What's working?
UCLA student tips on managing research remotely[1]

Scheduling	
• Plan meetings in advance • Make lists • Break work into smaller tasks • Do something every day and avoid binge working (i.e. take breaks) • Set tasks with deadlines • Structure deadlines around meetings with mentors or research team • Ask questions about expectations and timelines • Be realistic and communicate when something seems unfeasible • Use feedback to adjust your schedule	"Having weekly meetings with my professor! I was trusted to do my own work at my own [pace] but knowing that I would have to present something new to him every week motivated me to stay on track." "Setting up meetings in advance, like one or two weeks, can help me keep track of how many days have passed, and also give me a solid deadline to work towards. Regularly setting aside time to write, but also trying to be flexible enough to pick up my project." "Every day I write down 3-4 tasks on a Post-it note, ranking my particular responsibilities for that day from high to low, e.g. if I have X assignment due in 3 days, Y in 5 days, and Z in a week…." "I made a project timeline with my mentor and broke up large portions of writing my paper into smaller parts, receiving feedback all throughout the quarter rather than just the end. I maintained excellent communication with my graduate student mentor and met with her via Zoom weekly to discuss weekly updates." "To-do lists, accountability groups with others working on research projects, Pomodoro method, and setting deadlines." "Setting tasks I meant to achieve before I attended my weekly meeting with my faculty mentor." "The lab is very good about sending work and the estimated time to finish it. They also give a clear deadline and are helpful in meeting and reminding us about the final paper for 196B." "My faculty mentor keeps a running Google doc that lists our expectations for each week, which keeps us organized and accountable." "Regular work, asking questions whenever needed, giving little updates almost every day to keep up the communication." "[My mentor] and I created our own syllabus and outline of different questions I would think about/research each week as well as weekly journals to reflect on my different daily experiences. We also decided I would write a midterm reflection paper combining all my thoughts and are planning to do the same thing for my final. After the midterm, I came up with my own 5 questions I want to research in the next 5 weeks." "My mentor set very realistic deadlines and helped me create a schedule that I could keep up with."

	"Keeping myself on a fairly consistent schedule and blocking out specific times each week to work on writing and project tasks has really helped me keep up-to-date on my project. I have also found that clearly deciding what I want to have done by the next time I meet with my mentor has been really helpful in taking a big project and making it more manageable." "When I first started my project I laid out a weekly schedule through this spring quarter that would keep me on track to finish. I've been able to keep to this schedule, so even as the circumstances have changed I'm still acutely aware of what needs to get done."
Accountability • **Stay in touch and stick to your meeting schedules** • **Create accountability groups to give mutual feedback or do peer-review edits** • **Sharing work among your friends can be a comfortable way to get diverse feedback and keep each other accountable**	"My research cohort has been helpful in keeping me motivated and accountable." "Maintaining my progress on my project website helps me keep accountable for my deadlines and provides a platform for the rest of my peers to view my work." "Make sure I show up to the weekly meeting, even if I watch it later—seeing my peers keeps me motivated and accountable." "I meet with my thesis group every week, and I am held accountable by providing a few sections of my paper each time to receive peer review edits. My mentor also provides me with a lot of feedback and helps me expand on my research." "It has … been helpful to talk with my friends in the lab and keep tabs on each other and [hold] each other accountable. Being isolated really drains the energy for working on projects so maintaining connection has been key."
Communication Methods • **Maintain a set meeting schedule where possible** • **Use and explore a variety of methods and tools (e.g. Slack, FB messenger, texting). Some will work best for different types of research and communication** • **Use sharable resources: e.g. shared calendars, Trello boards, google docs, Zotero libraries**	"Our group has been utilizing Slack, and it has been a great way to keep track of and maintain progress." "My faculty mentor and I have great communication. We correspond regularly by email and meet for around half an hour each week over Zoom. We had the same meeting schedule in the winter, so it was just a matter of switching to digital meetings." "Attending biweekly general lab meetings, having short quarterly 1:1s, frequently emailing." "Emails, phone calls, and Zoom office hours check-ins." "Weekly Zoom meetings and the messaging app Slack." "An email chain where we exchange research documents and ideas, and weekly Zoom meetings." "I worked primarily with my graduate student mentor. We used Zoom, phone calls, texts, email, and Google Docs to communicate." "I have been able to do virtual field work by using [the] Facebook messenger app video calling function to observe and interact with one main research subject as he recorded in his home studio." "We use the Calendly website, email, and Skype a lot."

Maintaining motivation and avoiding burnout • **See it as an opportunity to study something you're passionate about** • **Consider how your research relates to your long-term goals and next steps** • **Consider how your research will serve society and contribute to knowledge on the subject** • **Consider how much you and others have already invested in your project** • **Share your progress with the people around you who provide support and encouragement** • **Be kind to yourself and recognize that it's okay and healthy to adjust your expectations**	"I have an amazing project, and I want to do justice to it. The hours of reading, discussing, writing—I want it all to come to fruition." Thinking about graduate school and staying hopeful for a better future. The lack of news coverage on the subject of my research." "Quite simply, this is my passion and what I obsess over 24/7. I live, breathe, think entertainment so it has been an absolute joy to work with my mentor, conduct this important research, and conclude my four years of UCLA in this manner." "My research is closely tied to the well-being of others, and it is a topic I am continuously interested in." "My desire to get into graduate school as well as follow through with all of the work I put in in the preceding three quarters." "I was able to work on something I was genuinely interested [in] and passionate [about]." "I am just really enthusiastic about the subject I'm studying and just have a general academic drive to write something compelling. I also plan to use my research as a grad school writing sample so I sort of understand that I need to be diligent about it." "I am invested in my project, I have deadlines for the PROPS program, I have applied to conferences, and I'm hoping to apply to graduate school. All of these factors have kept me motivated to continue with my project." "Knowing that I put in so much work earlier in the year and hopefully the research will also improve the lives of those that I am researching in my topic." "A lot of what has kept me motivated is encouragement and weekly check-ins with my graduate student mentor. She helps me to develop a timeline for my project but also is very understanding and accommodating when things need to change." "The implications of my research can help youth nation-wide one day. So I am driven to complete it." "Having support from friends that are conducting research, creating a makeshift workspace, not pressuring myself too much to conduct the same level of research under normal circumstances." "Being real with myself and what I can accomplish this quarter despite the earlier deadline." "My research is related to my projected career goal, therefore, I am motivated to receive as much insight to present my best work for future employers on my portfolio website." "My topic is something I'm really passionate about. When I had off-weeks, I made sure to take a step back and allow myself breaks so I wouldn't burn out."

"Knowing that the work is important and that it will add positively to the academic discussion on my specialty area—IF it comes out good enough to get published—keeps me working hard. Tapping in with my research subjects and hearing their passion for their art inspires me to represent them accurately in the academic sphere."

"Need to succeed, maintain sanity in an unpredictable world. Setting an example for other members of my household that staying focused and goal-oriented is possible."

"I want to do it for my family and mentors, to be able to accomplish a lot with their support."

"Publication and need for this research to be practically implemented."

"The positive feedback I am getting from both the mentor and the graduate student I'm working with. Passion in the work, interest in research, the valuable experience I'm getting. The possibility of getting published. Thoughts about graduate school."

"Only minimal motivation, but mostly just wanting to keep my mind distracted from this situation."

"I want to get enough work done that I can spend the summer editing and start applying for programs in the fall so that is a good motivator.

"I also try to talk about my work to people around me, and having friends or family ask about the progress of my research can help motivate me to write more and remind me how interested I am in my topic."

"Passion for developmental research!"

"A number of people invested their time and even money into this project, and I want to do justice to the faith they put in me."