

Is Online Learning for You?

People enroll in online courses for various reasons: they live in remote areas; their schedules make it difficult to attend class; they have other commitments that are hard to predict; or they are attracted to the flexibility that online courses provide. However, online learning is not for everyone. To determine if it is right for you, read the following statements and ask yourself if they describe you:

- I am able to organize my schedule and commit to the time required to complete my course(s).
- I am comfortable with communicating through writing.
- I have a computer and high-speed internet access readily available.
- I am comfortable with using technology and open to learning new software.
- I have basic skills in word processing, email communications with attachments, and other computer applications.
- I have experience navigating the Internet.

Also, there are a couple of **common misconceptions** about online courses that should be addressed:

“Online courses are easier than classroom courses”.

FALSE – Online courses require the same amount of effort and time (if not more) as in-class courses. Not only are you expected to complete course work including readings, assignments, quizzes, and projects, but you will also be responsible for keeping track of deadlines and for organizing your own time.

“Online courses are self-paced”.

FALSE – While online learning offers the flexibility to arrange your time to fit the course, you still must meet deadlines and move through the course at the pace established by the instructor(s). Also, you are often required to interact with your instructor(s) and other participants at scheduled dates and times.

For a more positive learning experience, assess your own comfort level and abilities, commitments and schedule, and access to technology when considering an online learning option.