

WELCOME TO WASHU!

# ARE YOU READY TO START YOUR SEMESTER STRONG?



## Set Yourself Up for Success in the Classroom

- **Know where your classes are:** Before classes start, visit all of your classrooms so you can learn exactly where they are and map out the most convenient route to get there. (Remember, the passing period is only 10 minutes!)
- **Take good notes:** Try out a few different [note-taking styles and strategies](#) until you find one that works for you. Don't assume the class will be recorded; paraphrase key points to keep up in real time and improve retention.
- **Engage in class discussions:** Before class, review any material that you know will be discussed. Make note of any interesting, controversial, or confusing details that can help you formulate questions for the class.
- **Take advantage of office hours:** Instructors and TAs/As are here to help you! Come prepared with a question or two and don't be afraid to take notes or ask follow-up questions as needed. Some courses also offer TA/Al-led review sessions prior to exams, and these are a great opportunity to seek support and clarification.
- **Show grace to your classmates:** Some of your peers may continue practicing social distancing and/or wearing a mask, even if they are not required to do so. Please respect their choices and boundaries. Remember, everyone's comfort level with in-person interaction during the pandemic is different, and that's okay.
- **Reach out for help if you need it:** If you feel lost or like you're falling behind, contact your instructor, your advisor, the Learning Center, or another campus resource as early as possible – they're here to help!



## Stay on Top of Your Schedule

- **Compile key information:** As soon as you receive your syllabi, enter key dates and deadlines (exams, quizzes, big assignments, etc.) into your calendar or planner so you'll know what to expect throughout the semester.
- **Plan ahead and prioritize:** Set aside a few minutes at the start of each week to [plot out your schedule](#) and/or [prioritize your to-do list](#).
- **Give yourself enough time to study:** A good rule of thumb is for each hour you spend in class each week, you should expect to spend an additional 2-3 hours on homework or studying outside of class.
- **Expect the unexpected:** Leave some open or flexible time on your calendar to make sure you can compensate for unexpected delays and take advantage of unplanned opportunities.
- **Find a balance:** As you get involved in extracurricular activities, aim for quality over quantity when choosing which ones you want to prioritize and be sure to give yourself enough time for studying and self care.
- **Schedule self-care:** No matter how busy you are, set aside some time each week to relax and recharge.



## Optimize Your Study Strategies

- **Find a place to study on campus:** You won't always have time to go back to your dorm! The DUC and Olin Library are great places to start, but don't be afraid to check out [other libraries](#) and public spaces, too.
- **Set specific goals for studying:** This will help you stay on task and keep track of your progress.
- **Connect with (or form) a study group:** Talk to your classmates, instructors, and advisors to gauge interest and learn about existing groups; chances are, if you're looking for support, other students are too. In addition to helping you learn course content, your peers can help hold you accountable to meet your academic goals.
- **Use evidence-based study strategies:** [Improve your processing](#) and [study more efficiently and effectively](#) by incorporating spaced retrieval practice into your routine. You can do this by using practice problems, flashcards, or other resources to quiz yourself (without your notes!) a few times each week.
- **Study the way you will be tested:** Find or create a study space that is similar to an exam room – quiet, well-lit, and relatively free of distractions. If possible, try studying in the building or room where the exam will take place.



## Ace Your Timed, Closed-Note, In-Person Exams

- **Inform your instructor of any relevant academic accommodations at least 7 days before the test/exam:** View your Accommodation Letter or apply for testing accommodations at [disabilityresources.wustl.edu](#).
- **Prioritize your health and well-being:** Get a good night's sleep (7-9 hours), eat a good breakfast, and stick to your usual routine as much as possible on the day of the exam.
- **Know what you need to bring:** Prior to the exam date, check your syllabus or talk to your instructor to find out what supplies or resources (student ID, pencils, calculator, limited notes, etc.) you should bring to the exam.
- **Arrive early and don't forget to breathe:** Plan to arrive 20-30 minutes early to give yourself time to find the exam room and settle in. Take some deep breaths, meditate, or walk yourself through a grounding exercise to [improve your focus and reduce anxiety](#).
- **Preview the test:** As soon as the test starts, write down any relevant formulas in the margins and skim through the test to see what kinds of questions and topics are included. Use this information to decide how to manage your time – How long can you afford to spend on each question? Are there any "easy" questions to start with?
- **Review and reflect after the test:** Ask yourself – What went well? What didn't? What did you learn that could help you on the next exam? After you receive a grade and feedback from your instructor, [review your work](#) to see how you can learn from your mistakes and build on your strengths moving forward.

LEARN MORE OR SCHEDULE A ONE-ON-ONE APPOINTMENT  
WITH AN ACADEMIC SKILLS PEER COACH AT  
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