Helping the Traditional Student Become an Excellent Online Student
Or, the Coronavirus Challenge of 2020-22

https://pixabay.com/photos/change-wall-painter-house-painter-2850274

Dr. Tamara Fudge, Purdue University Global

Introduction

- Many traditional college students have been forced to learn online due to Covid. Others have chosen to learn online as a means of earning a degree. Whether forced or chosen, the student who has previously never learned online can be shocked at the commitment required, the intricacies of learning activities, course expectations, and other facets of learning from the relative comfort of home. Changes must occur both from student perspective and faculty action.

- Topics to be explored include student adaptation to self-management, availability of internet and appropriate hardware and software, digital literacy (the use of those technologies), understanding new modes of communication, and managing stress, family, and other commitments. Faculty must acclimate to delivering content in new ways, maintaining interaction with students, clearly communicating expectations, and performing outreach to address student concerns. This session will include helpful links along with recommendations.

https://pixabay.com/photos/laptop-woman-education-study-young-3087585
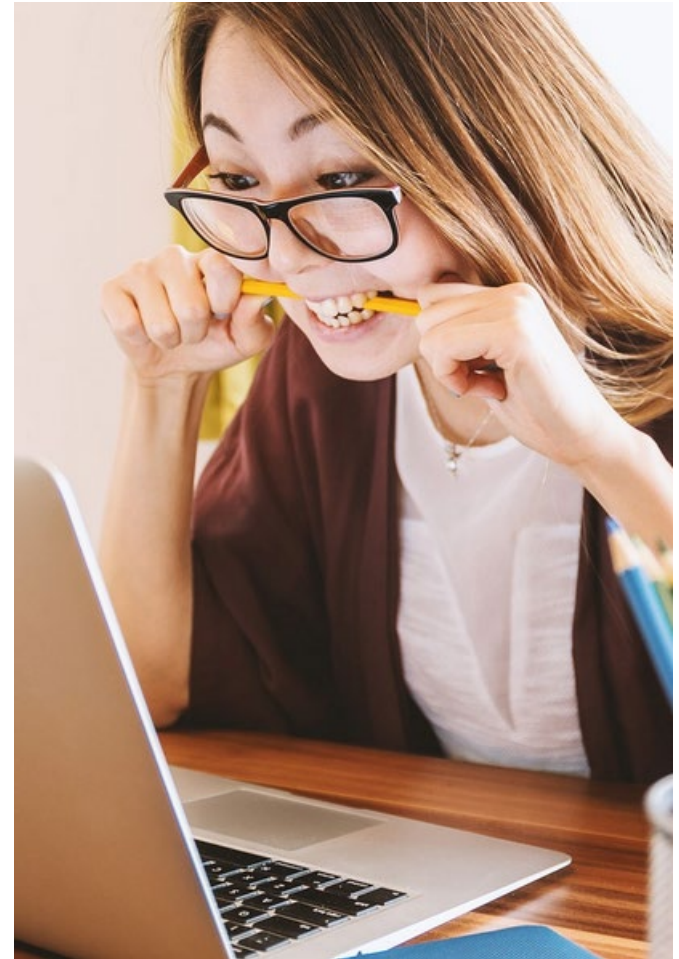
Quick Literature Review

Immediately noticed positives

- No need for travel time, school will provide IT support (Wetzlmair et al., 2021).

- Students can use smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktops and connect using Wifi as well as wired connections (Abou-Khalil et al., 2021)

Quick Literature Review

Challenges

- Both digital literacy of the student and course design must be considered (Samoylenko et al., 2022).

- Students may engage with course content differently, having difficulty adapting. They may also have issues with internet connectivity and have difficulty concentrating in the home environment (Kamble et al., 2021).

- Some content not quickly transferable to an online format in the early days of Covid (Wetzlmair et al. 2021).

- Some have problems adjusting to new digital tools (Friedman, 2020).

- "Psychological space and disconnect" when asynchronous; problems can be technical, social, or related to work (Iyer & Chapman, 2021, p. 206).
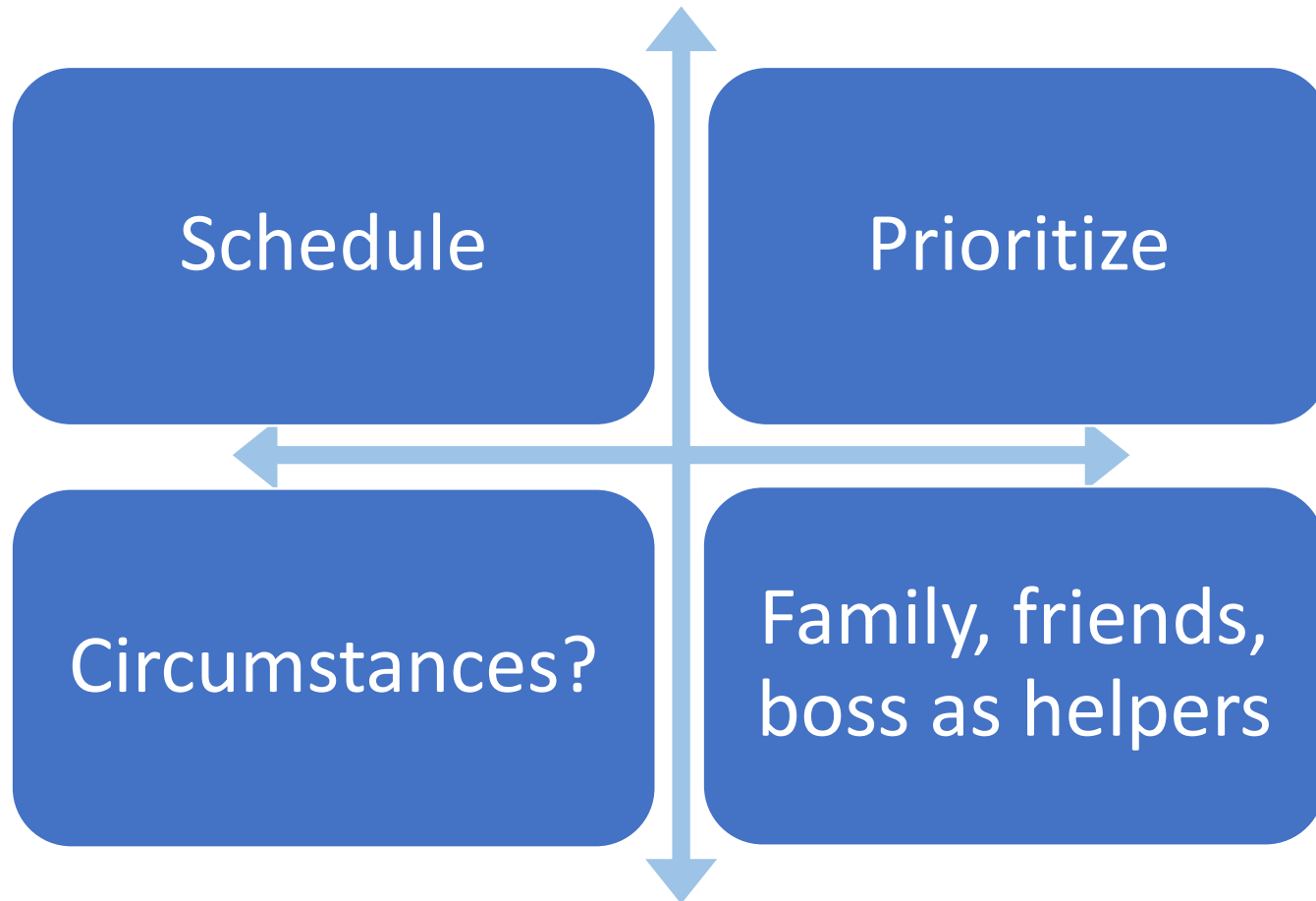
The Major Problems

For those who expected to learn in person, the change to online was unexpected and sudden.

At first, schools, faculty, and students lacked resources and know-how.

Students who choose online learning might still think it will be easier than in the traditional classroom.
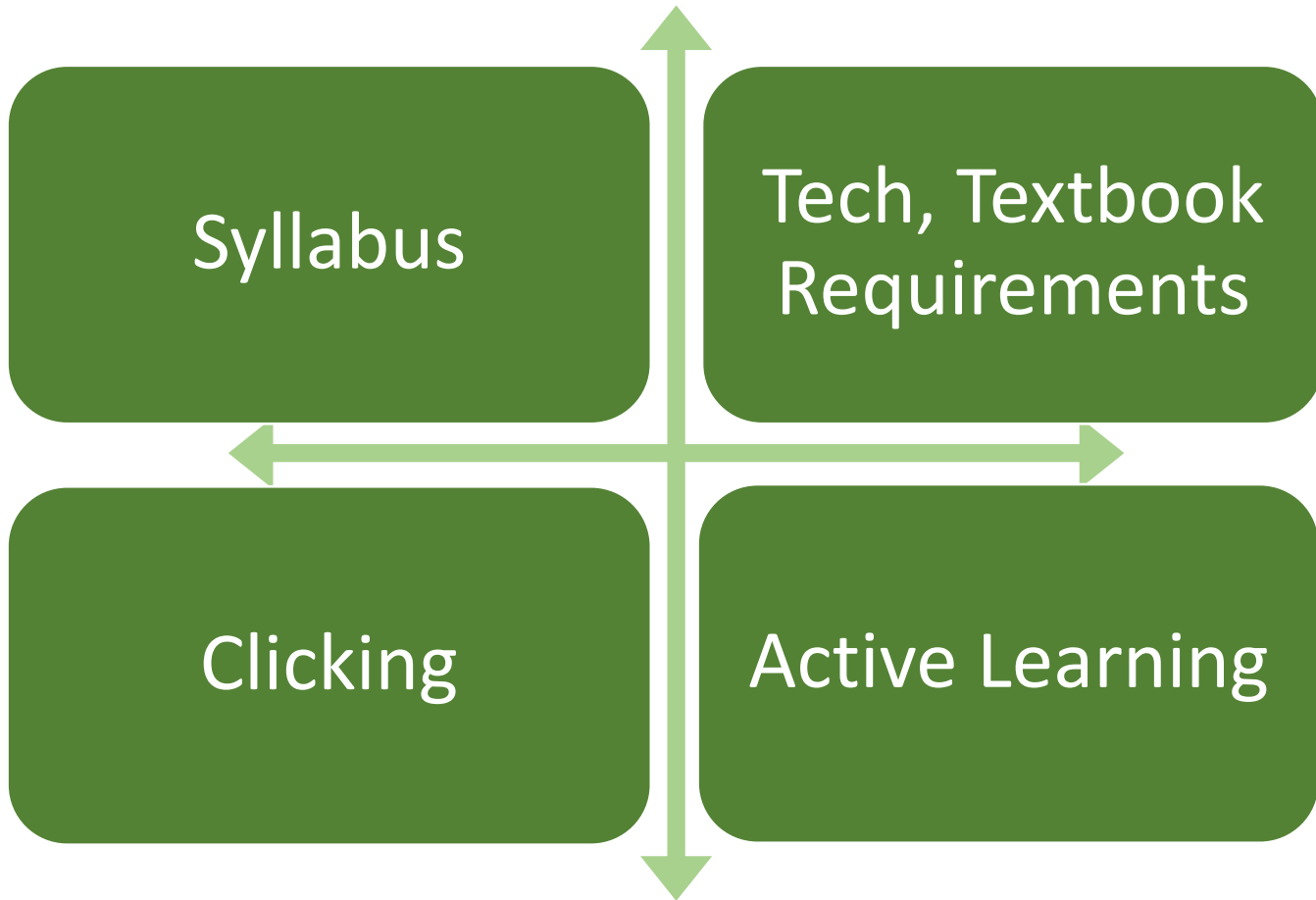

https://pixabay.com/photos/classroom-lecture-hall-college-1699745

https://pixabay.com/photos/woman-laptop-business-blogging-3190829

Self-Sufficiency: Time Management

Schedule

Prioritize

Circumstances?

Family, friends, boss as helpers

Understanding Course Content

Syllabus

Tech, Textbook Requirements

Clicking

Active Learning

Communication: The New "Office"

Course or Prof's modes

School email

Questions

Netiquette rules
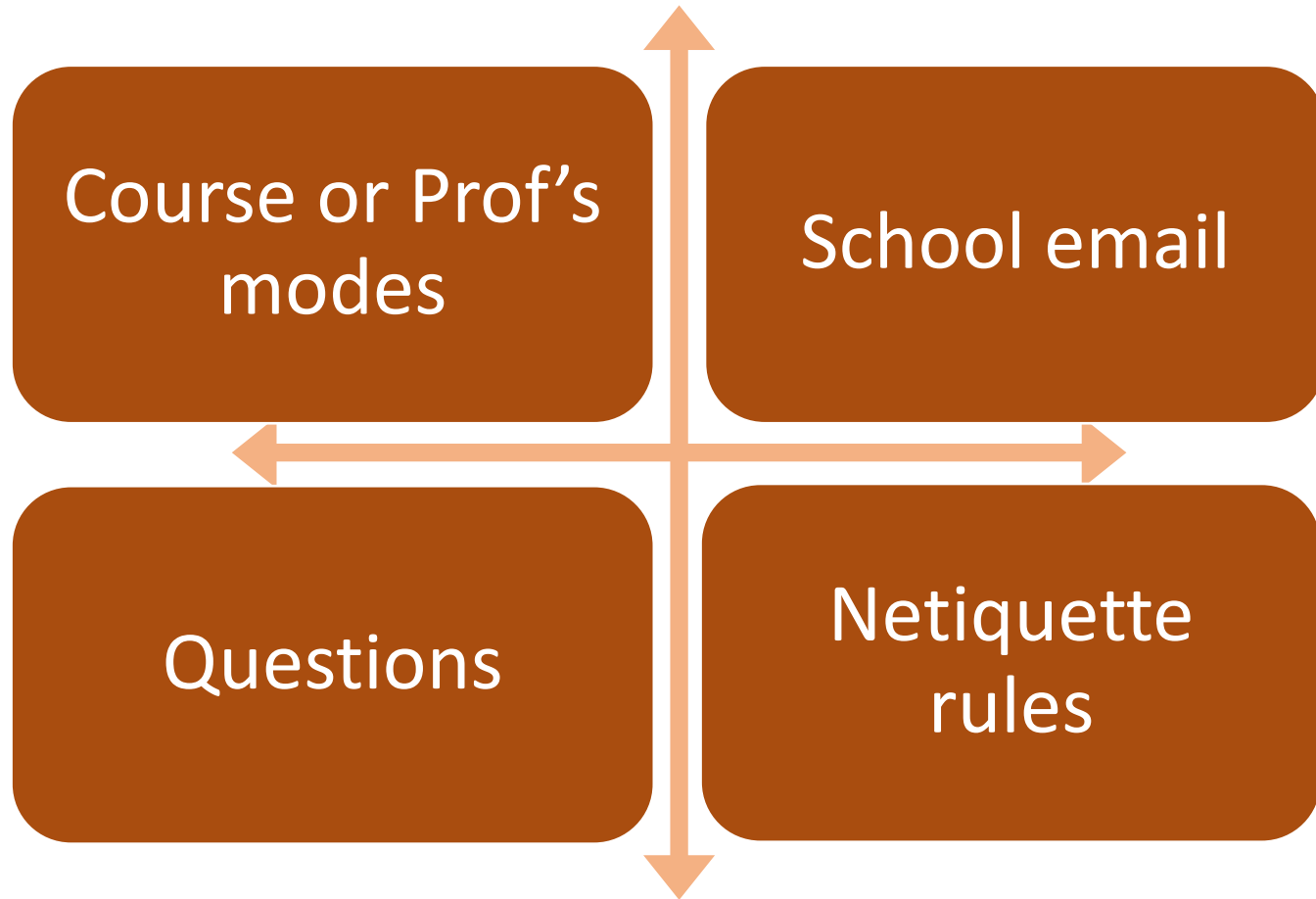
Other Needs and Possibilities

Coursework = time

Study space

Health and managing stress

School mechanisms
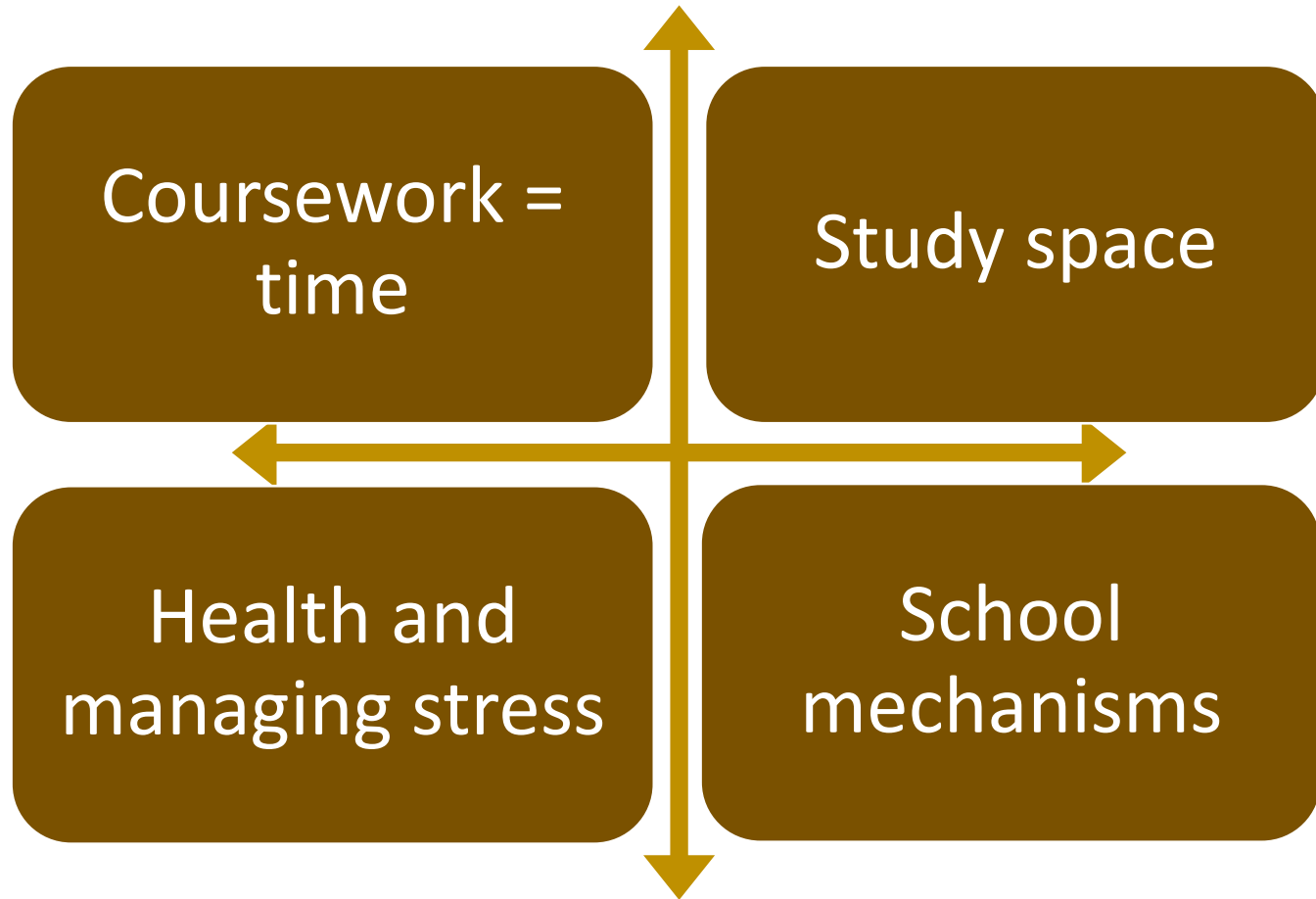
How to Teach This

School-sponsored orientation programs < **crucial**

Course announcements or welcome emails with "tips" culled from various sources – Example lists:

https://pixabay.com/photos/tips-tricks-tips-and-tricks-4905013

- https://www.northeastern.edu/graduate/blog/tips-for-taking-online-classes
- https://www.usf.edu/education/about-us/news/2020/tips-success-online-classes.aspx
- https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/7-Tips-for-Online-Learning
- https://www.uis.edu/ion/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/successful-online-student

How to Teach This

Online activities such as:

https://pixabay.com/photos/laptop-apple-keyboard-technology-2589420

- https://this.deakin.edu.au/study/quiz-what-type-of-online-student-will-you-be
- https://www.lacitycollege.edu/Academics/Distance-Education/Student-Resources/Online-Readiness-Quiz/Online-Readiness-Quiz
- http://fudgelink.com/onlinestudent

Ongoing outreach through email, phone (where appropriate), **working with academic advisors**

From the Literature:
Teacher Engagement

"Student-teacher interaction plays an essential role … and has been perceived by students as the most important type of interaction to keep them engaged" (Abou-Khalil et al., 2021, p. 3).

Recommendations from Northern Illinois University (n.d.):
- Send a welcome message before the term begins to help set expectations
- Make due dates clear
- Reach out to students who are not participating

Additional strategies from Abou-Khalil et al. (2021):
- Post announcements
- Send emails
- Use group chats or synchronous sessions
- Make discussions/forums mandatory
- Refer to students by name
- Answer questions and provide substantive feedback

Lastly, Ongoing Encouragement

Keep coursework interesting
- Participate alongside students in discussions and forums
- Make synchronous seminars interactive
- Use a variety of delivery modes and/or graded elements

Your responses and reactions are important
- Follow netiquette rules
- Answer email in a reasonably quick time
- Grade within your school's timing requirements
- Include positives in grading with ideas for improvement; watch wording (instead of "you," focus on the work itself)

References

Abou-Khalil, V., Helou, S., Khalifé, E., Chen, M. A., Majumdar, R., & Ogata, H. (2021, January 8). Emergency online learning in low-resource settings: Effective student engagement strategies. *Education Sciences*, *11*(1), 24. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11010024

Friedman, J. (2020, May 4). Tackle challenges of online classes due to COVID-19. *US News & World Report.* https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/how-to-overcome-challenges-of-online-classes-due-to-coronavirus

Iyer, D. G., & Chapman, T. A. (2021, February). Overcoming technological inequity in synchronous online learning. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, *48*, 205–212. https://doi.org/10.17705/1CAIS.04826

Kamble, A., Gauba, R., Desai, S., & Golhar, D. (2021, February). Learners' perception of the transition to instructor-led online learning environments: Facilitators and barriers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, *22*(1), 199–215. https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v22i1.4971

Northern Illinois University. (n.d.). *Recommendations to increase student engagement in online sources.* NIU Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. https://www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/increase-student-engagement-in-online-courses.shtml

Samoylenko, N., Zharko, L. & Glotova. A. (2022, February). Designing online learning environment: ICT tools and teaching strategies. *Athens Journal of Education*, *9*(1), 49–62. https://doi.org/10.30958/aje.9-1-4

Wetzlmair, L.-C., Kitema, G. F., O'Carroll, V., El-Awaisi, A., Power, A., Owens, M., Park, V., McKinley, M., Anderson, E. S., & Loder-Fink, B. (2021, December 2). The impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of interprofessional education: It's not all bad news. *British Journal of Midwifery*, *29*(12), 699–705. https://doi.org/10.12968/bjom.2021.29.12.699

Thank you

Tamara Fudge

tfudge@purdueglobal.edu