
Online Course Policy Handbook
for
Students

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Introduction

Keep three things in mind as you approach an online course: participation, persistence, and patience!

Participation plays an important role. You must be an active, involved, and an independent learner. Your comments, questions, and answers are valuable in making the class feel like a community. Actively joining in will also make you feel more like a member of the group.

Persistence is a valuable quality for online learners, too. Keep trying until you get the answers you need. If technical problems come up, don't put off dealing with them; send a note to the instructor immediately. No one can see the baffled look on your face, so if you need clarification or explanation, ask for it.

Patience will help you in the online learning experience also. Be patient with yourself. Allow extra time as needed to master any course content or any new technical skills that may be unfamiliar to you. Be patient with others in the class, too, and be considerate in your comments and emails. Others can't see that you're smiling when you make a sarcastic remark, or that you're angered by someone's statement. Write your messages carefully so that they clearly convey your meaning.

Computer Requirements

As a student taking an online course, you must have access to a computer (including weekends). Our online courses require the following:

Hardware and system software

- Macintosh or Windows PC
- Internet connection
- Sound card
- Speakers and/or headphones

Browser Information

Our courses require a Web browser. Use any of the following browsers:

- Firefox
- Safari
- Internet Explorer

Set the following preferences on your browser:

- Enable Cookies
- Enable JavaScript
- Enable Style Sheets

Browser Plug-Ins

You will need the Shockwave plug-in to use all of our courses' interactive features. You can download and install Shockwave from the Adobe Shockwave Download Center online.

You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to access some of our course files. You can download Adobe Acrobat Reader from the Adobe Acrobat Reader online download site.

Screen Resolution

Our courses are best viewed with a color monitor set at a minimum screen resolution of 800 x 600 pixels.

Screen resolution settings can be adjusted in the display options for PC users and in the control panel for the Macintosh.

If you are having problems adjusting your settings, consult your operating system manual.

Technology Skill Set

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Certain technology skill sets are required to take an online course through the College of Education and Human Development. Carefully read over the technology skill self-assessment questions below.

Computer Operations/Concepts:

1. Can you start up, restart, and shut down a computer?
2. Do you know how to click, double-click, and right-click the mouse?
3. Can you open, close, minimize, and move windows and menus on your computer's desktop?
4. Do you know how to create folders and navigate a directory to locate files?
5. Can you save and retrieve files from storage devices such as a USB flash drive or external drive?

Word Processing Skills:

1. Can you create, save, delete, and print a word processing document?
2. Do you know how to cut, copy, and paste text in a document?
3. Can you change text formatting such as font style and size, paragraph alignment, etc.?
4. Do you know how to use the spell-check feature of your word processing program?
5. Can you rename, copy, or save a document to a floppy, hard drive, etc.?

Internet/World Wide Web:

1. Can you distinguish between a website URL and an email address?
2. Given a URL, can you access the Internet and go to that website?
3. Do you know how to use the "Bookmark" or "Favorites" feature of your browser?
4. Are you familiar with using Internet search engines such as Google or Bing.com?
5. Can you download and install browser plug-ins for common software applications such as Adobe Reader, Windows Media Player, Real Player, etc.?

Email Basics:

1. Do you know how to acquire a free, personal email address, or have you already established an email account of your own?

2. Do you know how to send, receive, forward, and reply to email messages?
3. Can you save and delete email messages?
4. Do you know how to attach a file to an email message, and open an incoming email attachment?
5. Can you use the "address book" feature of your email to create and send "group" mailings?

Austin Community College created this self-assessment instrument.

Accessing Campus ID, Email and Courses at ULM

To access ULM programs, you will need to know your Campus Wide Identification number (CWID) and your ULM email username.

1. To find your Campus Wide Identification number (CWID), go to the Arrow System at <https://arrow.ulm.edu/>.

- Click on LOG IN to Student Services.
- Log in using your Social Security Number as the Student ID and your birth month and year (mmyyyy) as the PIN. If that does not work, use the last two digits of your birth year (mmyy). This will log you in and give your CWID. Make a note of your CWID and password.

2. To find your ULM email address, go to myULM at <https://my.ulm.edu>.

- Click on the Help Tab, scroll to the bottom and enter you CWID, click on Get Account Name. This will give you your ULM email address and password information. Make a note of your ULM email address and password.

3. You will now be able to log in to myULM which gives you access to Arrow, Zimbra, and Moodle.



myULM is a Web portal with Single Sign-On (SSO) and secure access to your ULM profile and records. Available inside *myULM* is access to ARROW, Moodle, Email, FlightPath and more. You can access **myULM** from [the myULM Web portal login page](#) or click the **myULM** logo on the left.

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4. Once you log in to myULM, click on the Campus Systems tab and click on launch ARROW. You will be automatically logged in to ARROW. Click on the Term tab and choose the correct term. Click on the Registration tab and choose Add/Drop Classes. **ARROW is where you will enroll in courses** for the upcoming semester. Use the Course tab to search for availability of courses.



ARROW stands for **A**cademic **R**egistration and **R**ecords **O**n the **W**eb. While logged in to ARROW you can check your financial aid information, course availability, and access your student records. You can access ARROW from [the myULM Web portal login page](#) or click the **ARROW** logo on the left.

5. Access the official ULM Email through myULM. This is the only email you are to use for sending and receiving information related to your enrollment and courses at ULM.



ULM Email is available through Zimbra, ULM's Web mail service. Zimbra also provides collaboration tools, such as a calendar and other features. You can access **Zimbra** from [the myULM Web portal login page](#) or click the **Zimbra** logo on the left.

6. Moodle is where you will access your online courses. Log on to Moodle through myULM. The first time you log in to Moodle, you will not be enrolled in any classes. You must exit, wait at least 30 minutes, and log in for a second time. You should then have access to the classes you are enrolled in. Click on "Intro to Moodle – Student" in the Main Menu for more information on using Moodle.

MOODLE is a course management system which allows faculty to place course materials online. Students can also interact and collaborate with each other while connected to Moodle. You can access **Moodle** from [the myULM Web portal login page](#) or click the **Moodle** logo on the left.

Course Attendance Policy

The College of Education and Human Development at the University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM), believes that students must attend class if they are to be well prepared for the workplace. Online courses are no different from traditional classroom courses in this regard. Online students are subject to the same attendance policy and procedures as traditional students. Please see the "Attendance Policy and Procedures" section of the ULM Student Handbook. However, participation is defined in a different manner.

Student attendance in online courses is defined as active participation in the course as described in the individual course syllabus. Online courses will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for student participation, which can be documented by any or all of the following methods:

- Completion of tests
- Discussion boards or forums
- Submission/completion of assignments (through the digital drop box or discussion boards)
- Communication with the instructor

Having these weekly mechanisms in place requires that students attend class each week. Students are required to log in to each online course by the second day during the week in which the course officially begins and to complete the initial introductory postings required in the course. Students must log in at least one additional day during the first week of the course. Students must log in on two separate days each subsequent week of the course to meet attendance requirements.

If you fail to meet these attendance requirements in one week of the course, you will be given an absence for that week. Students are allowed one absence per course. If possible, contact the instructor in advance and make arrangements to complete the required assignments. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the instructor. If students fail to meet the attendance requirements for a second week in the course, students will be withdrawn from the course retroactive to the last date of recorded attendance. Required courses must then be repeated.

Students who do not email their instructor regarding their attendance by the last day of the Drop/Add period will be dropped from the course. (The drop/add period is usually the first week of the semester. Drop/add dates are listed in the semester schedule.) Students who fail to maintain active participation in an online course as defined in the course syllabus will be processed using the current attendance policy.

Course Communication Protocol

You are able to communicate with instructors via e-mail, discussion forums, an instructor's Web page, teleconferences, or any combination of these.

Instructors will use any of those above mentioned combinations as well as others to keep in contact with you and also to make announcements and updates. It's your responsibility to follow the method of communication that is given by the instructor.

Requirements for communication with students

- Method and form of communication between instructor and student will be clearly posted on course site.
- During the fall and spring semester, instructor of the course will respond to student's questions within 48 hours on weekdays and weekends. During the summer or interim sessions, instructor of the course will respond to student's question within 24 hours on weekdays and weekends.
- Course instructors will maintain at least 2 of the 10 required office hours as virtual office hours a week in the fall and spring semester. In the summer and interim semester 2 of the 5 required office hours will be maintained as virtual office hours a week. These hours must be clearly posted on course site. Virtual office hours - means that course instructors will be logged on to the course site during those hours to answer questions or address any issues regarding the course from students.
- Course instructors may also conduct face-to-face question and answer session at their discretion. These sessions must be optional and not required for students to attend. In these sessions no new material or reviews can be conducted, since this would create an unfair advantage to those who attended.
- Course instructors and student must follow net etiquette as outlined in Appendix C.

Course Grading Protocol

The following grading protocols are implemented to help create an efficient and student friendly learning environment.

Grading Scale

The grading scale will be determined by the course instructor and will be clearly described in the course syllabus.

Fall & Spring instructor turnaround time requirements

Student Action	Instructor Turnaround Time
Assignment	5 days
Questions and inquiries	2 days (including weekends)
Exams	10 days

Summer & Interim session instructor turnaround time requirements

Student Action	Instructor Turnaround Time
Assignment	3 days (including weekends)
Questions and inquiries	1 days (including weekends)
Exams	5 days (including weekends)

Assessment System

All courses will follow current assessment protocol as face-to-face courses.

Grade Appeal

Grade appeals will be addressed as outlined in the student handbook. However you are encouraged to have regular communication with instructors regarding grading and other course issues. Proper protocol must be followed to maintain the integrity of the appeals process and the University.

Netiquette

Internet etiquette, or **netiquette** guides us in proper behavior on the Internet. There are widely accepted rules of behavior to follow when you're online. It is very important to learn and follow these rules.

Sometimes the online world can feel "pretend" because you cannot see the person with whom you are communicating. So, it is very important to remember that you are dealing with "real" people online and you should use your very best manners - just as you would at home or at school.

As a **newbie** (someone new to the Internet) you do not want to venture into cyberspace until you are familiar with the acceptable rules of Internet behavior. There are a few tips that can help you feel more comfortable with the new situations cyberspace will throw at you. With a little practice you can become a responsible **Netizen**.

Here are some things to remember anytime you are online:

Do unto others, as you'd have others do unto you. Be polite and courteous at all times. Remember that you're not communicating with a computer screen, but with a human being who has thoughts and feelings just like you. So, always think of the *person* on the receiving end of your messages.

Do not TYPE IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS for emphasis. IT LOOKS LIKE YOU ARE SHOUTING. If you need to emphasize a word, use asterisks, like **this** or lines, like *_this_*.

Remember that the written word is hard to interpret. When you speak to someone, that person can hear the tone of your voice. If they can see you, they can take visual clues from your face and body to better understand your meaning. All of this is lost in text, and sometimes responses can come across as mean or rude, even when you did not intend them this way. This is the reason some people use emoticons (visual clues) in their e-mails, it saves a lot of confusion.

Be careful not to use rude or bad language online. Many providers will terminate your account.

Don't break any laws. When you're on the net, follow the same rules of behavior that you would in real life. Remember, if it is against the law in the real world, it is against the law in cyberspace.

Be universal. Other users have different Web browsers, different online services, different e-mail programs, etc. So don't, for example, send out e-mail with text formatting -- boldface, italics, indentations, etc. -- because many other programs will not be able to read the formatting and the recipients will receive your e-mail filled with muddled codes.

Be brief whenever possible. No one wants to read through a lot of unnecessary
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information. If you are replying to an e-mail, try editing out unimportant information and anything that is repeated.

Don't flame. Do not send rude or offensive e-mails or postings. It's bad manners and can get seriously out of hand (flame wars). So don't flame others and if you are flamed, do not respond: you will never win. If you are flamed in a forum or chat room, or if you receive hateful e-mail, let your instructor know.

Always identify yourself. Never send e-mail without including your name at the bottom of the e-mail. Similarly, don't post forum messages without identifying yourself, this is seen as rude.

Make a good impression. Remember that the written word is the only way you can represent yourself online, so spelling and grammar count. If you are going to be writing a large amount of text for other people to see, make sure you break it up using paragraphs, it will make it easier on the eye for those that will read it.

Be patient with newcomers. Once you have become an Internet expert, it is easy to forget that you started out as a newbie too. Learning the rules of cyberspace is much like learning a new language; it takes practice, and includes making mistakes. So if you come across someone else's mistakes on the net, don't put them down, just politely point them in the right direction for guidance.

http://www.kidsdomain.com/brain/computer/surfing/netiquette_kids.html (modified to fit our needs)