

Online & Distance Education

The following resources provide information for students who primarily enroll in online or distance education courses. Please contact the Student Success Coordinator if you would like to discuss how to incorporate these strategies into your daily schedule.

Self-Management

Self-management is a key skill for college students--particularly those who enroll in online classes. Self-management involves setting goals and managing your time in a way that will promote success. It can also prevent excess stress and provide you opportunity to enjoy your daily experiences.

Checklist Before Beginning an Online Course:

1. **Confirm Technical Requirements.** Make sure your computer works with all the necessary programs, you know how to navigate them, and you have a consistent workspace in your home or office. These steps will help you be ready for day one of class. The IT Service Desk is here to assist you with technical questions: 918.444.5678 or help@nsuok.edu.
2. **Connect with Instructors Early.** It is extremely important to stay in contact with your instructor. It is up to you to communicate with your instructor, so start early.
3. **Create a Schedule.** Consider dedicating daily two-to-three hour time blocks to log in and complete assignments. Online courses require you to display self-management and accountability. These are essential to your success because you are not attending lecture in a formalized classroom.
4. **Talk About Your Course with Others.** A key difference of online courses is the lack of face-to-face discussion with classmates and instructors. Discuss what you are learning with friends, family, or colleagues. The more you discuss the material, the more you are invested in the knowledge.

Tips for Success in Online Learning

Successful online learners organize a plan, prioritize activities, communicate questions, engage with the class and dedicate themselves to success.

- **Organize.** Successful online learners understand the importance of organization, especially if they are enrolled in more than one class. Taking a few moments at the beginning of the class to review due dates of exams, assignments and other class requirements is essential to success. Knowing what is expected of you at the beginning will help you create an organized and realistic plan for the semester.

- **Prioritize.** Successful online learners prioritize their activities to help stay on top of homework, reading and deadlines. Each week create a prioritized “to do” list including both academic and non-academic items. This will give you a snapshot of your week and help you not only stay on task but also with time management.
- **Communicate.** Successful online learners know the importance of regular communication. Visual clues and body language are ways a face-to-face instructor determines if students are 1) present and 2) understanding the material. These clues are not available in online classes. The only way an online instructor can “see” you are present and understanding material is through regular communication. If you have questions or are struggling it is up to you to communicate with the instructor in a timely manner.
- **Engage.** Successful online learners engage with others and the course content. As with almost anything in life, the more engaged you are with an activity the more likely you are to succeed. Online learning is no exception. Make the most of your time in class to connect with your classmates, the instructor and the course content.

Tips for Online Discussions

- **Understand the Requirements.** Take time to understand what is expected of you in the course. Dedicate time each week to meet these expectations.
- **Understand the Questions.** Make sure you understand what is being asked of you to discuss. Is the instructor asking for your opinion, your feedback, or a summary? Read your responses carefully to ensure your post is both relevant and appropriate to the discussion.
- **Be Timely and Involved.** Your attitude can dictate your enjoyment in the course and online discussion with peers. You may learn a lot from your peers who are also communicating on the online boards!
- **Use Proper Netiquette (Internet Etiquette).** The way you treat others online should be the same way you would treat someone face-to-face. Make sure you are responding to others with respect, making meaningful contributions, and being conscious of the tone of your message.

Sources: [Iowa State Academic Success Center](#), [Boise State University](#)