

# Are you prepared for online learning?



## Prerequisites

Students who enroll in online/hybrid courses at Southwestern Michigan College are expected to have some computer and technical skills in order to be successful. As a student in either of these types of courses, you will be expected to have good reading, writing, and study skills. You will also be expected to:

- Complete your assignments on time as outlined by your instructor
- Organize your time
- Keep up with your reading assignments
- Participate in online activities
- Monitor SMC Wired for communications
- Be able to read and understand assignments and directions which may be provided in person or online
- Immediately inform your instructor of any questions or concerns
- Be a person that stays on schedule and is self-motivated

You will be required to take any traditional classes which are prerequisites to these courses prior to enrolling in an online or hybrid course.

## What students should know before enrolling in a hybrid course

Students enrolling in hybrid courses should know that there are different expectations from the traditional classroom learning than those which are online.

**Faculty Contact:** Your hybrid course instructor has a role that is somewhat different from that of an instructor in a traditional course. In a hybrid course, the instructor is more of a “facilitator of learning” than a source of information or a discussion leader. However, this does not mean that the instructor is unavailable to you.

**Time Management:** Time management is crucial for hybrid course work. All assignments need to be completed and sent to your instructor on time so it will be necessary for you to set aside time on a regular basis to study. This will require self-discipline.

**Technology:** Even the most sophisticated technology is not 100 percent reliable. Problems can occur with technology at any point during your coursework. Should you experience problems, you need to be

ready with a backup plan. Fortunately, there are several places on campus for you to go for help such as the Learning Centers at the Dowagiac campus and Niles Area Campus. Communicate with your instructor first if you are having difficulties.

**Accepting Responsibility for Personal Learning:** There may be some students who enroll in a hybrid course that are not prepared to take responsibility for their own learning. Hybrid courses emphasize learning activities that require student responsiveness and participation. Students who are accustomed solely to traditional lecture formats may be unprepared for their new active roles. You cannot be a passive learner. When discussion questions are posted, everyone is expected to respond.

**Expectation that Fewer Classes Means Less Work:** Students seem to expect that fewer in-person classes equates to less coursework. Surprisingly, many of the students don't perceive time spent in lectures as work, but they definitely see time spent online as work, even if it is time they would have spent in class in a traditional course.

**Preparation:** To succeed in a hybrid course, you must be comfortable using computers and software applications. It will be hard to keep up in an online hybrid course if you are not reasonably skilled at using a web browser and email communication through SMC Wired. You must have time and access to the web several times a week; you must keep up with the class reading; you must stay current with class assignments deadlines; you must read assignments and directions carefully; and most importantly, you must be self-motivated in order to success in a hybrid course.