



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Office of

Graduate Studies



Tips for Online Student Success

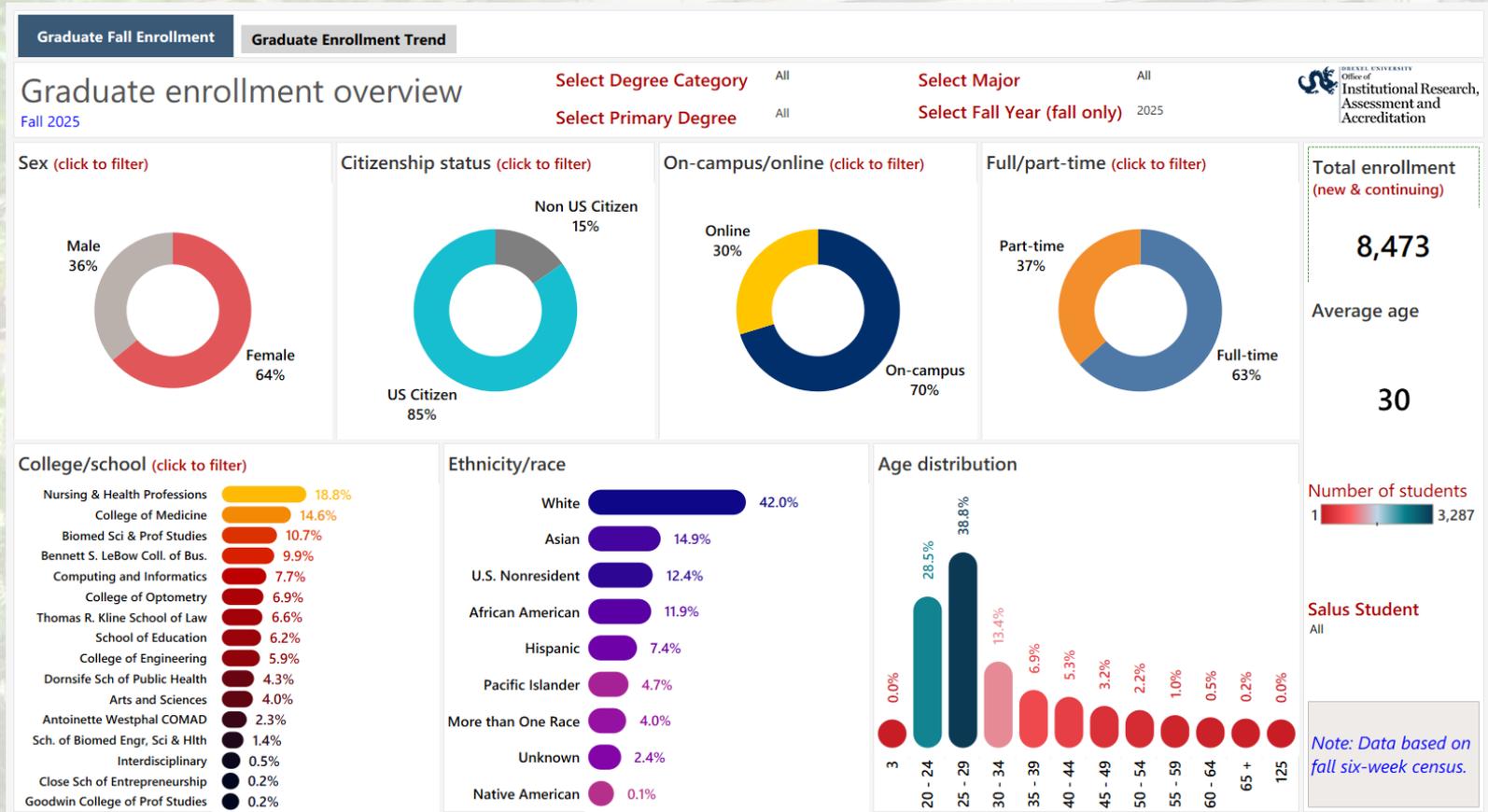
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YOU'RE NOT ALONE: DREXEL GR STUDENTS FALL 2025





OUTCOMES: DREXEL MS STUDENTS FALL 2025

Retention/graduation rates

One-year retained or graduated
(face-to-face)

91.7%

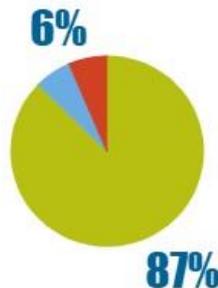
One-year retained or graduated
(online)

74.6%

One-year-out outcomes

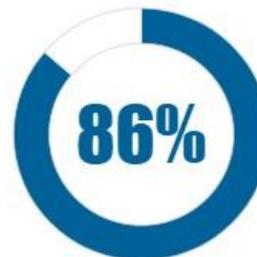
Master's (and above) recipients, as self-reported 9-12 months after graduation

Post-graduate outcomes



■ Employed ■ Graduate school ■ No work or school

Overall job satisfaction
% satisfied, of those working FT



Average annual salary
(of those working FT)

\$91,009



BALANCING

- Work/professional responsibilities
- Family responsibilities
- Finances
 - As of 2021, graduate students accounted for 15% of the total student population in higher education in the U.S.—and 40% of the student loan borrowers. ([EAB](#), July 2021)
 - Uncertainty of federal funding at the graduate level
- Competition
- Isolation
- ***Sheer workload involved...***

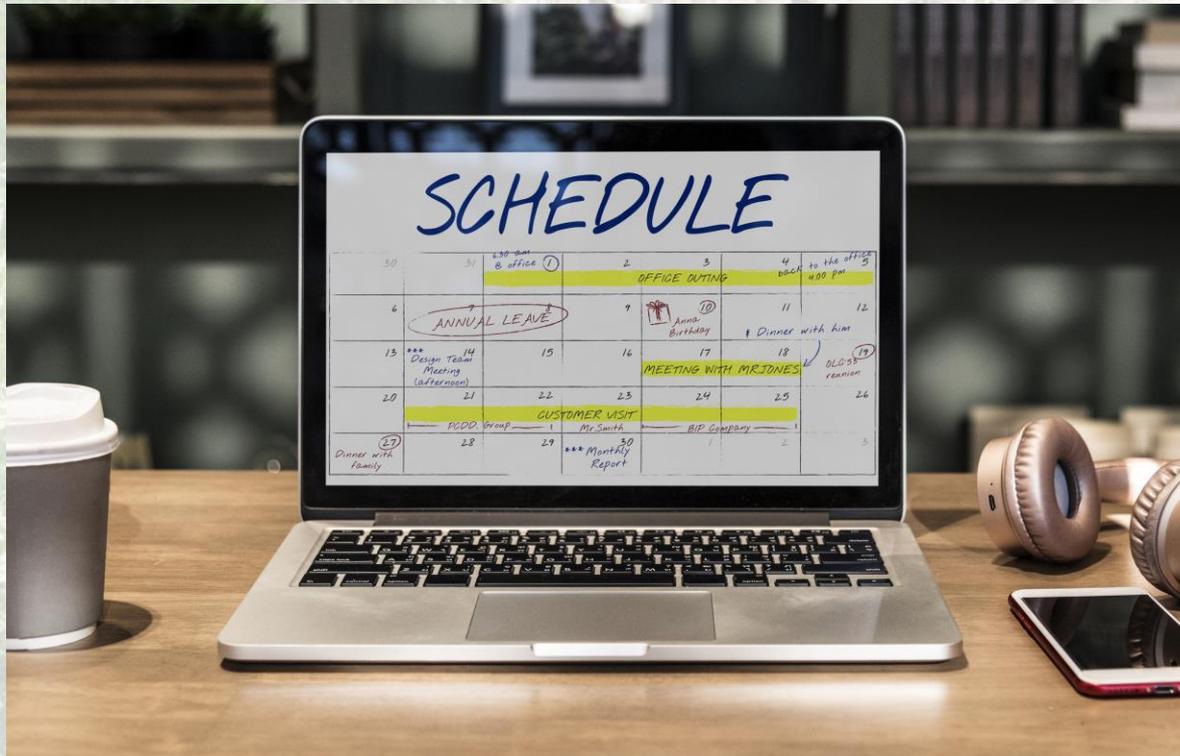


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Tips for Online Student Success

TIME MANAGEMENT & CARVING OUT A SCHEDULE





DISSECTING THE SYLLABI

- Why is it important?
 - Objectives for the course
 - Grading scales
 - Assignments/due dates!
- What to do with this information?
 - Organize the assignments
- Make the syllabus work for you!



ORGANIZATIONAL TIPS

- Make notes of all the assignments and due dates
- What is due during what week?
Compare with other classes.
Are there weeks with multiple assignments due?
- What are the weekly expectations for work?
Weekly readings?
Weekly videos/lectures?
Discussion boards/VoiceThreads?



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Tips for Online
Student Success

TOOLS OF THE TRADE



How can you organize all
of this information?



What do you use?

Study Tools

Passive study tools

- Reading the textbook
- Reviewing PowerPoints
- Reading your notes

Active study tools

- Allow you to engage with the material you are learning.
- Put information in new and memorable format
- Increase comprehension and retention
- Keep study process engaging



ACTIVE STUDY TOOLS

- What do Active Study Tools look like?
 - Flashcards
 - Outline
 - Timeline
 - Chart or Diagram
 - Mnemonic
- Anything else?



PUT TOOLS TO USE

- You know what active study tools are.....now what?
Plan out your studying!
 - How will you study each class?
 - What formats make sense for what class?
 - How long will you study for?
 - What will you do each study session?
 - Tell yourself what you need to do and when you need to do it



LEVERAGING FACULTY OFFICE HOURS

What are faculty office hours?

- Online/zoom/hybrid
- “By appointment”
- Ask what the department/prof’s culture is



HOW TO USE FACULTY OFFICE HOURS

When NOT to use office hours

- “Ready reference”/Google-able
- If it’s on the syllabus
- If a classmate can help
- Individual “make up” classes. “Did I miss anything?”
- Complaints with no constructive suggestion

When to use office hours

- Gaps in understanding
- Discuss assignment feedback
- Accommodations/learning preferences
- Build relationship/mentorship
- Express concerns



DURING FACULTY OFFICE HOURS

- Give the Professor a heads up that you'll be visiting
 - Move to the top of the queue
 - Advance preparation/resources
- Come prepared: documents, textbook, etc.
- Propose an agenda. Be specific.
 - Not "I'm confused" but "I'm confused about..."
- Join with students expressing similar confusion
- Offer suggestions. We are also here to learn.
- Overall: We wouldn't be here if we didn't want to help
- Office hours are an extension of the classroom



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN UG AND GRAD

- Fewer class sessions
- Less time per task (labs/activities/studios)
- More “life” issues/competing demands
- More autonomy, but more responsibility
- Much more reading/thinking/writing/
processing individually
- Give yourself time and space to absorb new
concepts and skills



BOOSTING ENGAGEMENT & INTERACTION

- You get out as much or more than you put in
- Grad Professors typically don't monitor or manage your engagement
- Imposter syndrome v Authentic self
- Sitting with complexity. Time to think/process and develop your ideas. Complex issues without easy solutions.
- Eye on the prize—put the course in context.
- What motivates you as an individual? What is the best way for you to engage? Reading, writing, thinking, discussing?



CONSIDER HOW YOU INTERACT

Types of Interaction

- Learner-Content
- Learner-Instructor
- Learner-Learner

Where are you most comfortable? What can you do to better engage at each level?



TIPS FOR ONLINE STUDENTS TO WORK SUCCESSFULLY IN VIRTUAL GROUPS

Working in groups for class assignments can sometimes be difficult, especially for the online learner. Follow these useful tips to help guide you into a more successful virtual group dynamic!



When possible, choose group members with similar schedules. Online students reside in different time zones and can have opposing work schedules.



Be proactive and begin setting the groundwork early. As online learners, your time is extremely precious.



Align group roles and responsibilities with individual strengths and interests.



Organize



Research



Record



Analyze



BUILD A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

GET TO KNOW YOUR CLASSMATES & INSTRUCTORS

Connecting with online professors and classmates is much easier than you might think, given the many communications tools available for doing just that. Take the power of social media, for example, for communicating offline communication with your fellow Dragons. In addition to Drexel University Online's "official" sites, our students often create their own social media trails for studying together or bonding with each other. You might want to create a Facebook study group or use an application like Google+ Hangouts for video-chatting in real time, while also sharing notes and outside resources.

ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

You will probably feel frustrated at times, especially when the material, assignments, and technologies are confusing, overwhelming, or both. On top of that, life can and sometimes will get in the way of your studies because of urgent situations like illness, family problems, or work emergencies. That's why it's crucial to reach out and ask for help from your professors, your peers, and your advisor – via phone, email, or Skype – before things get out of hand.

USE AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES

Drexel has plenty of campus support services that are easily accessible to online students, as well, such as the award-winning W.W. Hagerty Library, 24/7 tech support, the Writing Center, and the Steinbright Career Center. Take time now to explore these resources and use them as needed.

STAY CONNECTED TO FAMILY & FRIENDS

Because there will undoubtedly be times when you think that you'll never make it over the finish line, you will need an enthusiastic squad of family members and friends to lift your spirits and cheer you on when the going gets tough. Indeed, as social creatures, our mental and physical health is always better when we enjoy meaningful relationships at home, at work, and out in the community. So build in time to reach out and engage with those closest to you.





Counseling Center

The Counseling Center offers free and confidential counseling appointments to Drexel students via in-person or virtual appointments. Services include peer counseling, group counseling, individual counseling, case management for community referrals, BIPOC Drop-Ins, same-day appointments, and crisis support.

At the Graduate College, we care about your overall health and well-being because we know it is critical to your success. Drexel offers several resources and services, including online/virtual and in-person, to help support you throughout your program, whether you're full-time, part-time or online. When in doubt, reach out!

SupportLinc

SupportLinc, a 24/7 confidential and professional service for support, guidance, counseling, and resources, is available to all graduate students and their families and household members at no cost. Services include short-term counseling, dependent/elder care, retirement coaches, housing, travel, home repair referrals, legal services, and more!

Self-Help Resources

In addition to the services provided by Counseling and Health, you may need help in finding additional information about other resources, both on and off-campus. You will find presentations and handouts on a variety of mental health topics and links to additional information online. Self-Help Resources include tips for coping with anxiety and stress, mindfulness, relationships, adjusting to college, and more.

Center for Learning & Academic Success Services (CLASS)

Drexel's Center for Learning & Academic Success Services (CLASS) offers resources specifically geared for online student success. Resources include remote learning and time management tips and downloadable planning tools.

Additional Health & Wellness Resources

Check out the Graduate College's Health & Wellness page for additional resources for graduate students including links to resources on this page.

