

Tips for Online Learning Success

Some basics:

- Be sure to review emails and documentation that contain start-up and “help” information.
- Complete any assigned orientation tasks to familiarize yourself with the online course interface.
- Manage your time by designating blocks of time in your schedule for coursework.
- Download or, if necessary, print out reference pages to have on hand.
- Check the syllabus and course outline regularly to stay on track of assignments, readings, and projects.
- Ask for help right away if you encounter a technical issue or need clarification regarding the course content.

Before you start:

- Make sure you know how to get in touch with your instructor, using his/her preferred method of communication – this information is usually indicated in the course syllabus or an introductory letter/email.
- Read the course outline and schedule and take note of important dates, including assignment and project deadlines.
- Understand the structure of the course – know what is expected of you in terms of completing work online, participating in web conferences, submitting projects, etc., and how you will be evaluated.
- Scan through any workbooks, manuals, and texts that are used in the course to familiarize yourself with the content.
- Read all documentation and emails sent to you – they usually contain passwords or log-in instructions, or special notes about the course.

Communication and participation:

- Because there are no face-to-face interactions between you and the instructor to provide non-verbal clues, take responsibility to initiate contact to ask for help when needed.
- Actively participate by contributing your comments and sharing your experiences during web conferences and “live” sessions.
- Remember that others can’t see your physical expressions – be clear and concise in your written communications, and explain your ideas fully; avoid using abbreviations that others might not understand.
- Think before you send or post – re-read what you have written to ensure you are saying what you mean to say. Consider how the recipient(s) might interpret your words.
- Keep on top of emails and other messages that your instructor sends throughout the course.
- As in any classroom environment, courtesy and respect should be demonstrated towards peers and your instructor.