8 Strategies for Success in Online and Hybrid Courses

Familiarize Yourself With the Course Design

1. Print the syllabus and read it away from the computer.
2. Be aware of class requirements, including the technology used, and your instructor’s expectations.
3. Record dates for assignments, quizzes, and tests in your agenda.
4. Record support contact information (i.e. technology support, instructor, tutoring).

Log On Daily

1. Check Canvas for important announcements.
2. Maintain your email inbox, and check your email daily for important announcements.
3. Keep up with Canvas discussion posts and replies.

Prepare

1. Most instructional information will be delivered to you in the form of print, video, and links to electronic resources.
2. Your instructor will guide you in your learning process.
3. Your instructor is your coach, but it’s up to you to execute the plays.
4. Make sure you have a back-up plan to access your course in the event of technology failure.

Commit Yourself

1. An online or hybrid course is more convenient but NOT easier than a face-to-face course.
2. Having more freedom and flexibility with the course format also means assuming more responsibility.
3. Self-motivation is key; be responsible for keeping up with assignments.
4. Be independent; do not expect an online instructor to remind you when assignments are due.

Plan Your Schedule

1. Dedicate a specific amount of time to your course.
2. Spend approximately 5 to 10 hours per week on each course.
3. Maintain a calendar to keep track of assignment due dates.
• Do not procrastinate.
• Try not to fall behind in the course because it will be very difficult to catch up.

6 Communicate Clearly With Your Instructor

• Follow your instructor’s directions when sending email. Include your name and section number in the subject line. Take care to include all pertinent details in your question(s).
• Follow your instructor’s directions about using the Q&A discussion forum.
• Your instructor won’t be able to see your facial expression when you don’t understand something, so it will be up to you to communicate clearly.
• Be comfortable asking for clarification from your instructor, and continue to ask more questions if you need more information.
• Almost all communication is written. Become accustomed to expressing your thoughts in writing.
• Think before you send a message. Review what you have written carefully before you send it to your instructor.

7 Participate in the Discussion Forum

• You won’t be sitting in a classroom, so participation in the discussion forum is very important.
• Read the instructor’s guidelines and/or rubric for discussion participation, so you know what is expected of you.
• Be polite and respectful. You may not see the other students in the course, but they are fellow students too. Maintain a positive online environment.
• Don’t expect immediate responses.

8 Study Skills

• Take careful notes on all of your reading and course content assignments (review the online Note-Taking Workshop video provided by the Academic Center for Excellence).
• Read academic material more than once.
• Set aside time to study each day.
• Let your family or roommates know you will not be accessible during the designated study time.
• Establish small goals for yourself each day to remain focused and to maintain motivation.
• Time management is of the utmost importance in an online or hybrid course. Instructors strictly adhere to all due-dates.