Studying at UCalgary from outside Canada

Resources and services related to online learning.

Learning online at the University of Calgary

Web Resources

The Student Success Centre offers **online workshops and resources** to support your online learning. Topics include getting started with online learning, maintaining your motivation, managing your time, and approaches to online tests and exams.

Introduction to Online Learning D2L module

This module provides University of Calgary students studying online with opportunities to learn about and practice with the common technology tools associated with online courses.

REGISTER HERE

Academic Support Appointments

You are also welcome to book a one-on-one appointment with Jennifer Parsons, Academic Development Specialist for International Students. Some early morning and evening appointments are available to accommodate your time zone.
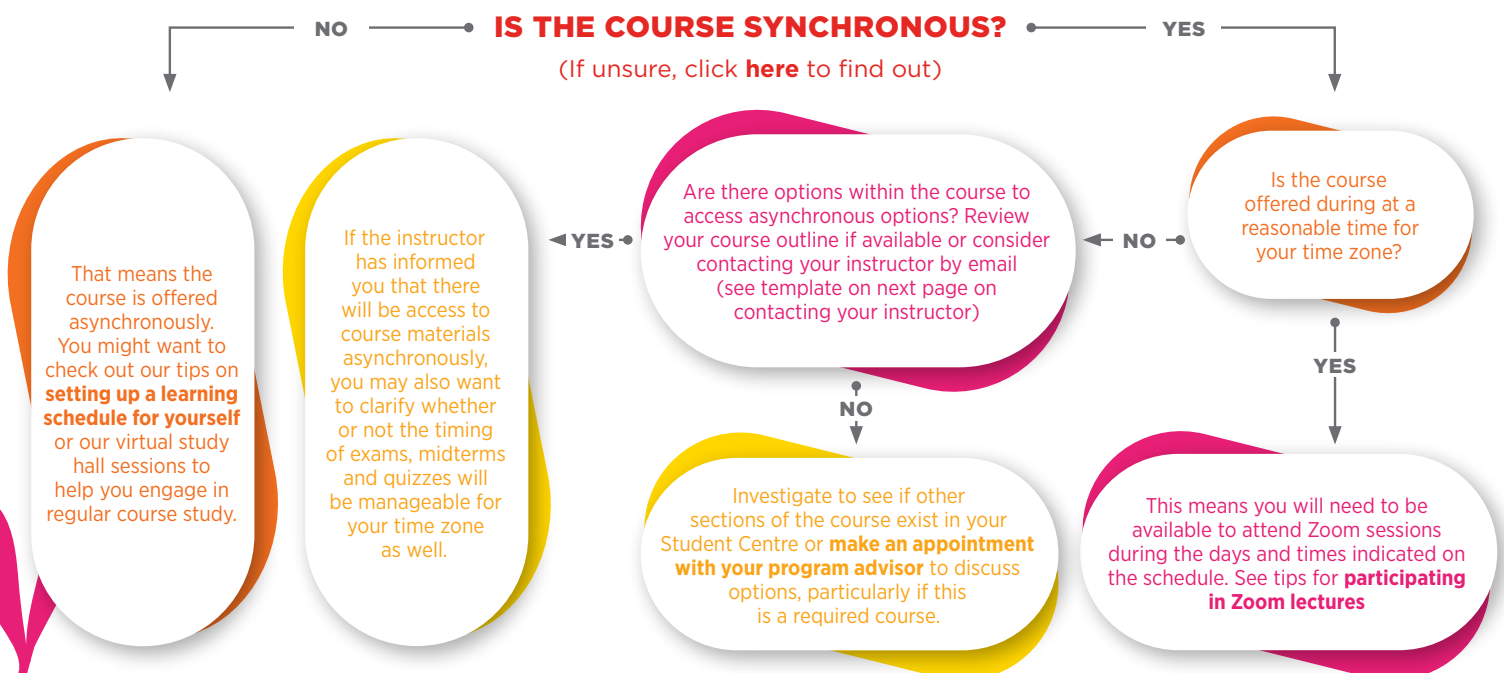
BOOK AN APPOINTMENT

Student Success Centre also offers **language and writing supports**.

Selecting courses

Academic advisors within your faculty are available to support you in selecting courses for your degree. Up to date information on how to access advisors in your faculty can be found **here**. Below are some quick tips on navigating course selection within your time zone.

Classes may be offered synchronously (at a set time when students attend online) or asynchronously (lectures are recorded and students can watch it at a time they choose).

NO ← **IS THE COURSE SYNCHRONOUS?** → YES
(If unsure, click **here** to find out)

◄ YES • Are there options within the course to access asynchronous options? Review your course outline if available or consider contacting your instructor by email (see template on next page on contacting your instructor) ← NO ◄ Is the course offered during at a reasonable time for your time zone?

That means the course is offered asynchronously. You might want to check out our tips on **setting up a learning schedule for yourself** or our virtual study hall sessions to help you engage in regular course study.

If the instructor has informed you that there will be access to course materials asynchronously, you may also want to clarify whether or not the timing of exams, midterms and quizzes will be manageable for your time zone as well.

NO ↓

YES ↓

Investigate to see if other sections of the course exist in your Student Centre or **make an appointment with your program advisor** to discuss options, particularly if this is a required course.

This means you will need to be available to attend Zoom sessions during the days and times indicated on the schedule. See tips for **participating in Zoom lectures**
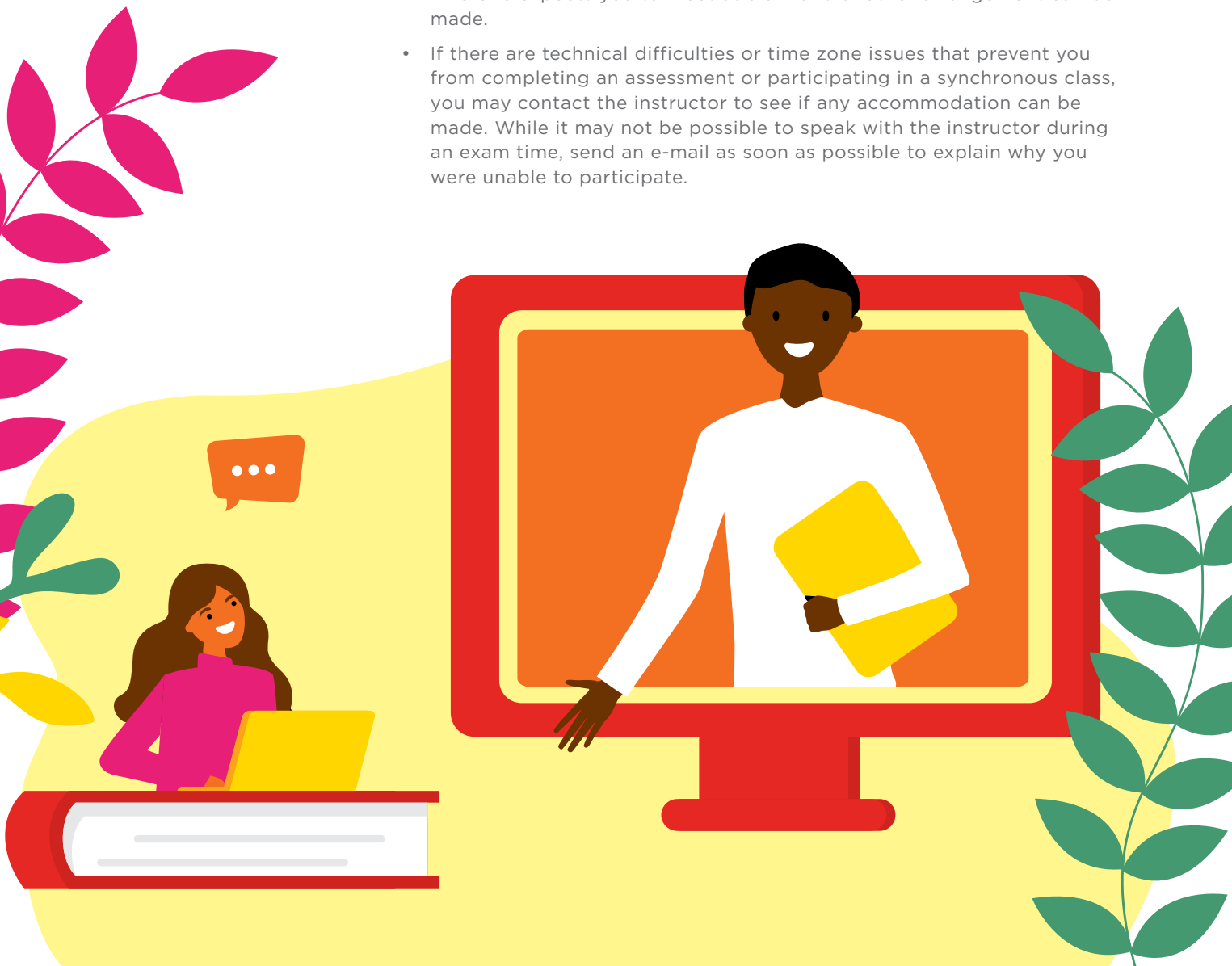
Communicating with your instructor

When should you contact your instructor?

- If you need clarification about course material or assignments and you cannot find the information yourself by checking your syllabus, assignment sheet, textbook or notes

- If you need to discuss your progress in class, test results, or difficulties with the lecture or readings.

Be proactive

We encourage you to be proactive in reaching out to your instructors. They may communicate to you how they would like to be contacted, for example, through email, within D2L or during office hours.

- Do not assume your instructors have time to talk to you right after class. Ask if they have a few minutes to answer a question for you. Online instructors may volunteer to stay a few minutes after each lecture. You could also make that request in the chat and see if they are available or can set up another time.

- If you need more than a couple of minutes, make an appointment. Many instructors will give their office hours on the course outline. These are the times that the instructor is available to give extra help to students, go over tests, or discuss difficulties you may be having. When studying from home in a different time zone, you may need to communicate through e-mail. Make sure your instructor is aware of the time difference – no one expects you to meet at 3 am and another arrangement can be made.

- If there are technical difficulties or time zone issues that prevent you from completing an assessment or participating in a synchronous class, you may contact the instructor to see if any accommodation can be made. While it may not be possible to speak with the instructor during an exam time, send an e-mail as soon as possible to explain why you were unable to participate.

Below is a basic e-mail template for such communications.

1. E-mail only from your University of Calgary email account (@ucalgary.ca)

2. E-mail should be courteous and to the point. Identify the reason for your e-mail in the subject line.

3. Greet your instructor by name.

4. Identify yourself clearly.

5. Explain the situation briefly, without additional remarks.

6. Provide any corroborating documents, screen shots, or actions you have taken.

7. Make your request politely without other comments.

8. Express appreciation for the instructor's extra work on your behalf.

9. Use a polite closing with your full name and student number (in the form the professor will know from class lists.

Email to Instructor Template (Issue with an online assessment)

Subject line: Internet unavailable at time of exam

Dear Professor Johnson

I am a student in MATH 249, Section 3. Because I am in my own country and there is not a consistent Internet connection, I was unable to access D2L for the whole test time on Thursday.
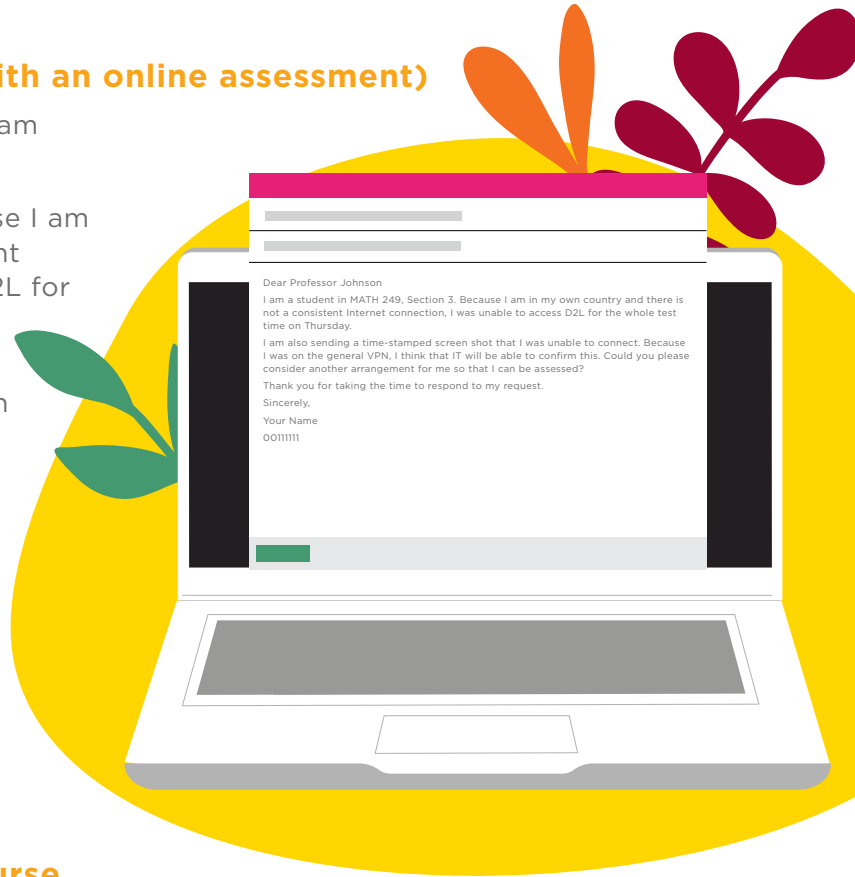
I am also sending a time-stamped screen shot that I was unable to connect. Because I was on the general VPN, I think that IT will be able to confirm this. Could you please consider another arrangement for me so that I can be assessed?

Thank you for taking the time to respond to my request.

Sincerely,

Your Name

00111111

Email to Instructor Template (Query regarding access to asynchronous course content for a course listed as synchronous)

Subject line: Query regarding access to asynchronous course content

Dear Professor Johnson,

I am a student in MATH 249, Section 3.
Because I am studying in my own country and the synchronous class time is during the middle of the night in my time zone, I am unable to attend live lectures.

I am writing to ask if it is possible to complete the course by accessing course materials asynchronously (e.g. via recorded lectures, flexible assessment times) within D2L.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to my request.

Sincerely,

Your Name

00111111

Technology

Students are expected to have access to equipment and technology for remote learning. These requirements can be found **here**.

Instructors at the University of Calgary use a variety of online learning platforms such as Zoom, D2L or Microsoft 365. There may be other learning platforms that you will need to use for learning.

It is helpful to be proactive in reviewing the course outline for each course to determine which technologies and equipment you will need to successfully complete all aspects of the course.

To learn more about university platforms you may be asked to visit **elearn.ucalgary.ca**.

Technical Issues

For technical issues (e.g. access to university sites, D2L, university network, WebWorld) students can **contact IT** through live chat, phone, or e-mail. If you are contacting IT outside university business hours, someone will respond the next day.

You may want to keep a record (e.g. screenshot, etc.) of the technical issue you experienced to provide IT and / or your instructor.

General concerns related to online learning

If you are experiencing a challenge related to your academic success (e.g. concerns about course load, grades, access to your instructor or course materials, reaching other departments within the university, etc.), please contact the Student Success Centre at success@ucalgary.ca or drop by our Virtual Front Desk, Monday to Friday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm MST **here**.

International Student Services

International students can also find many services and supports at I**nternational Student Services**.

If you are an international student intending to drop to part-time status, not registered in any courses, or considering going on a leave of absence, you must check with the Immigration Advisors in International Student Services so that you understand the implications and consequences on your immigration status in Canada before you make any changes to your course load.

Email: issimmigration@ucalgary.ca

Students accessing funding, loans, or scholarships

Switching to part-time status, not registering in any courses, or considering going on a leave of absence may impact your eligibility to access certain funding, loans, or scholarships. If you are a full-time student currently accessing any of these, contact your financial sponsor before you make any changes to your course load

Quick tips and resources for online learning success

Motivation

- Study in groups: connect with classmates or attend virtual study hall for accountability and support
- Use visible reminders such as sticky notes, a whiteboard, or a desktop calendar
- Reward yourself with small breaks between tasks and scheduled time for your enjoyable activities and self-care
- Create a helpful study environment: designated desk space, headphones, resources close by
- Minimize distractions: for example, dock your cellphone at a distance and turn off notifications
- Reframe demotivating tasks: it can be helpful to remind yourself of longterm goals, find new approaches to the material, and reflect on your own emotions and self-talk around the task and deadline
- Develop supports for stress and anxiety: the Student Success Centre and Student Wellness have online resources and you can meet with an advisor or counsellor for additional strategies

Time management

- Review your course outlines and enter all due dates, reading deadlines, and exams or quizzes into one calendar
- Estimate the time needed for each task
- Plan ahead: monthly, weekly, and daily task lists are helpful
- Use a visible calendar and map out a weekly and daily study schedule, balancing time for each course
- Work on large assignments and study for exams in manageable daily sections over a period of days or weeks
- Schedule time for health, social connection, and personal interests to avoid burnout