

Have Students Develop a Structured Work Plan

For longer assignments, it may be helpful to provide online students with a template to plan when and where they will complete each step of the process (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016). Have students plan for the following steps in the work process.

- **Schedule where to work.** For tasks that require more concentration or higher level thinking such as reading articles, writing an outline, or working on problems, schedule time in your most productive places (e.g., your home office, a library, a coffee shop, etc.).
- **Schedule when to work.** When looking at the time you have allotted to work each day, be sure to account for any time you need to transition to your chosen online working place. For example, if you plan to complete one hour of work at a coffee shop, you should schedule more than an hour so that you have time to get there, to settle in, and to get your coffee.
- **Specify tasks to complete during each work period.** Use the due dates for the different parts of an assignment as milestones, and make sure you schedule enough time to complete each part on time.
- **Gather your tools and resources ahead of time.** If you have a writing assignment that requires you to cite sources, schedule separate time to search for appropriate articles or other resources prior to your scheduled time for writing.

Assignment Completion Schedule Example		
Assignment: Term paper Final due date: March 30 Additional due dates: Topic, Jan. 21; Annotated references, Feb. 5; Research proposal, Feb. 14; First draft, Feb. 28		
When will you work?	Where will you work?	What will you accomplish at the specified times and places?
Jan. 19, 7:00–8:00 a.m. and 9:00–10:00 p.m.	On my way to work In my home office	Brainstorm and list topic ideas. Research the viability of my ideas and search for resources.
Jan. 21, 8:00–9:00 a.m. and 7:00–9:00 p.m.	In my home office	Choose a topic and find at least five references. Submit my topic and references by 9 p.m.
Feb. 1, 4:00–6:00 p.m.	At the library	Work on my annotated reference list. Complete at least two.

Feb. 3, 4:00–6:00 p.m.	At the library	Work on my annotated reference list. Complete at least two.
Feb 4, 7:00–10:00 a.m.	In my home office	Finish and submit my annotated reference list.
Feb. 5, 7:00– 8:00 a.m. and 9:00–10:00 p.m.	In my home office	Work on the statement of thesis for my research proposal.
Feb. 6, 6:00–8:00 pm	At the library	Work on the outline for my research proposal.
Feb. 7, 6:00–8:00 p.m.	At the library	Finish the outline for my research proposal.
Feb. 12, 11:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.	At the coffee shop	Complete a reference list for my research proposal.
Feb. 14, 7:00–8:00 a.m.	At the coffee shop	Copyedit my research proposal and then submit it.
Feb. 20, 6:00–8:00 p.m.	At the library	Work on the first draft of my project.
Feb. 21, 7:00–8:00 a.m.	In my home office	Work on the first draft of my project.
Feb. 23, 6:00–9:00 p.m.	In my home office	Work on the first draft of my project.
Feb. 25, 11:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.	At the coffee shop	Meet with Karla to peer review each other’s work.
Feb. 26, 8:00– 10:00 p.m.	In my home office	Revise the first draft of my project.
Feb. 28, 6:00–7:00 p.m.	In my home office	Complete any final work and submit my first draft.
March 10, 11:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.	At the coffee shop	Start revisions on my second draft.

March 13, 7:00–9:00 a.m.	In my home office	Work on the revisions to my second draft.
March 15, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	At the coffee shop	Meet with Karla to peer review each other’s work.
March 20, 7:00–9:00 p.m.	In my home office	Complete the final revisions on my second draft.
March 30, 7:00–8:00 a.m.	In my home office	Submit my final draft.

