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This **Getting Started Guide** is your source for up-to-date information about what you need to know before you choose a school or program. Use these tips to get organized and motivated—and get going on making your dreams a reality.

AllArtSchools.com

📍 Online or On-Campus which type of classes should you attend?



There are more online schools, programs, and classes than ever before. While online classes are very convenient, they're also challenging in their own ways. Which is right for you—online or on-campus classes?

Use this **Getting Started Guide's** questions and quizzes to help you determine what's best for your personality, lifestyle, and the way you learn.

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Online classes enter the mainstream

Online classes were uncommon even a decade ago, but enrollment has tripled during that time. Now, **more than 6.1 million students** each year take one or more online classes.

high-quality education

If you've never taken an online course, you may have concerns about the quality of the learning experience, and whether it'll be harder to learn online than in a typical classroom setting. No reason to worry—in a large study by the U.S. Department of Education, online classes were shown to be more effective than in-person courses.

Fast Fact

Most college students—
85%—take at least some of
their classes online.



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Benefits of **online** classes



going mobile

Does your job require a lot of travel? Online classes can keep you on the path to your desired degree.

no schedule snafus

Many online classes have weekly homework deadlines; as long as you complete the classwork on time, you can often set your own schedule. Term paper writing at 5 a.m., or class readings at midnight? You bet.

flexible start and end dates

Some online courses are entirely self-directed. You enroll whenever you're ready, instead of waiting for the school's semester or quarter to begin. Some also offer flexible time frames, so you're given more time to finish if you need—or can finish more quickly if you'd prefer.

world vision

Online classes can include students from all over the country, and even the world. Having learned alongside a diverse student body—and considered a wide variety of perspectives and experiences during the learning process—can be seen as a plus when you're in the job market.

affordability

Many online degrees can save you money. There's no need to relocate, and the per-credit-hour tuition can be lower than on-campus programs.

less pressure

If you tend to be shy and reluctant to speak up in class, learning online and being allowed respond to each assignment on your own time will be appealing.

Fast Fact

87% of companies surveyed said they hired a graduate of an online program in the past 6 months.

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“If you’re walking down the right path and you’re willing to keep walking, eventually you’ll make progress.”
—President Barack Obama

Benefits of on-campus classes

no excuses

If you’re required to attend class and get yourself into that lecture-hall chair, you’ll be very motivated to make it to campus and less likely to fall behind on your work.

social time

It can be easier to strike up friendships with other students, set up study groups—and network with your peers when it comes time to hunt for jobs after graduation. In-person connections made with other students can last a lifetime.

collaboration

Do you thrive when you working on projects alongside others? If so, the on-campus choice is something to consider.

one-on-one attention

Taking a class you think will stretch your intellectual limits? If you know you’re in for a real challenge—maybe chemistry, calculus, or a writing course, if that’s never come easy to you—having a professor you can meet with one-on-one when the going gets tough is helpful.

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Quick quiz: which is best for you?

Not sure which type of class might be best for you? Check the box in the column that best describes yourself to see whether you lean toward online learning or the on-campus experience:

	online	on-campus
Self-motivation	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm very self-motivated and believe staying on top of my coursework will be a snap.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do best when I have a regular schedule of classes.
Schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> The convenience of watching webinars and doing coursework on my own schedule will be very helpful to me.	<input type="checkbox"/> I can adjust my work and family responsibilities around a class schedule.
Social environment	<input type="checkbox"/> I have a strong social network. While it might be fun to meet my fellow students, I'd rather be enrolled in an online program than put off my dreams and enroll in an on-campus program later.	<input type="checkbox"/> I look forward to seeing other students in class and making new friends.
Teacher interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm not shy about emailing or calling my professor if I have questions.	<input type="checkbox"/> I think being able to interact with a professor in person will be helpful to me.
Class interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm well aware that communicating with others online has its pitfalls, and I think I'll be careful to communicate sensitively.	<input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy participating in class and am not shy about raising my hand to either ask or answer questions.

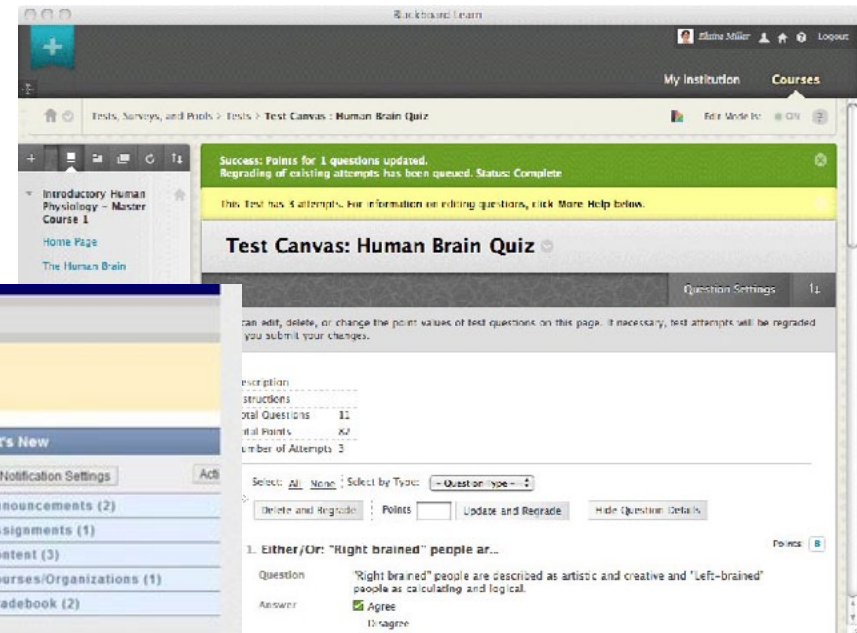
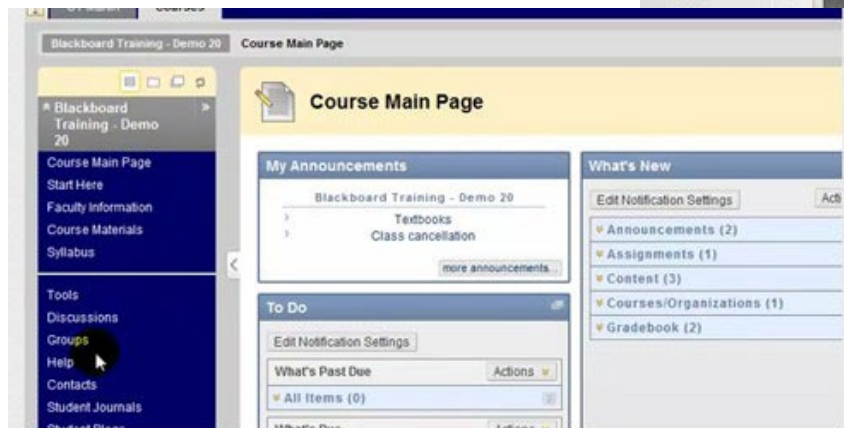
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What are online classes really like?

If you enroll in an online course, you may interact with your teacher and other students using a video-chat format. Or, your class could be set up entirely in an online learning environment, such as Blackboard. The instructor or professor writes questions that are posted to this system, and students respond. It's actually quite similar to email.

Assignments may be turned in directly to the professor's email address, posted to a virtual "drop box," or shared online for the entire class to see.



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Make a brighter future for yourself

Whether you choose an online or in-person class or program, keep in mind you're making a great choice for your future. Taking classes and working toward a degree will give you a head start in the competitive job market—and it'll also give you an immense sense of satisfaction that you finally took the plunge to make a change. While a new degree or certificate will prepare you to enter the profession of your choice, it's also about pushing yourself, becoming more confident, and discovering all you're capable of.

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“A beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.”
—B. B. King

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