

UIW School of Professional Studies  
Office of Student Success

**Online Course Success Tips**

You are about to start your first online course. What do you do? We've provided some helpful tips to get you going on the right path during the first week of class.

1. **Access and read your course online thoroughly – then ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.** Every online course has its own structure. Become familiar with yours right away. Also, ASK for clarity from your instructor if there is anything that you do not understand.
2. **Download and/or buy materials early.** Do not fall behind on your work because you are lack the course materials. All undergraduate courses have eBooks in which you will download from within your online course. Only graduate students purchase textbooks. Textbooks can be found online [here](#).
3. **Check your computer.** Make sure you have a computer with basic system requirements (Pentium or higher and 28.8 or higher speed modem), MS Office Professional 2007 or higher, Microsoft Office XP or higher on a Windows operating system or comparable MAC system and a reliable Internet Service Provider (ISP). Check your course syllabus for software or hardware you may need.
4. **Get mentally and physically prepared.** An online course offers convenience and flexibility, however, it does not decrease in the level of rigor. As an online student, you lose the “face time” that others receive in the traditional classroom. Effective and timely communication is a must! Access and regularly check your Cardinal Student E-Mail regularly. Also, take the time to create a physical space conducive for reading, studying, and writing. Your environment matters.
5. **Introduce yourself to your instructor and other classmates.** Make an effort to connect with others right away.
6. **Participate.** Go ahead and jump in to participate in your online class discussions. The more you participate the better you will grasp the material.
7. **Keep an updated calendar.** As soon as you receive your syllabus, record all of the assignments, tests, or project due dates.
8. **Establish a study time that works for your schedule and do it consistently.** Also, study to learn, not to memorize. Study as if you have to teach the class. One way to increase your level of study is to identify your most dominant learning style(s). For more information about learning styles, click [here](#).
9. **Get a head start on your work.** As an online student, it is imperative that you become proactive instead of reactive. Take some initiative to get a jumpstart on your course work by beginning upcoming assignments and papers during your first week. This will also help you determine any questions you may need to ask your instructor ahead of the due date.
10. **Reach out for help.** Do not blotch your record with an “F” or a “W” because you failed to reach out in time for help. The SPS faculty and staff are all here to help you succeed. If you have taken on too much or feel you need assistance, please contact your instructor and/or academic advisor immediately.

Technical Trouble? Contact the Help desk at (1) Website: <http://www.uiw.edu/technology/>, (2) By calling 210-829-2721 or Toll-free at 1-866-614-5043, or (3) By email: [helpdesk@uiwtx.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uiwtx.edu).