



David Miles
December 19, 2006
ITEC 860

10 Do's & Don'ts of A Hybrid Course

Taking classes can be a fairly daunting task when faced with the demands of busy life schedules. Here's a solution, take your courses online. You've tried that but sometimes you just feel left out of the classroom's social loop. Well have you tried a hybrid solution yet? A hybrid course will allow you to attend your class face-to-face, online or both. Here are some tips to help you succeed in your hybrid course.

1. Don't Treat It Like One or the Other

This is a hybrid course so use the benefits of each style of the course even if you'll be doing primarily one over the other. If you're going to be primarily a face-to-face student make sure to use the online notes and, course materials and if available the class recordings to accent your own in class notes. If you'll primarily be taking the course as an online student don't forget there are real live people in this class to interact with and a live instructor to ask questions to.

2. Do Read the Syllabus

There's tons of information here. Everything from the instructor's office hours to course assignments can be found in the syllabus. It's a quick way to find standard information about the class. So give it a look on or before the first day of class and give yourself an idea of what you're about to embark on.

3. Don't Sit Idly By

Participate, participate, participate. You have to get involved in the class, especially if you're online. When there's a class discussion or forum posts by your classmates have a voice and respond. When you're online if you don't speak up people can easily forget that you're even there. Not being seen by your classmates or instructor can have a negative impact on your grade.

4. Do Get to Know Your Classmates

Everyone who's asked to share notes in a face-to-face class knows that your classmates can be your best friends. The same applies to those students taking the course primarily online. Classmates can answer question that are unclear to you, catch you up on things you've missed and even be a sounding board for you to bounce your thoughts off. Social interaction will also alleviate the feeling of disconnect some students feel with a class solely online.

5. Don't Forget to Reflect

Many instructors ask students to write reflection papers for each class or week that has gone by for the class. Whatever the time frame of the reflections are, try and do them as they come up. Going back in the end and looking through your notes or revisiting the entire online library for the course to write your reflections can be exhausting and probably won't look that great to your instructor either.

6. Do Attend A Class (F2F)

Are things getting rough online? Is motivation to keep up with online work getting a little low? Well why not go in to the face-to-face portion of the class. Interaction with real living people in a "normal" classroom setting can be just the jolt you need to get things going again. It will also give you chance to meet the people you've been interacting with in your virtual settings, talk with your instructor and get out of the house for a much needed breath of fresh air. See number seven.

7. Don't Get Stuck In Front of Your Computer

Take a break. Schoolwork can get tough if you're spending all your time sitting in front of a computer. Many people opting for more of an online education do so because of work schedules that don't permit for attending classes face-to-face. If you're working on a computer, studying on a computer and playing on a computer chances are you'll need to step away and clear your head and give your eyes a break from staring into the glow of a computer monitor. Hybrid courses are about having the best of both educational worlds so if you've been spending too much time in front of the computer give face-to-face a try.

8. Do Talk With Your Instructor

One quick and simple way to get a feel for how things are going with any course is to talk with your instructor and hybrid courses are no exception. You'll have quite a number of options to do this. You can chat with them through emails, in online forums/discussions, in person during regular office hours or in class during normal regular class hours. Instructors can help with any number of topics and should not be shied away from. Don't forget there to help you; instructors' goal is for you to succeed not to fail.

9. Don't Flake

It's easy to hide out in both face-to-face and online classes and not get a lot done. A major portion of a successful hybrid class is the interaction between all involved. If you're distancing yourself from the class it makes it that much harder for everyone else. Make sure when you a lot time to be a part of the course to actually show up and do your best to be a part of the class. Hybrid courses can have group assignments, discussions boards, forums, emails discussions and presentations all of which need every student to be involved to the most effective for everyone.

10. Do Have Fun

You're taking this class for a reason, whether it is a need for a specific degree program or personal interest; so enjoy the class you've chosen to take. Utilize all the available tools of the hybrid structure to make the most of the class. If you're a face-to-face student opt for a class or two online or pair up with another student that's primarily online and vice versa if you're planning on being primarily an online student. Classes you enjoy you're more likely to participate in, keep up with your assignments and overall do better in the class.