Online Learning Tips

General

- Hang in there. Don't give up on your course if the first two weeks are tough. Online learning is quite different and does require a lot of persistence. However, once you get into the class and become familiar with the format and schedule, you will do wonderfully. All it takes is persistence and work!

- Stay organized. It is easy to get distracted and confused in the online environment. Make sure to create folders and name files in an understandable manner.

- Have a back-up plan. Computer and internet failures are not valid reasons for missing scheduled due dates. Be prepared to use a family member or friend's computer if yours isn't working.

Time Management

- Create a schedule. Your life is busy so it may be hard to remember and meet all the due dates for your course. Create a schedule and set aside time each week to work on your course so you aren't rushing to meet a deadline at the last minute.

- Give yourself plenty of time. Remember that since you aren't attending a weekly lecture in a classroom, you must read and learn the material for yourself. Your instructor is there to help you, but the real work is your responsibility. Give yourself time to complete the readings, discussions, and assignments.

- Login to your course regularly. Things can change quickly in an online course, because of all the conversation that occurs. Try to log into your course several times throughout the week to read and respond to the discussions and check for any announcements or updates your instructor may make. You wouldn't want to miss an important announcement about a change in the week's assignments or due dates! Logging in frequently helps you keep in touch with the progress of the course and ensures that you are actively involved.

- Know when your instructor is available. Your instructor cannot be available 24/7. Remember that your instructor has other responsibilities as well. When you post or e-mail a question, give your instructor time to check his/her e-mail and respond. You should be able to expect a response in no longer than 48-72 hours, unless your instructor notifies the class of a longer absence.

Communication

- Post all questions to the discussion board. Posting questions here will prevent you from asking the same question as another student and allow the entire class to benefit from the response received.

- Answer questions. If you know the answer to a classmate's question, by all means answer it! You and your classmates are valuable resources for information in the classroom. In fact, by helping your classmates, you will actually be reinforcing memory of the information for yourself!

- Proofread and spell-check all communication. Sloppy messages are frustrating to read and convey an image of disinterest.

- Keep in touch. Make sure that you never go a week without being heard. Don't just send in assignments, but participate actively in the course discussions and make sure that your instructor and classmates know you are still there.

- Contact your instructor immediately if you have problems not related to technical issues such as an emergency leave of absence or other problems that might prevent you from completing your coursework on time. Remember, you can call your instructor on the phone if you need to.

Assessment

- Keep a copy of all assignments submitted. Technology is not perfect and it is always good to have a backup.

- Meet your deadlines. Even though you are not physically handing in information, make sure to submit your assignments on time.

- If you have any questions about an assignment, make sure to ask your instructor right away. Do **NOT** wait until the last minute to ask questions!

- Do not wait until the last minute to submit your assignments. Submitting work early helps you plan for the unexpected, such as power outages, computer errors, or internet connectivity problems that can make last-minute submission impossible. Completing assignments early ensures that your work is received on time.

- Be patient when waiting for feedback and grades. Give your instructor adequate time to complete his/her grading.

Technology

- If you try accessing your courses through public computers (e.g., libraries, Internet cafes, work, etc.), you may not be allowed to install or configure software that are used in your online courses.

- Technology can sometimes fail and you should have a plan for how to access your course and complete assignments in the event of a technical issue.

- Use the '15 Minute Rule.' **DO NOT** spend more than 15 minutes on any technology issue.

- Contact the EP or JHU IT Help Desk for any technical issues as soon as possible!
  - **EP Help Desk:** ep-help-desk@jhu.edu
  - **IT @ Hopkins Help Desk:** (410) 516 HELP(4357)