

Online Course Expectations for Students

Online education courses offer flexibility in terms of when, where and how long you study. However, online courses are as rigorous as their classroom based counterparts and this requires students to be self-disciplined and organized. For many, online learning is the ideal solution to a unique learning experience and personal development in a busy schedule balancing family, work and personal interests. Here are some things to consider:

1. **Time requirements:** You are expected to put in the same amount of time for an online course as you would if the course was face to face. You should be prepared to devote approximately 4 to 6 hours per day to your course; which is equivalent to 90-110 hours of course work. This includes time to read course materials, research and clarify your understanding of key concepts, participate in online threaded discussion boards, complete assignments, and studying for tests.
2. **Time Management:** Although you have flexibility in the time that you access your course online, it still takes discipline to stay on top of each day's readings, assignments and other activities. It's important to manage your time each day to work on your course. Due to the compressed nature of the course, assignments have hard deadlines which must be met.
3. **Communication:** The online environment relies heavily on text. This means that you must be comfortable communicating with your instructor by writing your thoughts, questions, experiences, etc. in emails and discussion forums. You may have the opportunity to interact via web conferencing, audio podcasts, or other tools, but not all courses will utilize these tools. ALL courses will have email capability available to you.
4. **Being proactive:** You must be comfortable actively seeking out help when needed. Remember that your teacher has no way of knowing if you have questions, concerns, or are having technical difficulties. Keep in mind that a response to your electronic communication may not happen immediately. Stay on task and don't wait until the last minute.
5. **Online Environment:** You will need a reliable internet connection and an electronic device to access your course online on a daily basis. The device must have the minimum technical capabilities as specified by your program. You should also consider factors such as where will your quiet area be, how much uninterrupted time you have available, and when you will do the study and research your course requires.
6. **Remember:** If you have not logged into your course every day you will be considered absent. If you are absent for two consecutive weeks you can be dropped from the course, or if not dropped, receive a failure on your transcript. *(If you do not access your online course for a couple of days because of an excusal or other reason, you must let your teacher know. It is the student's responsibility to notify the teacher if they wish to withdraw from the course before the start of the third week.)*

Face to Face Day, although not mandatory, allows you to meet your teacher face to face, ask questions about the course, ensure you are able to access Student Connect and your online course. Tech support will be provided during this half day orientation. No transportation is provided.