

What to Expect in an Online Course

What online courses are:

- an alternative to traditional classroom environment that provides students with greater flexibility in their schedules.
- **NOT:** Easier or less work - this is not the easy alternative to being in the classroom. The time commitment for an online course is more than a for face-to-face course. Reflect on your learning style before choosing an online delivery method.
- **NOT:** Self-paced - there is more flexibility in when you do your work, but there are still due dates and deadlines.

What you need to be successful in online learning:

- **Self-motivated, self-disciplined and responsible.** You have to set your own times to work on your courses and be responsible for checking announcements and knowing due dates. It is very easy to procrastinate when there are no scheduled class meetings and getting behind is deadly in an online course.
- **Consistent, reliable computer and high speed internet access** and a back-up plan if your computer breaks down.
- **Comfortable with email, using internet resources, and word processing.** Microsoft Word is required for most courses. Online courses are not for those with limited computer skills. Basic computer courses are available; check with your advisor.
- **Be confident in asking questions when you need to.** Your instructor can't see the puzzled look on your face.
- **Good time management skills.** Schedule time for the class like any other. Assume 3 hours of time per credit per week. A three credit course will require an average of 9 hours per week.
- **Active participation.** Log in to your course to check announcements and discussions at least three times per week.
- **Good netiquette.** No text messaging language should be used in your courses, including email and discussion board postings.
- **Use the feedback from your instructor.** Be sure to know when grading will be done and review all feedback given by the instructor.
- **Still unsure?** Talk with your advisor or counselor.