Student Best Practices for Online Classes

Create a Space:

To be successful in your coursework, organize a place where there are minimal distractions. Make sure you have the following in place for an optimum learning environment**:**

1.**Get some peace and quiet.** You will need a quiet place to work without distractions from things like television, family, or roommates.

2.**Avoid games.** Consider uninstalling any computer games to avoid temptation. Or keep the games on a different computer in the house.

3.**Turn off your cell phone.** Let friends and family members know the hours that you will be "at" school.

4.**Beware surfing** the black hole of the Internet. It is easy to lose track of the time as you wander from site to site.

5.**Consider ergonomics.** Adjust the height of your chair, keyboard, and screen so that you are comfortable. Forearms and thighs should be level and parallel to the floor. Wrists should not be bent while typing.

6.**Set up good lighting and comfortable seating.** Lighting in the room should be at least as bright as the computer screen to avoid eye strain.

Create a Schedule:

1. Connect with instructors early:
2. Complete assignments before the scheduled lab time.
3. Prepare ahead of time by reading the lecture notes and textbook chapters.
4. Be ready to interact on discussion questions to gain valuable participation points during students' scheduled lab time.
5. If you need clarification on any aspect of the course, e-mail, text or ask chat questions of the instructor.   Instructor contact information can be found in the course guide or in the signature block at the bottom of the messages. Each instructor has a daily office hour clearly posted.

Stay Organized:

1. Be self-motivated and self-disciplined. The online environment requires responsibility, commitment and discipline to meet course requirements and deadlines. Online courses do not take less time than on-campus courses; don't get behind.
2. Develop a personal schedule for working online each day. You will be expected to log in multiple times per week and perhaps every day.
3. Plan ahead to ensure you have enough time to study and complete assignments.
4. DO NOT PROCRASTINATE. You will quickly be behind and feel overwhelmed. Procrastination jeopardizes your ability to be successful.
5. Take notes as you study.
6. Follow deadlines and due dates. There is not teacher in front of the room to remind you to get work done. It is up to you to watch the announcements, calendar, syllabus and/or content area so you can plan.
7. Work ahead as much as possible. This gives you time to contact the teacher and get feedback before due dates.

Work Cooperatively with Others:

Your online course will require you to interact and coordinate with others even though your communication is restricted to email, discussion postings, and chat.

Be Flexible and Adaptable:

Online learning is an adventure that will expose you to many new experiences. The ability to be flexible, to be willing to be persistent and work through issues, and to remain open-minded is crucial to having a positive experience.