**Online workload seems heavier than with face-to-face classes**

You may have found it difficult to adjust to studying online from home. After all, none of us had prior experience of fully online learning and teaching to prepare us for making this instant shift. As the saying goes: “If you don’t PREPARE, you will always REPAIR.” As no student was prepared for this drastic change, urgent “repairs” had to be carried out. These included reprioritisation, time management and adjustment, and all of this had to happen in record time.

In this session, I will be highlighting important pitfalls that students should note and try to avoid.

Asking yourself the following questions will help you reflect on your experience of your online learning workload compared to the workload associated with regular face-to-face lessons:

1. ***How often do I attend classes online?***

***Possible answers: “Very often”, “Always”, “Sometimes”, “I do not bother”***

1. ***How often do I access learning materials posted online?***

***Possible answers: “Always”, “Sometimes”, “After a while”, “I do not bother”***

1. ***Am I engaging in online classes in the same way I used to in face-to-face classes on campus?***

***Possible answers: “Yes”, “No”, “I don’t know”***

If you’ve noticed a significant (negative) change, you need to reassess your study approach. If you do not change the way you study, you may fall into the following traps, which could lead to a perception of a heavier workload:

1. Listening to absolutely every word, and continuously rewinding the podcast not to miss important details **(*This can lead to frustration and confusion.)***
2. Writing down the lecture word for word **(*This can lead to a fear of failing.)***
3. Repeatedly listening to some lectures **(*This is a typical example of repair, as you are trying to make up for lost time.)***

If any of these sound familiar, don’t despair. Try these tips to manage your online workload and either get out of or avoid the pitfalls.

* Prepare for online classes by reading the relevant chapters or articles beforehand. This will inform your questions to the lecturer. You might also find that it makes you feel calmer during the session and enables you to better follow the lecture.
* Listen to the online lecture without interrupting, rewinding or pausing. Listen to it all in one go, like you would in a face-to-face class. You will save a lot of time by not fussing over the minute details, and will find it easier to stick to your timetable or planner.
* Make notes during the presentation, and then merely add important points afterwards. This keeps you focused on the content of the online session.
* If you have trouble understanding key concepts or feel a bit lost, consider discussing the lecture with a classmate directly afterwards or scheduling an online appointment with your tutor or lecturer. Knowing when to ask for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.
* Do not try to note down everything the lecturer says. Instead, try to train your ear to pick up on hints and insights that might appear in the assessments. Test your memory afterwards by trying to recall the tips that your lecturer emphasised. Write them down and colour-code the focus areas as you review the work.
* Set aside some reviewing time for work that you might need to go through more than once. This will be in addition to your class schedule. Be patient with yourself. Read tricky material more than once, read it out loud, phone someone you trust, and please ask for help.

Good luck!