Tips for Online Student Success

Keep in Contact with Your Instructor

- Read the syllabus and clarify the following:
  - Course Outcomes:
    - What is expected by the end of the course?
  - Due dates along with cut off times:
    - Assignments / Quizzes / Discussion Boards
  - Schedule:
    - Live events / meetings via webinar or hosted sessions
  - Ask your instructor of methods to connect with classmates:
    - Group Projects / Online Communities / Forums
- **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** Your instructor is there to help you understand the expectations of the course. Stay informed on office hours and your instructors availability.
- **Expect Communication.** Your instructor will be reaching out to you and your fellow classmates in the event of emergency. Make sure you monitor your University of Montana email for information outlining expectations for class continuation, how to contact them, how to submit assignments and more. Check back often or as directed to stay informed.
  - Some instructors will include information in their syllabus with how they plan to communicate with you in the event of campus closure. Make sure to identify the best ways to contact your instructor or what you should expect if an event occurs so that you are prepared.
- You may want to sign up for campus safety alerts and updates. You can join by texting "Join UM-alerts" to 30890. Signing up will inform participants, via direct text message, of immediate safety and health notices. The University of

[Montana's Emergency notification system](#) will also transmit an email with any emergency information to all 'umontana' email addresses.

Time Management

Allowing the appropriate time to approach your coursework online can be challenging. Follow these tips to help manage your time wisely:

- Understand Course Credit Hours.
  - *1 credit = 1 hour of classroom*
  - *2 hours of lab / homework = 3 hours per week*
- Understand the schedule of your class as there may be required meeting times as set in your course calendar.
  - Set aside time as if you are attending a class in person. A week of class time can easily fall behind if you don't plan ahead.
  - Stay engaged with classroom forum / events / assignment.
  - Plan ahead with vacations, sick time, family events.
- Log into your course at least 3 times per week and Check email frequently!
- Check with the [Office of Student Success](#) if you need to schedule progress reports or advice on your courses.

Temporary alternative methods of class are not vacation days. Students are still expected to continue working on their coursework with the same level of attention and dedication. Your instructor will likely adjust the syllabus, deadlines and activities that were originally outlined in your course to adaptable distance-based activities and extend deadlines as needed. Students should stay on track with homework, activities and projects or reading assignments as normal. Students who are finding the transition difficult should communicate with their instructors as soon as challenges arise.

Your instructor may still host class during your regularly scheduled class time. Though it may be tempting, please do not use normally scheduled class time to pursue other

activities that do not relate to your classes. Refer to communication from your instructor as to how they will continue teaching during the temporary campus closure. If you need accommodations or are having trouble with alternative course-delivery formats due to Internet access or for any other reasons please notify your professor. NOTE: *Your instructors want to see you succeed and will be accommodating to the best of their ability.*

Online Etiquette

Following these guidelines allows you to communicate in a responsible manner:

- Be Explanatory: Examples of explanatory post(s) / email(s)
    - Bad: *The assignment didn't make sense – please help!*
    - Good: *The 2nd assignment on Topic 3 was confusing in regards to the instructions. I have a few questions that I hope you can clarify. In what format would you like the assignment? What is the due date?*
- Be Credible: Always cite your material. The best way to make a thoughtful post / email is to reference the material you are using.
- Be Respectful: Conduct yourself as if you are engaging in a conversation with someone physically.

Understand Your Tools

The following tools are set in place to make your online experience more useful to you:

- Email
- Cyberbear
- Zoom
- Moodle
- UM Box

Regularly update your personal technology such as laptops, PC's, or mobile devices. Reliable technology and their chargers should be easily located in the event you need

to use them to complete coursework or communicate with your instructors. Make sure you are subscribed to UM Alerts.

Avoid Distractions

When interacting with your courses remotely, it can be tempting to browse *Twitter* and *Instagram*, watch *Netflix*, or even do chores around the house instead of engaging with your coursework. Some students may even attempt to multitask by doing both at the same time. However, research shows that humans are not as good at multitasking as we think we are. Eliminating those distractions by turning off your phone or closing non-academic browser tabs can help lead to success in the online environment by focusing your attention on the task at hand. Use those outside activities as motivational rewards for completing assignments and utilize your course time wisely.

Additional Resources

Many student services across campus such as advising and tutoring will be available online and/or via phone should in-person campus operations be suspended. Expect to receive updates from student support units with details on how to access services.

- IT Central
- Curry Health Center (Online Health)
- Mansfield Library (Online Book Delivery, Catalogue and Articles)
- Student Advocacy Resource Center (SARC) (Phone Peer Support)
- Student Affairs
- Starfish for Students
- Campus Security
- Office for Student Success
- Disability Services for Students
- Writing Center