NMSU School Of Nursing
Frequently Asked Question for Online Courses:

General Questions

What is an online course?

An online course is a course in which learning and student participation take place via the internet. At NMSU, we use Instructure Canvas as our learning management system (LMS) to deliver the courses via the internet for you to access anywhere there is a computer with internet connection. Online courses are designed for people with very busy schedules who don't have time to come to campus and participate in a traditional classroom environment. Granted, you still have to meet deadlines and dedicate time to your courses but with the luxury of doing it anytime and anywhere there is a computer with internet access.

How do I know if online courses are right for me?

When you try something new for the very first time it may seem scary and challenging at the same time. Online courses are very different from face2face courses, but the outcome is still the same. We have experienced faculty and course designers that work closely together to bring you a high quality online course. We want to make your experience with us a memorable and successful one. To find out if online courses are right for you, take our online self-evaluation and find out for yourself, http://distance.nmsu.edu/prospective/self_eval_dl.html.

How do I enroll for these courses?

Once you have been accepted to NMSU you will need to meet with an advisor for your program and they will direct you to a degree plan and tell you what courses are being offered online and what to register for.

How will I gain access to my online courses?

Once you have been accepted to NMSU, you will need to access https://my.nmsu.edu And activate your student ID. This is a simple, few steps process. Make sure to write down your Pin #, User ID, and your newly created password and keep them in a safe place where you can access them for future reference. Once you have done this, you can then access the Canvas server (where the courses are maintained) at https://learn.nmsu.edu. Once your courses are available you will be given access to them. You may also be given access to a help site that has tutorials on how to navigate your online courses and where to ask for technical support.

What should I expect in an online course?

Most online courses require at least 1-3 hours a day of online participation/work. Be prepared to spend at least 6-10 hrs. per week on any given online course and to participate in discussion topics and readings. Your instructor will give you feedback and interact with you via email within each course and another form of communication, like VoIP.

How often does the class meet online?

Each instructor has certain times that students get together for online virtual chats or individual chats with the instructor, or group work. Students are required to follow their syllabus closely to know when assignments are due and when discussions must be posted. It is up to the student to make sure deadlines are met and to make time to participate in the discussions and assignments. Online courses allow you access to your courses 24/7. Keep a calendar of your due dates and deadlines.

Will I need to purchase course materials?

Yes. Many of your online courses will require that you purchase a book(s) and other reading materials. Once you have registered for an online course you will be given a booklist with the book name, author, book edition, and ISBN number. The campus bookstore will usually carry this book or you will be given instructions on where to find the book(s) to order online.

Do these online courses count towards a degree?

Yes, all of our nursing courses fall within a degree plan and many can only be taken online. Make sure you follow your degree plan carefully and get with your program advisor to make sure you are taking courses that will count towards the completion of your degree.

Technical Questions

Do I need a special computer/software to gain access to my online courses?

- Although personal computers vary widely, you will not need any unusual hardware or software installed. Any computer, either Mac or PC, with a relatively modern operating system (preferably Windows XP, Vista, 7, or MacOS, OSX) and Web browser (preferably Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome) will work.

- It is essential that you have internet access (broadband or high speed preferred) in order to gain access to the course materials and participate in the online discussions and assignments. Please make sure you are prepared before committing to any online course.

- We also recommend that you purchase a headset with a built in mic, or your system already has an internal device, in case your instructor chooses to use a synchronous tool for students to meet online and collaborate. These are readily sold at many stores such as Wal-Mart, Kmart, OfficeMax and Best Buy.

- It is also important that you have and are familiar with the basic Microsoft Office software such as Microsoft PowerPoint and Word. If you need help using these programs you can visit the Microsoft How to site at: http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/FX100485361033.aspx?pid=CL100605171033. You will need to use these programs to complete your assignments and to be compatible with what your instructors use. At NMSU we use either Office 2007 or 2010.

- It is also important that you are familiar with surfing the internet and doing basic functions on the computer such as sending email and attachments, saving files, doing web searches, etc.

Who should I contact if I have problems accessing my course?

You will need to first contact your instructor. If it is a computer related issue, you can also contact the NMSU Student Helpdesk at 575-646-4433 or help@nmsu.edu or the assigned tech support person(s) for your school. For more information, please contact our office at 575-646-5228 or email us via your Canvas nursing student help site. Also, visit the Canvas Student Support site for tutorials and guides on how to use Canvas: http://guides.instructure.com/s/2204/m/4212.

Tips for a Better Online Experience

- Register for your courses early (online courses tend to fill up quickly)
- Make a list of your instructors contact information
- Purchase books and reading material as early as possible
- Select a certain time of day to access your courses (at least 5 times a week)
- Be self-motivated and self-disciplined and commit time to your courses daily
- Access your course e-mail frequently and your NMSU email weekly
- Get to know your instructor by keeping in touch with him/her throughout the semester
- Be patient; allow a reasonable amount of time for your instructor to respond
- Let him/her know of any changes in your contact information
- Make arrangements immediately with him/her for late assignment
- Communicate, via the course, with your classmates as much as possible
- Keep up with weekly assignments and discussions, don't procrastinate!
- Don't be afraid to ask questions to either your classmates or instructor
- Be open to this new method of instruction and make it a positive experience by being prepared

Visit the NMSU Training Services Student Support Site for additional Helpful Links at

http://studenttech.nmsu.edu/canvas.html

Have a Wonderful Experience!