

## **Succeeding in an Online Course**

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Online courses at Tulsa Technology Center offer an exciting, challenging learning opportunity! You should be aware of the requirements and general guidelines for taking an online course at TTC **before** you enroll.

### **Expectations**

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What should you consider before enrolling in an online course? The list below details some expectations for an online course.

- The student should be an independent worker.
- The student should be self-disciplined.
- The student should have good organizational skills.
- The student should have good time management skills.
- Online courses require as much or more time to complete as the face-to-face class.
- Online courses often require the student to use several different technologies.
- Students should expect collaboration between the instructor and other students through e-mail, discussions, and chat rooms.
- Most assignments are written.
- Online courses generally require a great deal of reading.

### **Computer Skills**

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The list below outlines the basic computer skills necessary to successfully participate in an online course.

#### ***Internet***

- Use an Internet browser such as Internet Explorer, Netscape, or Firefox.
- Navigate a Web site.
- Download and install browser plug-ins (i.e., Adobe Acrobat Reader).
- Modify browser settings related to security, pop-ups, and firewall settings.

#### ***Files***

- Create, modify, and save electronic documents.
- Manage electronic files (i.e., create and name folders, save and open files, and delete files and folders).
- Browse for an electronic file.
- Upload and/or download an electronic file.

### ***E-mail***

- Send an email.
- Attach a file to an email.
- Open and read an e-mail.
- Open an attachment to an e-mail.

**The instructor of your online course is not responsible for your basic computer literacy skills.** By enrolling in this course, you are declaring that you have the minimum computer skills outlined above. For courses to help you develop your computer skills, please see the Tulsa Technology Center Course Catalog available at [www.tulsatech.edu](http://www.tulsatech.edu).

### **Student Readiness Self-Assessment**

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Online courses require you to structure and manage your own schedule, communicate with your instructor and classmates using computer-based technology, and learn most of your material through reading and writing. You also need to be very disciplined with time management and self-motivated to successfully complete course work. Online courses require a substantial time commitment. While the number of hours needed to complete online coursework varies from course to course, you should expect to spend several hours a week completing assignments.

This self-assessment is designed to help you determine if you are prepared to enroll in and successfully complete an online course. Read each statement below and honestly answer “Yes” or “No” based on your previous educational experiences, your lifestyle, and your personal characteristics.

1. I am a self-motivated and disciplined learner.  Yes  No
2. I prefer to learn independently and rarely need an instructor's guidance or assurances.  Yes  No
3. I stay on task without direct supervision.  Yes  No
4. I am able to assess my own progress without immediate instructor feedback.  Yes  No
5. I consider myself to be a good reader.  Yes  No
6. I usually understand text without help.  Yes  No
7. I can easily follow written instructions.  Yes  No

8. I enjoy expressing my ideas in writing.  Yes  No
9. I am willing to contact my instructor when I need help with an online course.  Yes  No
10. I can communicate effectively without face-to-face interaction with my classmates or my instructor.  Yes  No
11. I enjoy interacting with others online.  Yes  No
12. I realize that the requirements for an online course are the same or possibly greater than the requirements for a face-to-face course.  Yes  No
13. I can prioritize my own workload with other demands on my time.  Yes  No
14. I can devote a considerable amount of time to assignments for an online course.  Yes  No
15. I am confident in my ability to successfully complete an online course.  Yes  No

A majority of “Yes” responses indicates that you have the skills and attributes necessary to succeed in an online course. If you answered “No” to 3 or more of the 15 statements, an online course may not be the best educational option for your learning style. You may want to instead consider a face-to-face course.

This evaluation is intended for informational purposes only. By completing this evaluation, Tulsa Technology Center does not guarantee the success or failure of any potential student.

### **Checklist for Starting an Online Course**

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- Verify that your computer meets or exceeds the technical specifications for taking an online course.
- Understand the expectations and requirements of online courses.  
*Complete the Student Readiness Self-Assessment to determine if you are prepared to enroll in and successfully complete an online course.*

- Have you taken an online course? Prior to the first day of your online course, we strongly recommend that you complete the Blackboard Orientation Course.
- Review the course syllabus to make sure you know the due dates for assignments and understand the demands of the course.
- Prior to the start of your online course, obtain all required textbooks, supplies, and materials.  
*A list of these items can be found on the course syllabus.*
- Make sure you know how to contact your instructor.

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## **Technical Specifications for Online Courses**

If you plan to participate in an online course **outside of the TTC classroom**, your computer equipment must meet the following minimum requirements.

### **Computer Requirements**

- Hardware Requirements
  - CPU Processor:
    - Minimum: Pentium 100-Mhz
    - Recommended: Pentium III and up
  - RAM (Memory)
    - Minimum: 64 MB of RAM
    - Recommended: 128 MB of RAM and up
  - Hard Drive space:
    - Minimum: At least 1 GB
    - Recommended: At least 3 GB
  - Screen Resolution:
    - Minimum: 800x600 resolution with 256 bit colors
    - Recommended: 1024 x 768 resolution with 16, 24, or 32 bit color display
  - Internet Connection:
    - Minimum: Dialup with 56.6 or higher modem
    - Recommended: High speed Internet connection
  - Sound Card
    - Required: 16 bit sound card
  - Headset or Speakers
    - Required
- A valid e-mail address
- PC Users - Internet Explorer 6 or greater for Microsoft Windows
  - Available free on the Microsoft site
  - The browser **MUST** have 128 bit encryption
- Disable or add TTC Blackboard to the Pop-Up blocker software on your computer.
- Windows Media Player for courses with streaming video