

**First, get your arms around your new schedule and “home classroom”.**

Getting your work done can be challenging when you don't have a classroom to meet in and friends to sit with. Online study can be very demanding, and most instructors help you by setting up regular class discussions and frequent assignment deadlines.

To avoid getting behind, **schedule a regular time and place for working on your course.** Think of it as class time. Plan for 2-3 hours per credit hour, per week. You should set aside time on at least 2-3 days every week, and put this schedule in your planner or digital calendar, just like you would any class you go to.

**Create a distraction free environment**—turn off email and cell phone while studying. Use a desk or table dedicated to coursework, and have everything you need at hand. Close the door and let your family know you are unavailable during your “class” time. Do your best to keep the appropriate windows open—quick looks at Facebook, ESPN, and CNN can be quite distracting when trying to focus on new material.

**Make sure you have the computer hardware and software needed for the course.** Your course's welcome area will have this information.

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**Next, become familiar with the course requirements and with support services available to you.**

Your course will have its own web site, usually on Blackboard. Take the time to **read all the welcome material, the course overview, and the activities or events you will be required to participate in (papers, projects, discussions, etc.)** Many students skip this step and pay for it later when planning and time management has been neglected. If you find anything at this point that seems daunting, give us a call at Learning Assistance. We can help you out!

Your course welcome materials will include a syllabus, which is an outline of topics covered, key due dates, and class policies, including grading system. Print out the syllabus and grading rubric and read it carefully, underlining the key requirements.

**Get a notebook, and set it up with tab dividers.** Put course policies, syllabus, and grading information in one tab. Your notebooks are important as a resource for future licensing exam study.

Create other tabs for each learning module, where you will store your reading or viewing notes, as well as any written assignments or material you download and comments or feedback from your instructor. Put some lined paper in each tab for taking notes, keeping a record of important learnings for each module, keeping ideas for future papers, or making notes of instructor feedback

**Read the course schedule information and put all deadlines and due dates in your planner.**

Success in many online courses classes depends heavily on both reading and writing skills. Learning assistance services provides you with support in both areas. How does it work? We can call you by phone, call you with Skype or Google chat, or work by email to discuss postings or papers you have drafted. Check out our support services by clicking [here](#).

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*For help in organizing your notebooks or taking notes in class, contact UNE's Learning Specialist on your campus:*

*Portland Campus:* Nora Krevans, 221-4259 or via e-mail, [nkrevans@une.edu](mailto:nkrevans@une.edu)

*University Campus:* Lorraine Pecchia, 602-2398, or via e-mail, [lpecchia@une.edu](mailto:lpecchia@une.edu)

*Online Campus:* Henri Moser, 207-221-4352, or via e-mail, [hmoser@une.edu](mailto:hmoser@une.edu)

**Get accustomed to academic reading**

**before class starts.** Practice sustained reading: read for two or more hours at a time, beginning with one, and then working up to two.

**Learn the PQ4R method** of reading for information and learn how to adapt it to journal articles, anthologies, web publications, and other material you need to read for papers or presentations. Click for an introduction to PQ4R or contact a [Learning Specialist](#) for a personal consultation.

**Practice participating in chat room**

**discussions** on a serious topic you care about. If you can't find one, go to the web sites of newspapers or a topical blog and post comments on articles. Read the postings of other readers.

**Take the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory** to understand your learning preferences and how to make your studying more efficient. UNE provides individual consultation to each student upon completion of the inventory. Contact a [Learning Specialist](#) to take the Myers-Briggs online.

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