



Online Student Tips for Success

Communication

1. Be willing to share your educational experiences as part of the learning process. The online environment is open and friendly, and you will benefit from communicating and sharing your experiences with your fellow students. Because this forum for communication eliminates the visual barriers that hinder some individuals from expressing themselves, it can work well for both introverts and extroverts. In addition, you have time to reflect on the information before responding, which is often easier than having to respond in a traditional, in-person discussion group.
2. Be comfortable and proficient at written communication. Because in the virtual classroom nearly all communication is written, you will be writing quickly and often. If you have limited writing abilities or are uncomfortable expressing yourself in writing, work on improving these skills before or as part of your online experience.
3. Be willing to let your instructor know about problems. Instructors who teach online courses can't see if you are having problems, such as confusion, frustration, boredom, or absence. If you are experiencing difficulties on any level—either with course content or the technology, communicate this to your instructor immediately. If you don't, your instructor will never know what kinds of problems you may be experiencing.

Motivation and Commitment

4. Be self-motivated and self-disciplined. Because there is freedom and flexibility in the online environment that doesn't exist to such a great extent in a traditional classroom, you need to be particularly responsible and self-disciplined. The online process requires a commitment. Schedule regular study and log-in times for your online courses.
5. Be prepared to spend as much time per week as the course requires—usually 12 to 15 hours per week per course. Online courses are not easier than traditional classroom courses. You may find that they require more time, commitment, and discipline.
6. Be able to meet the requirements. Your online program will have the same requirements as any quality educational program. If you want to succeed in your online program, you must view it as a more convenient way to receive your education, not an easier way.
7. Be able to apply critical thinking and decision-making skills to the learning process. The online learning process will require you to make decisions based on facts as well as experience. You must be able to use critical thought to assimilate information and make effective decisions.

Quick Tips

- Check your e-mail frequently.
- Keep in contact with your instructor.
- Allow a reasonable amount of time for instructor response.
- Advise the instructor promptly of any changes in your e-mail address and/or telephone numbers.
- Interact with your classmates as much as possible.
- Keep up with weekly assignments. When in doubt, ask questions.
- Be open to this new method of instruction and enjoy learning in Cyberspace!