YorkU Libraries materials during the temporary suspension of in-person services.
- Student Guide to Remote Learning Tips and resources for adapting to and navigating remote learning.
- □ Learning Skills Services Workshops Interactive webinars on learning skills topics. Registration is required.
- Learning Commons FAQs Frequently asked questions about accessing academic support services remotely at York.

Wellbeing Resources

- □ The 5 Ways to Wellbeing @ Home Simple practices that help you to build resilience, find balance, and boost your wellbeing.
- On Campus Wellbeing Resources for Students A list of on-campus programs and services for mental health and wellbeing.
- □ Community Wellbeing Resources for Students A list of community programs and services for mental health and wellbeing.