

Tips for Success

Below are tips to help you be successful in an online college course:

- **Monitor your Grove City College e-mail before class begins.** Professors often distribute course details in advance of the first day of class, including requirements for the first day of class. Some professors will even expect that you have done work prior to the first day of class (e.g., read the first chapter of your textbook). Monitor and read your e-mail early and often.
- **Read and understand the syllabus.** The instructor has most likely included key dates (exam dates, project due dates, etc.), expectations, and classroom policies in the syllabus. You are responsible for abiding by the details included in the syllabus.
- **Read your textbook.** You are responsible for the content contained within the textbook, even if the professor does not cover the material in a lecture. Read through the text in order to gain an understanding of the content, paying particular attention to bold text and headings. Take careful notes while you read. Ask the professor for clarification if something is not clear to you.
- **Professors will treat you like an adult.** They will thoughtfully answer all your questions and concerns, but they may not initiate personalized contact with you. You must advocate for yourself. You must initiate contact with your professors. By the way, at Grove City College, most of the professors have incredible credentials. You most definitely should network with them. They are an incredible resource to you in your future career.
- **Meet with your advisor.** Although you may be able to register for courses for the first semester through admissions or the registrars office, you will be required to meet with your advisor before you can register for classes the second semester. Contact your advisor to say hello. Advisors also will treat you like an adult, so you must contact them to make sure your college career is on track for where you want to go.
- **Log into courses before the first day.** Take the time to navigate through the Learning Management System (LMS) and to verify that your computer meets the technical specifications of the course. Find out how to get to the library online.
- **Dedicate a specific time and a specific study space for your online course.** Schedule a specific time each day to complete the requirements of your course. Do not simply try to “fit it in,” but, rather, create a daily schedule that you can follow. In addition, when planning your schedule, include enough time to complete projects and prepare for exams. Find a distraction-free zone to work. College courses are rigorous; working in a space that is distraction-free will allow

you to fully focus on your coursework.

- **Be prepared to spend 6-9 hours a week or more in a traditional semester course and 24-36 hours a week in a four-week course.** The general rule of thumb is that each credit hour of a traditional semester college course requires 2-3 hours per week. For example, if you are taking a 3-credit course during a traditional semester, you should expect to spend a minimum of 6-9 hours each week on that course for the duration of the course. If the course is more challenging or if you have exams or projects due, you may spend upwards of 12 hours per week on that course. Expect to spend significantly more time each week if the term is less than the traditional semester.
- **Create a calendar of deliverables.** Each professor may use a different Learning Management system or different mode to share information. Reference each syllabus and communication method to create your own calendar of due dates.
- **Become organized. Stay organized.** Create a schedule for what you need to accomplish each day and stick to that schedule. Keep your coursework, computer, and study space organized and distraction-free. In addition, back up your computer regularly and in an organized manner so that you have an easily accessible copy of all of your assignments, papers, projects, etc.
- **Communicate. Ask questions.** If you have questions, ask. Do not wait until it is too late. If you have questions about the course itself, contact your professor. It is your responsibility to reach out to your instructor. Unlike a traditional classroom, the professor cannot see your facial expressions or body language to determine if you are confused, so be sure to contact the professor at the first sign of any concerns. If you are having an issue navigating college life or have a question about your academic schedule, you should contact your advisor. Your advisor can assist you with scheduling, adding or dropping a course, how to get assistance, and other important items. When you can't figure out who can help you, contact your advisor. If you are having technical issues, contact IT. If you have questions about course registration or schedules, contact the registrar. Whatever your concern, contact the correct person to help you resolve those concerns.
Introduce yourself to your professor and your advisor and then maintain regular dialogue. Particularly in the online environment, creating an open line of communication early on can help address concerns early enough to fix them.
- **Before submitting your work, compare it to the rubric.** Verify that you have completed all of the requirements as listed on any supplied rubric. Evaluate your own work before you submit it to be certain that you have fulfilled the requirements.
- **Have fun. Enjoy the learning process.** Earning college credit while in high school is a wonderful opportunity to challenge yourself, to learn, to make new friends, and to develop or solidify your interests. The professors at Grove City

College have a wealth of knowledge and are experts in their field, so you will learn from the best and the brightest.