

Online Courses — Your Path to Success

Online courses can be a convenient, efficient way to complete your degree. However, they do require students to be self-motivated, self-disciplined, and well-organized, because they require more reading, writing, time management, and computer skills than most face-to-face classes. Follow these strategies to increase your success in your online courses!

Before the Semester Begins



Instructors DO NOT ACCEPT "technical difficulty" as an excuse for missing deadlines or online activities. Test your computer and logins before the semester begins!

Get Up to Speed



Arrange for additional equipment (webcam, headset, software) or accounts required by your course.

Contact the ITS Help Desk for tech support:

<https://odu.edu/its/helpdesk>
itshelp@odu.edu
757-683-3192 (local)
877-348-6503 (toll-free)



Prepare to Use Technology

Confirm your computer meets ODU requirements: <https://tiny.cc/hsmvzy>.

Update your Internet browsers: <https://odu.edu/ts/browser-check>

Locate tutorials for Blackboard or any tools you haven't used before: <https://www.odu.edu/lynda>

Learn to use web conferencing, if you have online meetings:

Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/yxadbjrx>

Blackboard Collaborate Ultra:
<http://tiny.cc/ir7hiz>

WebEx:

<http://online.odu.edu/get-started-in-webex>

Improve Your Online Learning Experience



Ask other students what techniques work for them — this is the best way to adapt to online learning.



Prepare for how online courses differ from face-to-face classes: <https://online.odu.edu/online-learning-environment>

Learn how to learn online: <https://cit.odu.edu/keep-learning/>

If you need disability support, complete an Accessibility Accommodation Request: <https://odu.edu/life/diversity/accessibility>



First Week of Class

Get Organized



Record all due dates and deadlines on your calendar or phone.



Add reminders for tests or live activities to your mobile device.

Post your hellos to the discussion board, or connect with your classmates. Be respectful and professional: <https://online.odu.edu/online-class-behavior>



Connect with your online course as soon as it becomes available in Blackboard. Check in with it every day.



Understand the Course Requirements

Contact your instructor with questions about online requirements or the syllabus. Follow the instructor's email policies, and include your full name and course ID.

Attend the instructor's online office hours, if offered.

Schedule an exam proctor, if required: <https://online.odu.edu/coursework/exams-proctors>

Establish Your Learning Space and Routine



It's harder to catch up if you fall behind in an online course. To motivate yourself, treat your online deadlines as if you had to go to a classroom at that time.



Maintain a study space — without noise or interruptions — for watching videos or attending online meetings (perhaps in an office or library).



Establish a routine for online course work, so you prevent procrastination: <https://caps.ucsc.edu/resources/time-management.html>

Plan to spend 9-12 hours/week on each 3-credit online course.

Study online in small windows of time. Improve your focus by spacing out your study sessions and taking frequent breaks.



Mid-Session

Stay Engaged



Form an online study group, to motivate yourself and engage with your classmates.

Live chat with a librarian, for research assistance: <http://guides.lib.odu.edu/distance>

Improve your writing with help from the ODU Writing Center: <https://www.odu.edu/all/centers/writing-center>



Be your own advocate! Seek tutoring or advising: <http://odu.edu/success/center>

Maintain Discipline

- › Confirm the schedule and assignment deadlines — they can change.
- › Stay in contact with your instructor. Email them immediately if you're falling behind, and give the instructor time to respond before your assignment is due.
- › Complete ODU's mid-semester feedback form, if available.



Plan for Online Assessments

- › Cite your sources, and don't plagiarize: <https://wts.indiana.edu/writing-guides/plagiarism.html/>
- › Check testing technology in advance! Give yourself time to troubleshoot setup and connection issues before you begin an exam.
- › Verify you can submit papers to SafeAssign in Blackboard, if required: <http://tiny.cc/dpx5zy>
- › Confirm your exam proctor appointment, if needed: <https://online.odu.edu/online-experience/coursework>

End of Session

Share Your Experience



Complete the Student Opinion Survey: <http://tiny.cc/bmnfmy>. Your feedback helps instructors improve the course.

Finish with Success!