Distance Learning Success Tips

Establish a Routine

- Do your best to establish a routine. This will help you avoid procrastination.
- Stick to the course deadlines by downloading a copy of the assignment schedule and/or write down the deadlines in your calendar.
- Set aside time each day to complete the course readings, activities and/or assignments.
- Check your messages on Blackboard and your myCNM email account. Your instructors will let you know how they want you to communicate in their courses.
- If required, keep up with the class discussions and respond to your classmate’s postings throughout the week.

As you settle into your routine you will feel more comfortable and confident. You will also notice that the better you get at navigating your class, the less time you will need to spend online.

Communicate Clearly

Communicating effectively and professionally in your class is very important. Your instructor may give you instructions and/or a rubric that outlines how to interact and respond in class. Following the recommendations and instructions closely should help you get started. These best practices are often referred to as online “netiquette.”

- **Write clear and concisely.** Use complete sentences, including proper grammar and spelling. Avoid “chat” type text shortcuts.
- **Avoid misunderstandings.** Take the time to organize your ideas before sharing them with the class. Also, maintain your personality when expressing your opinions. Find ways to add humor, empathy and/or your own experiences.
- **Create drafts.** When composing long messages, emails and/or discussion responses you might want to create them off-line first. You can also take advantage of spell and grammar checks when drafting your messages off-line.
- **Avoid plagiarism.** Always express yourself using your own words. When using someone else’s words to help describe or support your point, use quotes and/or credit your source.
- **Email properly.** Always check with your instructors regarding how and where they would like you to send email messages. In addition, always include a “subject” in the Subject line and sign your name at the end of your email message.

For more information on the Core Rules of Netiquette, go to [http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html](http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html)

Participate and Stay Connected

Some students mistake the concept of learning "anytime and anywhere" for not having to participate or interact with the class. Students who develop meaningful connections with the instructor and classmates typically receive and give more support. In addition, these connections can translate to academic networking opportunities.

As a distance learning student you will be **required** to have access to a computer with a broadband internet connection. That may not always be easy, particularly if you do not own a computer or have an internet service provider at home. However, there are so many places to connect to the Internet such as CNM's computer labs, the public libraries and businesses that offer free Wi-Fi to customers.

For the locations of CNM's open computer labs and their hours of operation go to: [http://www.cnm.edu/depts/tutoring/computer-labs](http://www.cnm.edu/depts/tutoring/computer-labs)

If you are having difficulty finding an internet connection, don't give up! Contact the **CNM Distance Learning Achievement Coach, Michelle Rentería**, phone: (505) 224-3320 and email: mrenteria4@cnm.edu
Get Help and Ask Questions
If you need help with tutoring; selecting what classes to take; paying for classes; buying a text book; or computer technical assistance, CNM offers these services online:

- Brainfuse Online Tutoring Service - To create an account, login to CNM Learn; then click on the link located in the Tools’ box.
- CNM's Online Bookstore –  [http://cnm.edu/student-resources/bookstore](http://cnm.edu/student-resources/bookstore)

Additional student resources and their contact information can be found on CNM's web page at:

- List of all CNM Student Services  - [http://www.cnm.edu/depts/ssa/servicesforcurrentstudents.php](http://www.cnm.edu/depts/ssa/servicesforcurrentstudents.php)
- List of Achievement Coaches -  [http://www.cnm.edu/achv/ac_contact.php](http://www.cnm.edu/achv/ac_contact.php)
- CNM Distance Learning Student Resources - [http://www.cnm.edu/student-resources/distance-learning/students](http://www.cnm.edu/student-resources/distance-learning/students)

Remember you instructor is available to answer your questions. Check your course syllabus for your instructor’s online office hours.

Be Flexible and Proactive
Online instruction is dependent on technology, which can be unpredictable; therefore, you will most likely encounter some bumps along the way. For instance, your internet connection may be dropped unexpectedly; your browser won’t display information correctly; or an important web-site may no longer be available. No matter what, stay on your toes, know when and who to ask questions and you'll be okay.

In addition, "online" does not mean "instantaneous". Some web-based tools take longer to load and some documents may need more time to display. Try to keep your cool and have some patience. **Note:** Clicking too many times to accomplish the same task can have an adverse effect on what you are trying to do. For example, clicking an item more than once may result in the item downloading several times and therefore taking a longer time to open.

Be Open Minded
When learning online, the possibilities for your potential are limitless! Students are no longer confined to learning only within a certain classroom, at a certain time or in a particular building. They can now go online, on their own time and review materials, take exams, complete assignments, interact with students and so much more! Of course, learning in this way takes some getting used to and requires an open mind and curiosity. In the process, you may also learn more about yourself and how you prefer to learn.

Many colleges and universities publish tips for being a successful online learner. If you are interested in finding additional tips, type in "Characteristics of a Successful Online Learner" in a search engine. Some sites even have fun online surveys and quizzes that can help you rate your characteristics and preferred learning styles.

Be Honest
Central New Mexico Community College requires all students online and in the classroom, to conduct themselves with a high level of academic honesty and integrity.

**Cheating, falsifying work or plagiarism will not be tolerated.** Students committing these offenses are subject to penalties ranging from a “0” on the assignment and/or test, to an “F” in the course. **All** incidents will be reported to the CNM Dean of Students.
To view a message from the CNM Dean of Students, Dr. Rudy Garcia, go to
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPmlOFtjG6A&feature=youtu.be&hd=1