Preparing for distant learning – tips and tricks for online classroom

Dear Tigers, as we all embrace the new ways of delivering classes, RIT has prepared some useful tips and tricks for you. Keep on reading!

1. Getting started – a checklist

Here is what you can do now to shift to alternative methods of instruction.
- **Review your new syllabi.** The new syllabus that your instructor will share/has shared will be somewhat different than the syllabus you received at the beginning of the semester. If you have any questions about new due dates or any assignments, contact your instructor. Include the name of your class in the subject line of your email.
- **Reach out for help and support.** Your instructor’s office hours may have changed. Make sure you know when they will be available to talk and answer questions and the best way to contact them (phone, email, Skype, etc.).
- **Check your university email.** Do this every morning and throughout the day.
- **Stay in Touch.** Just because you are learning remotely does not mean you have to be alone. Use online tools such as Zoom, or other virtual meeting spaces to connect with one or more classmates at a time.

2. Communicate with your instructors and staff regularly

We have all just made a quick adjustment to a new way of doing things. If you run into any difficulties with the course materials, course work, or any new tools that your instructor might be using, contact your instructor right away. They want to hear from you.

Your academic advisor and other staff members are another resource for you, and will be happy to offer guidance and point you toward additional support.

Be sure to also respond to outreach from your instructors and advisor, whether they contact you through email, myCourses, Starfish, etc. You have an entire team of RIT people who are rooting for you, and supporting you. Now is the time to use them. You can find their contacts [HERE](#).

3. Be patient and flexible

RIT has all the resources and knowledge to deliver top quality education using alternative methods of course delivery, and our faculty and staff are prepared for it. However bear in mind that we all are facing a novel situation. We kindly ask you to be flexible and patient if something does not go as planned. If that occurs, trust that all of us are doing our best to remove obstacles and provide you with the best service possible.

We all need to work together on this – to make it work 😊.
A few more practical advice on how to prepare for online learning in a few days is available HERE.

4. Using myCourses

Here are three helpful tips for using myCourses as your online classroom.

- **Check myCourses regularly.** Try to log into myCourses and check all of your classes at least once a day. Check to see if there is new course material or if there is an upcoming due date. Your instructor might be using a new tool to provide content. If you have questions, contact your instructor.

- **Manage myCourses notifications.** You can be notified by myCourses when new content is posted, when a grade is released, and so on. You can receive these notifications by text message or email. Information on adjusting your myCourses notifications:
  - Manage myCourses Notifications
  - myCourses Notification - Video Tutorial Sign Language

- **myCourses time zone.** If you have traveled home, and might be in a different time zone from Croatia, please beware of the time zone set in your myCourses. myCourses due times for Quizzes and Assignment folders are most likely displayed as Croatian time. If you would like to adjust the time zone for myCourses, follow these steps:
  - In myCourses, click on your name, then choose Account Settings.
  - Scroll down to select your time zone.
  - Once you select your time zone, the due date times displayed in myCourses for Quizzes, Assignments and other items will not match due date times in printed materials such as the syllabus or announcements the instructor might post. You’ll need to remember that you have selected your home time zone as the default.

5. Zoom videoconferencing

For live (or synchronous) meetings, RIT is providing Zoom Video Conferencing as an option for students and faculty. This software allows for video meetings, and a variety of other interaction options during this transition from face-to-face learning to remote.

- **Zoom has been integrated with myCourses for easy access.** Full access to Zoom will be available through the web portal at https://rit.zoom.us

- You will be asked to grant permission for Zoom to manage your myCourses Calendar the first time you access the Zoom integration on myCourses.

- When the meeting is scheduled to begin, you may join, and will be prompted to download Zoom. Open the Zoom app, or start Zoom in your browser.

- Once the meeting has begun, your instructors will be able to broadcast their voice or image via their computer’s internal microphone or camera. They will also have the ability to share their computer screens, which will allow for the presentation of documents, videos, and slide presentations.
Zoom also provides functionality to encourage engagement such as polling and chat tools.

- Zoom will be a great way to be “together” during social distancing safety precautions. Students will have access to use Zoom for their own meetings through the web portal, https://rit.zoom.us. Students will not be able to schedule and manage meetings through the myCourses integration. If using Zoom is new to you, here’s a helpful Getting Started page which will walk you through, step-by-step.

If you need support:

- Issues with login, emails and accounts: Contact the ITS Service Desk: its@croatia.rit.edu

- Your Lab Monitors are also available to assist you with minor technical issues concerning Zoom, BlueJeans, Duo MFA, SIS, myCourses, etc.. Please do not hesitate to contact them:

  Zagreb Campus
  - Iva Bubicic ib3012@rit.edu
  - Stjepan Gazde sxg6840@rit.edu
  - Josipa Puljko jxp5761@rit.edu
  - Stjepan Taritas sxt5935@rit.edu
  - Anamarija Vidosevic axv3903@rit.edu
  - Ivan Vujanic ixv8678@rit.edu

  Dubrovnik Campus
  - Klara Lucijanovic kxl9597@gr.rit.edu
  - Teo Surković txs4072@gr.rit.edu
  - Antonio Miljan am1253@gr.rit.edu
  - Mateo Lucic mxl3773@gr.rit.edu

- Resources and tutorials
  - Zoom issues and support: https://rit.zoom.us/
    https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us
    https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials?
  - BlueJeans support: https://wiki.rit.edu/display/SaundersTechnicalSupport/BlueJeans%2BVideo%2BConferencing

6. Tips for organizing your work

Time management and organization are key to successful online and distance learning. This Study Tool Kit has resources to help you create a foundation for productive learning.
We have found students who develop a predictable routine and work habits achieve academic success. As you transition to online learning, here are some key habits to cultivate:

- **Create a daily routine.** This will keep you on schedule to complete assignments. Set up regular times for course work, and stick with these. You may even want to follow your regular class schedule even if your classes will not be held online live.

- **Find and organize a dedicated workspace.** Try to find a space where you can focus on your work. It may not be ideal, or perfect, but using the same space each day will help support your learning routine.

- **Get organized.** Take the time to map out your work and deadlines so you stay on track.

7. **Library resources are available online**

FAQ on current library services due to COVID-19 are available [HERE](#). Of special note for faculty and students is the section on “What library resources are available online?” In addition to our usual e-resources, we are listing e-resources from various publishers that are now free for all to use through the end of the semester. More of these notifications are available daily so this site will be updated frequently.

Here are some additional resources for staying organized while studying online.

**Videos**
- [Time Management for Online Students](#) (6:00)
- [Organizational Tips for Online College Classes](#) (6:17)
- [Top Tips for Student Success in Online Courses](#) (7:23)
- [Online Tips and Tricks! Vlog 73](#) (7:59)

**Articles**
- [Four Time Management Tips for Online Students](#)
- [Five Essential Online Learning Strategies](#)
- [Five-step Strategy for Student Success with Online Learning](#)
- [Eight Strategies for Getting the Most Out of an Online Class](#)

We hope you find these tips useful, and if you have some you would like to share – let us know and we can post them!

Good luck and stay safe 😊

RIT Croatia team