Online Student Essentials
The following checklists are designed to help you get ready to learn online, whether you are taking your first online class or your tenth!

First Time Online Students—the Essentials
- Set up a study space—an area dedicated just for coursework.
- Make sure your accounts (Rebelmail, WebCampus, Library) are activated.
- Check that your computer meets the technical requirements.
- Practice navigating WebCampus and using its tools.
- Review the Office of Information Technology (OIT) information for students.
- Help us improve this resource PDF. Please give us feedback about what is and is not helpful.

Essentials for All Online Students
Before the semester begins:
- Check out our Tips for Success Online (below).
- Review the WebCampus tip sheets and tutorials if needed.
- Familiarize yourself with the Resources and Support available to you as a UNLV student.

As soon as your online classroom is available:*
- Log in to WebCampus.
- Read the “Getting Started” section of your course.
- Review the course syllabus thoroughly. Make note of:
  - Important dates and deadlines.
  - Your instructor’s availability, office hours, and preferred method of contact.
  - How to get questions answered.
- Order your books and course materials.

Throughout the semester:
- Log in to your class on a regular basis. We recommend at least once a day.
- Promptly read the announcements and other communications from your instructor.
- Connect with your classmates.
- Manage your time, set schedules, and meet your course deadlines.
- Participate in the class discussions.

At the end of the semester:
Let us know what worked well and what could be improved.
- Complete the course evaluation form(s) to provide constructive feedback about the course.
- Help us improve this resource PDF. Please give us feedback now that the course is over.

Consider how you approached learning online.
- Note what worked best for you and what you would do differently next semester.
- Reflect on how you will apply everything you learned and accomplished in this course.

*Students are able to access their online classroom 1 week (7 days) before the class is scheduled to start for most classes. Some faculty members may elect to make the section unavailable until they are ready for students to access the materials.
Tips for Success Online

Taking a course online is different from taking a traditional course in a physical classroom. To be successful, a student must plan time to study and be disciplined in keeping pace with the course. Check out our Tips for Success online.

Goals and Objectives
Identify your short term goals and write them down to help ensure that you achieve them. In addition your online classes will have goals and objectives, as well as learning outcomes for each module.

- **Read the syllabus carefully.** Make sure you understand what is expected of you, as well as the goals and objectives of the course. Ask questions if you are uncertain.
- **Review learning objectives** for the course and for each module. Use these to make sure you are on track when completing projects and assignments or participating in discussions.
- **Set study goals.** Create a list of things to accomplish in each log-on or study session. Check off items as you complete them.

Study Space & Organization
Success in online classes requires you to be organized and have a place to study that works for you.

- **Set up a study space**—an area dedicated just for coursework.
- **Keep study tools in one place.** Make it easier to get to work and stay focused by having a specific place or bag for all of your tools and supplies (books, computer, paper, pens, etc...)
- **Create a course folder on your desktop or Google drive.** Keep all files and documents for your course in one place that's easy to find and access.
- **Have a backup plan!** Identify a strategy (flash drive, cloud, Google docs) for backing up important files.

Time Management
As an online student, it will be up to you to establish a regular study/learning schedule.

- **Note important dates and deadlines in your calendar.** Be sure to review the UNLV Academic Calendar as well as the course syllabus. Keep track of assignments and other requirements.
- **Check in daily.** Students who log in and participate consistently have a much higher level of satisfaction with their online learning experience.
- **Avoid interruptions** during the times you’ve set aside as “class time”. Turn off your cell phone. Let family members or housemates know not to distract you when you are “in class”.
- **Pace your work.** Regular, spaced study results in better learning. You want to learn the relevant skills and concepts presented in the course—not just cover material.
- **Look ahead.** Develop a plan to tackle assignments or projects that may have similar deadlines.
Communication & Interaction

Communication and interaction with your instructor and classmates are key to a successful online student experience.

- **Make connections.** Get to know your instructor and classmates.
- **Participate in online discussions frequently and consistently.** Discussions are the heart of the online classroom. This is where you “talk” with your instructor and classmates. Generally discussions are focused on a dialogue between students, as well as the instructor.
  - **Read (and follow!) the course instructions** and expectations for discussions carefully.
  - **Say something substantive.** Back up your opinions with facts to strengthen your position. **Cite your sources** to avoid plagiarism.
  - **Participate in discussions early and often.** You’ll miss out on the conversation if you wait until the last minute to post.
  - **Remember the discussions are a conversation.** Just like in a face-to-face classroom, you need to “Speak up” to share your thoughts and contribute by posting to the discussion. You want to be part of the conversation but not dominate it.
- **Ask questions.** If something isn’t clear to you, ask. Know when and how to best contact your instructor. Keep in mind that they are not online 24/7; you will need to give them time to respond. Remember that you can also post questions in the discussion forums; often some of your classmates will have the same question and one of your classmates may know the answer.
- **Use an appropriate writing style** for the environment and audience. An informal style may be fine when communicating privately with classmates. However, when contacting your instructor or posting in the discussions, you should write in full, grammatically correct sentences. Review your message for tone and clarity. In all of your online communications be professional and practice good Netiquette. Review Virginia Shea’s “Core Rules of Netiquette” for tips.
- **Ask for help.** Unlike the face to face classroom, faculty can not read students facial expressions and body language. If you are struggling or have a question, it is up to you to let them know.
- **Identify your support network.** This can include friends and family members, as well as classmates, professors, mentors, university resources, and tech support.

Learning Style

Know your learning style and determine whether the online learning environment is compatible with how you learn best. If it is not, look for ways to support your learning style that are not exclusive to the online environment. This may include:

- **Utilize UNLV student resources** such as the Writing Center and Academic Success Center.
- **Visit the University Libraries** and use their Library Services for Online Education Students.
- **Join a study group** online or meet in person. Having other people to study with can help you gain new perspective on the material, reduce procrastination, and enjoy the class more.
- **Look for real-world examples.** The more relevant the subject is to your actual experience, the better you will understand and retain it.
- **Practice what you learn** as soon and as often as possible.
- **Talk about what you are learning with others.** One of the most effective strategies for learning is to explain what you have learned to someone. Discuss concepts to reinforce your understanding.
Helpful Contacts

The Office of Online Education is dedicated to working with the university community to support your success as an online student. General student information can be found on the student section of the UNLV website.

Technical Support

The WebCampus Support Center has a knowledge base that may provide the information you need. You can submit a support ticket, chat live, email, or call the IT Help Desk at (702) 895-0777. Tutorials and instructions for all tools are available at the WebCampus Support.

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<tr>
<th>WebCampus Accounts and Passwords</th>
<th>Rebelmail accounts</th>
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<tr>
<td>WebCampus Support - Students</td>
<td>General technical assistance</td>
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Academic Resources and Support

Your instructor should be your first point of contact when you have questions about your course. If you are unable to contact your instructor, call your academic department or college. UNLV provides Academic Resources and Support to degree seeking undergraduate and graduate students in online as well as face-to-face classes.

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<th>Academic Advising</th>
<th>Online Writing Lab (OWL)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Success Center</td>
<td>More UNLV Resources and Support</td>
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Accessibility

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas is committed to providing equal access to its programs and services for students who experience disabilities. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) was established to support these goals and to provide assistance with college learning through the provision of academic adjustments, auxiliary services, and advocacy.

If you wish to request accommodations, you must register with the Disability Resource Center.

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<th>Request Accommodations</th>
<th>Disability Resource Center</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contact DRC</td>
<td>Accessibility at Blackboard</td>
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UNLV Libraries and Official Bookstore

UNLV Libraries makes accessing our resources and services as seamless as possible for online students, even if you're thousands of miles away. Visit the official UNLV online bookstore for textbooks, e-textbooks, apparel, supplies, and technology.

| UNLV Library Services For Online Education | UNLV Official Bookstore |
| Register to use the library remotely (off campus) | UNLV Copyright Information |
| UNLV University Libraries |

Admissions, Registration, and Financial Aid

You must apply and be accepted to UNLV through the standard admissions process in order to enroll in online or hybrid degree programs. If you would like to enroll in courses at UNLV without being officially accepted into a degree-granting program, you may apply to UNLV as a non-degree-seeking student.

Students in Nevada can take online courses. If you are outside of Nevada and wish to take online courses at UNLV, see our information on State Authorizations.

Once you are accepted to UNLV, look for classes in MyUNLV that are listed as "Hybrid", "Webbased", or "Webbased with on/off campus meeting" under "Mode of Instruction". Then follow the usual process to enroll.

| Undergraduate Admissions | Tuition and Fees |
| Graduate Admissions | Financial Aid and Scholarships |
| Undergraduate Non-Degree Seeking Students | Registration |
| Graduate Non-Degree Seeking Students | State Authorization |

Diversity

The university is committed to diversity and inclusion, as stated in the UNLV mission to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment. The Office of Diversity Initiatives facilitates policy creation and compliance; supporting strategies that enhance professional development, mentoring, recruitment and retention; as well as working in collaboration with campus and community partners to foster and encourage cultural competency.

| Visit the Office of Diversity Initiatives | Contact the Office of Diversity Initiatives |

UNLV Office of Online Education Helpful Contacts Updated January 3, 2017