

# YOUR GUIDE TO SUCCESS IN UA CLASSES DURING COVID



## A MESSAGE FROM BIG AL:



We all are experiencing changes here at the Capstone. With change comes the opportunity to grow. This guide will help you to increase your success to “Roll with the Tide.” Be patient with yourself, your classmates, your groups, as well as your Professors, who are all taking part in this journey alongside of you. This success guide will help you navigate the Fall Semester at the University of Alabama. Remember, you are not alone.

We are in this together.

## THIS GUIDE WILL TALK ABOUT:

- COMMUNICATION
- ENVIRONMENT
- MULTITASKING
- VIDEO LECTURES
- ORGANIZATION
- STRATEGIES
- ONLINE GROUPS
- STAYING CONNECTED
- SELF-CARE

Since more of your coursework and teamwork have been moved to online and remote learning, here are some strategies to keep in mind:

## 1. COMMUNICATION

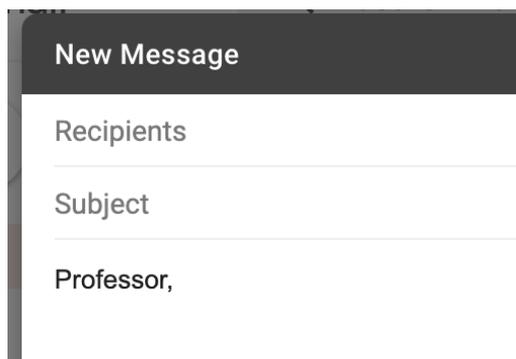
When communicating with your Professor:

- Make sure you have read your syllabus to understand expectations.
- Clearly state any questions towards the professor.
- Use a professional tone when communicating with a professor.
- Find when zoom office hours are being held to get further assistance.
- Let your professor know if you run into any issues. They won't know that you are in need of assistance if you don't communicate with them.
- When emailing about a specific class, put the class and section number in the subject line.

When communicating with classmates:

- Use blackboard email. or roster tool to find emails of other classmates.

Remember: Communication requires effort and adaptability. Communication will lead to connecting with others.



## 2. ENVIRONMENT

Your environment is essential to the way you learn. Having an environment that will help you when learning is important to having a successful semester.

- Use an area that will eliminate your distractions.
- Have a structured environment.
- The University of Alabama has libraries on campus that you can utilize if you do not have a suitable environment.

Example:

Have a specific place to study that is free of clutter, away from others and a space that is quiet to help aid in concentration. This could be a place in your room at home such as a designated desk space in your room. Try to avoid using a comfortable space like your bed.

Remember: Our Environment influences our performance.

## 3. MULTITASKING

When starting a new semester, we experience cognitive overload and start to jump from task to task. We begin to feel frantic and want to work on multiple things at once. Make sure to slow down and do one thing at a time.

The downside of multitasking:

- Takes longer: You are spending more time trying to reengage in an assignment than to sit down & just do it.
- More likely to make a mistake.
- Taking in less information: Your brain is divided into different tasks and not focused on just one. This makes an individual less able to take in information and store it in their memory.

Instead:

- Take on thing at a time: accomplish an assignment before you start on the next.
- Take breaks in between to restart your brain for another task.

## 4. VIDEO LECTURE

Video lectures, both live and pre-recorded, are a common feature in online classes. The lectures are designed to help you learn the material as if you were in the actual classroom. Whether you are in a pre-recorded class, synchronous video lecture class with zoom, synchronous hybrid video lecture class, or in a class that involves a combination of all of the above, these points can be useful for you.

- Stick to your professor's schedule as much as you can. Even if the lecture is pre-recorded, go ahead and use your assigned class time to view it.
- Staying on a schedule will help you have a feeling of normalcy and prevent you from falling behind.
- Find out how to ask questions. If the lecture is live, is there a chat feature? If the lecture is pre-recorded, is there a discussion forum?
- Remember that your professor and/or your TA also have office hours. Make it a priority to attend these hours to ask questions.
- Even if the class does not require you to login to the video lectures for a grade, attend to be sure you are getting all materials and staying up to date.
- Always take notes during your video lectures, just as you would in the classroom. Think of them less like a movie or TV show and more like an opportunity to learn what you need to know for upcoming assignments and tests.

## 5. ORGANIZATION

With the overwhelming feeling that the first few weeks of class brings, here are some things to keep in mind:

Are in-person parts of the class changing?

- What are the in-person parts of this course? (lecture, lab, hybrid, etc)
- Where can you find it or how do you access it? (zoom, blackboard, etc)
- Is it at a specific time or can you watch it anytime?

Are assignments changing?

- Is how you're submitting your assignments changing?
- Are certain assignments being given virtually?

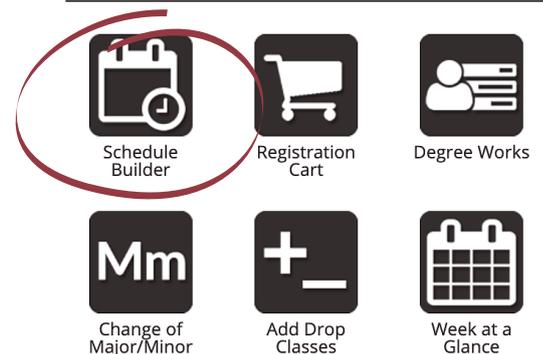
What should you do if you need help?

- Is your course offering virtual office hours? When and on what day?

What platform?

- Is there an online forum for asking questions? (do you need to go to a discussion board, email, zoom sessions, etc.)
- Utilize a planner to keep your classes and outside activities in order.
- Set out a time to accomplish each classes work.

### Student Academic Services

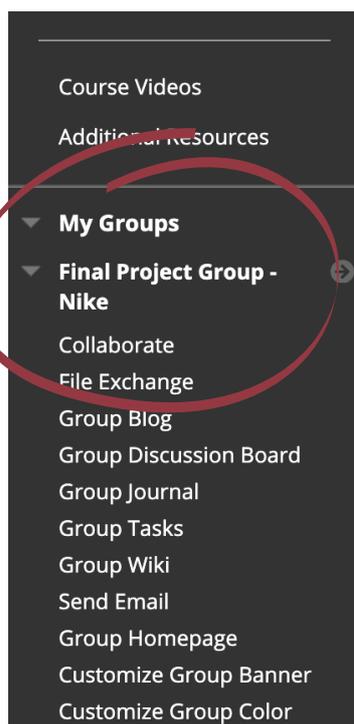


## 6. STRATEGIES

Replacing old strategies is important to help you form habits that will lead you to succeed.

For example:

- If you usually study in a coffee shop or library, ask yourself what kind of environment helps you study. See if you can recreate that.
- If you always study in groups, try a virtual study session with your group. (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Blackboard Collaborate, etc.)
- If you normally schedule in person office hours for help on assignments, schedule virtual office hours on zoom to get that same visual learning help.

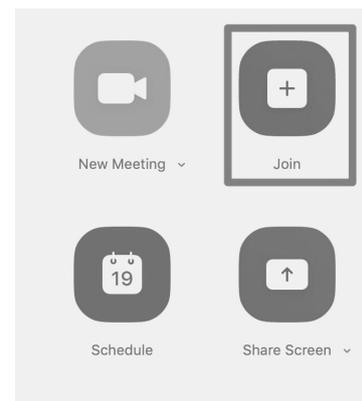


## 7. ONLINE GROUPS

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

- Try not to procrastinate. Stay on track and engaged with other group members.
- Meet regularly, especially if you usually touch base during class or lab. Consider a quick text on your group chat about progress every couple of days. Meet virtually once a week to work closely together.
- Set a purpose for meetings in advance. Take notes in a shared document (ex. google docs) so you can all contribute and follow along.
- 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.

You can set up zoom calls, GroupMe's, and work in Teams on Microsoft. The resources to engage with groups are endless. Make use of these!



## 8. STAYING CONNECTED

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 video calls with friends and family. Talking with loved ones is often really helpful when you're stressed or nervous about something.
- Take a break and go outside.
- Use Collaborate in Blackboard. to connect with classmates to talk through a tough problem.
- Attend virtual office hours or study groups so that you can stay up-to-date on your coursework.



## 9. SELF-CARE

Self care includes your sleep cycle, physical activity, and breaks in your schedule. It is important during this time to keep yourself healthy considering everything that is happening.

Key Factors in ensuring Self Care:

Sleep:

- Sleep cycle: strive for 8-10 hours of sleep each night.
- Eliminate distractions in order to prepare your brain for sleep.
- Get up everyday at the same time.

Activity:

- Utilize your resources to get active; workout classes online, being active outside, and doing exercises at home.
- Get outside to raise your levels of Serotonin.
- Be active to release endorphins.



You are already accomplishing big changes. Take each day one step at a time. This is a new experience for you, your friends, classmates as well as your instructors. The University of Alabama is here for you and will help guide you through the Fall semester.

We are in this together

Roll Tide

## *ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:*

Please remember that the University of Alabama offers FREE Tutoring and Academic Coaching:

[Academic Coaching](#)

[University of Alabama Tutoring Schedule](#)

- [UA's Updates on COVID-19](#)
- [CDC: COVID-19](#)
- [Alabama Public Health Updates](#)
- [Tuscaloosa City Guidelines & Updates for COVID-19](#)
- [Capstone Center for Student Success](#)



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