Hi. This is Bernie Grindel, assistant director of the Learning Center at Quinnipiac University. I have got some ideas for you on how to carve out some time and space so that you can get your online school work done and still respect the needs and wishes of your family.

Now, if you are a lot like a lot of online students, you have got a lot of things going on at home. You have got a spouse or a mate. You have got maybe some pets, maybe some kids. Definitely you have some household responsibilities. How do you balance all of these?

Well, I have got three tips for you.

The first is this:

**realize that your family and your household support your goals**

They want you to succeed in school as much as you do, and they are going to rip the benefits from your success just as much as you will. So, start the negotiations with this assumption: everybody else in the house wants you to be a successful student.

My second tip is this:

**carve out physical space for yourself**

Make sure that the place that you do your school work at is going to be secluded and isolated.

This means:

- keeping the door closed;
- no kids or pets running in;
- no interruptions from phone calls or IMing or emailing that is of a personal nature.

Make sure that you have got a place where you can concentrate. Also make sure that you have everything you need there. If it is going to be a place for reading, make sure the light is nice and bright and will keep you alert. If you are going to write papers, make sure you have a desk there and a computer so you can do that work as well. Whatever you need to do your school work, make sure it is all in one place and that it can be a secluded place.

My third tip is to:

**make sure that you are being very clear in your negotiations with your family about the time that you are going to use**

Don’t try to carve out long chunks of time, 4 or 8 hours at a time. That is not going to happen. Try to get reasonable amounts of time during which your family can function without you. Let them know that before and after this time, you are going to be the same person that you always were, maybe doing a couple of extra things around the time in exchange for this time, when you are going focus on your work. And when you have this time to focus on your work, make sure you use it to its best effect. Concentrate on those tasks that require maximum concentration and a long time.

So, these are my three tips for carving out some space in time and negotiating with your family. **First** of all, know that your family supports you. Start with that as the basis of the negotiation. **Secondly**, think about space. You will need isolated space. **Thirdly**, be clear about the times you are going to be using the space.

I am Bernie Grindel from the Quinnipiac University. Good Luck!