

Tips for Being a Successful Distance Learning Student

1. Taking an on-line course is very different than taking a traditional face-to-face course and not all students are prepared to be successful. In addition, Biol 101 will have several workshops throughout the semester which will complement the on-line component and allow some critical “hands-on” experiences. Review the tips below and ask yourself as to whether you are ready to commit to succeeding in a distance learning hybrid course. Recognize that course with online components are **NOT** any easier than face-to-face classes, and in fact may be **harder** for some students. Since our course is “hybrid” we will have some “live” interaction, however, a significant component of both lecture and lab will be done in the “online” environment.
2. **Read over** all of the introductory materials and contact the instructor(s) immediately if you have any questions. Communication is essential - all course related questions are welcome!
3. **Assume an active role** in the learning process; whether you are working alone, or in a group, contribute your ideas, perspective and comments on the subject you are studying, and read about those of your classmates.
4. **Log on to your course every single day**, or a minimum of 5-6 days a week. It is very easy to get behind quickly, so stay active in the course.
5. **Manage your time carefully**. Schedule at least 3-4 hours per credit each week to work on your course and stick to your schedule. Certain courses may require more time!
6. **Do not procrastinate**, follow the course schedule assigned by your instructor. If you need an external source to motivate you to do class work, then consider taking this class face-to-face.
7. **Locate resources to assist you** in being successful in this course, such as the Online Writing Lab, the Library article databases, or the Content Area Tutoring Center. Check out ISU’s Center for Teaching and Learning for these and other resources.
8. **Set aside a private space** where you can study where you can work without interruptions.
9. Make sure that you have the **appropriate software and plug-ins** necessary for the course. See WebCT Lesson 0 (in this packet) for more information.
10. If you are unsure of your **computer skills**, develop them! See below for links to online tutorials that can help you improve your computer skills.

Additional Resources

Is Online Learning Right for You?

<http://classes.isu.edu/online/students/>

Basic Computer Skills Tutorial, University of Maryland University College

http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/ctla/basic_skills/

Saba, F. 2004. Strategies to succeed at distance learning.

<http://www.distance-educator.com/dnews/PrintArticle10461.phtml>

What makes a successful online student? Illinois Online Network.

[http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/StudentProfile.
asp](http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/StudentProfile.asp)
