

TSU ONLINE

TSU Online seeks to firmly embed online education and other instructional technologies as key elements of the teaching and learning culture of Texas Southern University (TSU). TSU Online has a broader aim to enhance the University's reputation for teaching excellence and to provide a richly interactive and stimulating learning environment for students, faculty and staff alike. This section highlights TSU Online services,

- Such as the administration of the learning management system (Blackboard Learn), online faculty development, digital content development, integrated publisher content, secure assessments delivery, and course instructional design.

Technology and Coursework Completion

1. Blackboard and Your Course

- All Courses at Texas Southern, whether classroom based or wholly online, may utilize Blackboard for coursework delivery to varying extents depending on the instructor. Online courses are heavily dependent of Blackboard for content delivery, student engagement and interaction, grade reporting, and synchronous/asynchronous lecture delivery. Familiarity with Blackboard is critical to your success as a student. Here are a few things to know about Blackboard for coursework delivery at Texas Southern:

1. The Login URL: <https://texasu.blackboard.com/>

1. Coursework Participation

- Both face-to-face and online courses may utilize Blackboard for coursework delivery. This includes ongoing assessments, assignments, tests, and paper submission. It is the responsibility of the student to be mindful of the following:
- **Confirm technical requirements and Workspace:** Online classes can benefit students with busy schedules, but only if they can access the materials. Make sure you will have access to a good working computer with appropriate productivity software suites, reliable internet connection, and an ideal location to take tests and participate in online web conferences as needed.
- **Connect with instructors early:** Send your instructor a note, an email, introducing yourself and what you hope to get out of the class. Share your thoughts and course needs as the semester progresses. Instructors love to hear from students, however, keep the communication chatter free.
- **Create a schedule:** Familiarize yourself with the full semester schedule and contact your instructor early to see if accommodations can be made if you sense a conflict might occur during the semester. Otherwise, stay on schedule.
- **Stay organized:** Students enrolled in traditional courses usually have a consistent schedule to follow each week, with in-class instruction followed by out-of-class assignments. Find ways to stay on top of your coursework by utilizing tools such as electronic calendars, digital reminders, and other mobile electronic resources that can alert you to pending deadlines.
- **Know your rights:** Students taking online classes have very similar rights as on campus students. Consult your student handbook for more information.

Online courses at TSU are offered primarily as asynchronous (any time), Web-based instruction. While anytime, anywhere learning increases the accessibility of TSU courses, students should reflect carefully on whether online courses match their learning style and expectations for study. In particular, students should self-assess their level of readiness to learn in an online environment. Online courses are geared for the mature, self-motivated learner. They are not easier or less time-consuming than face-to-face (F2F) courses; many students feel that online courses initially require additional effort to adapt to new modes of course delivery and new ways of interacting with the instructor and fellow students.

Online courses are designed as active and collaborative (including peer-to-peer) learning environments. The instructor will provide his or her expertise through lectures, readings, activities, and discussions with students, serving as a facilitator, and encouraging students to explore and interact with fellow learners to reach new levels of understanding and knowledge. Some instructors may even schedule optional synchronous (a.k.a., real time) meetings to aid students.

Successful peer interactive learning requires regular attendance and participation; students enrolled in online courses are expected to log into the course website frequently (at least four or five times per week). Although asynchronous courses allow for flexibility in how students schedule their class work, activities and assignments often follow a rigorous schedule with firm deadlines. Typically, students will log into their course at the beginning of each week to receive instructions about what learning activities to complete; these activities are often bundled as a "learning module." Over the course of each week, they will be required to complete various activities (e.g., quizzes, exercises, short papers) and participate in online discussions by the dates the instructor has established in the syllabus and weekly learning modules. Students may also work on term projects over the course of the term in addition to weekly assignments.

Throughout the semester, online classroom participation through Web tools such as discussion boards, weblogs, and wikis are expected on a regular basis and often represents a significant portion of the final grade for the course (30 percent or higher in many cases). Students should examine the syllabus closely to determine requirements for the course and weighting of each assignment.

Getting Help and Contacting TSU Online

For assistance with blackboard and other instructional technologies for coursework related activities you may contact TSU Online through any of the following options:

Email: tsuonline@tsu.edu

Call the 24/7 helpdesk @ (713) 313-4357

In Person: Mack H. Hannah Hall 320

General Office Hours: Monday – Friday (8am – 5pm)

What to Expect When Taking Online Courses at TSU