

# You, the Self-Paced Learner

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By taking this course, you have entered into an exciting world of self-paced, online learning! If online education is new to you, there are some things you should be aware of that may help you be more successful with this style of learning.

**Staying on track.** Because there isn't a live instructor to guide you through the material, you'll need to work out a system on your own so you can keep up with the schedule. You should plan on logging in a couple of times a day to check the discussion boards and check for new material. **You will not get regular email or announcements when things have changed** so be sure to check in regularly. Generally new material will be published once or twice a week (for those taking the course live) but your fellow students will be active in the discussion boards and you'll want to participate in the conversation.

**Working on problem sets.** It will be up to you to complete the problem sets in each of the modules. We will not provide answer keys for the problem sets or assessments so you'll have to work on the problems until you find the answer. While it may be possible to get solutions from other students or on the internet, we encourage you to work out the problems on your own and use your fellow students or internet resources to provide clues to solving the problem sets and assessments. This will enrich your learning experience and help lock in the concepts. If you get stuck, don't give up! There is enough material in the modules to help you solve the problem and your hard work will pay off.

**Instructor feedback.** Because of the nature of MOOC-style instruction (Massive Open Online Course), instructors aren't able to provide active feedback to individual students. Most MOOCs have thousands of students enrolled at a time and engaging personally with each student is not possible. However, we encourage you to use the discussion boards and seek help and feedback from your fellow students who are enrolled in the course.

**Stick with it!** We encourage you to take the course from beginning to end to get the full learning experience. Some modules may be very easy for you and others will be harder. But each module should offer something of value. There's nothing like that

feeling of accomplishment when you complete something from beginning to end so hang in there and enjoy the course!

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