

Introduction

Graduate school often represents a big transition from previous undergraduate coursework, where you were largely guided as to what to learn and what to do, to much more independent graduate work, where the expectations for learning and expertise building may seem much more open ended. Compounding that transition is, the more you learn in a given area, the more you realize there is to learn. Don't worry. This is an ongoing process that is true for every field, including for experts in that field.

The module on learning is designed to empower you with the skills needed to thrive and continually adapt in today's dynamic world. Most students have spent years, even decades, in formal learning settings without learning how learning works or how to leverage the research on learning to maximize your own learning.

In this module, you'll learn more about how learning works and build skills to help you become a more effective, adaptable, curious learner so that you can better achieve your goals, thrive in your career, and adapt to ever changing situations. Over the course of this module, you will deepen the skills you started to develop in the introduction of this course.

As you improve your learning skills, you will learn to apply associated cognitive strategies to improve your learning abilities. You will use activities in this module to set, plan and act on your goals through your semester and beyond. We found that students skills greatly improve in this area after engaging with the module for a single semester.

Learning can be difficult in ways that are desirable and appropriate. Success takes effort and requires dedication and at times can be very frustrating. Research has shown that the best learning is happening when it does feel difficult. So don't worry if you're feeling this way, it means you're on the right track. Even your professors have struggled and failed as well. The goal of this module is to help you develop learning skills and strategies to help you gain success, not only in university but also in your career and even your personal life.

Learning can also be difficult in ways that are not okay. Many learners face systemic barriers to learning where the very nature of a culture of discipline can hinder that learning. These barriers are especially faced by people from equity groups, including learners who are women, BIPOC, indigenous, first generation at university or low-socioeconomic status. Sometimes the amount to learn is simply too much in a given time frame, and learning goal should be simplified to a more appropriate one. In the past, students found some aspects of this module challenging because it took them out of their comfort zone, but they found it was well worth the effort. Thanks for being here with us.