TIPS FOR ENGAGING IN A VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

CONNECT WITH YOUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

SEND YOUR INSTRUCTOR AN EMAIL (OR TEXT) THE FIRST WEEK OF THE COURSE
- Introduce yourself and let your instructor know if you have any experience with online learning
- Ask questions about the course or the syllabus
- Communicate, communicate, communicate with your instructor
- Tell your instructor about any situation that keeps you from getting your work done for class – the earlier you do this, the better

FELLOW STUDENTS
- Connect with other students in your course in IvyLearn by clicking on the People tab on the left side of the page
- Organize a student group or reach out with questions about the course
- Engage with other students in the course in your discussion boards – this will help you get to know your peers
- Use the conversations link to send a message to not only the instructor but any of the other students in the course

GET COMFORTABLE IN THE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

- Download the Zoom app on your smartphone and your laptop/desktop computer (messaging and data rates will apply, so use on wi-fi when possible)
- Review the syllabus to see when assignments are due and how each assignment will be graded
- Make a note for yourself with the contact information for your instructor. (If something is unclear or you have questions, make sure to reach out to your instructor immediately.)
- Stay up-to-date on your grades; make sure any third-party software reports correctly into IvyLearn's gradebook (some take up to 24 hours to transfer)
- Create a folder on your desktop for each course you're taking; as you complete assignments, save copies of your work in the corresponding folder

A LITTLE BIT OF PLANNING CAN SAVE TIME LATER

- Preview the assignments due next week; even if you don't work on them immediately, you can think about them throughout the week
- Consider how much time each assignment will require before the due date; set aside enough time to complete the assignments each week
- Set goals to complete assignments 24-hours ahead of the actual deadline
- Create a back-up plan for different situations
  - What will you do if your internet connection goes down?
  - What will you do if you don't understand how to do something?
  - What will you do if you feel very frustrated?
  - What will be your plan if you miss one important assignment?

SET ASIDE TIME TO WORK ON YOUR COURSE

- Plan on checking in the course each day to see if you have new messages or announcements; respond to discussions daily
- Try to limit distractions if possible; find a quiet space, turn off other electronics and log-out of social media accounts
- Start your assignments as early as possible during the week because this gives you time to connect with the instructor or your peers, if you need help

WORK ON YOUR WRITING SKILLS

- Take the time to proofread because virtual classrooms often rely much more on reading and writing--and writing will likely be the main way you present yourself to your classmates and instructor
- Keeping in mind that tone can sometimes be difficult to express in e-mail, extend others patience, and try to be professional in your own messages to others
- Let others read your work before submitting
- Take advantage of the College's resources, such as free tutoring hours through Tutor.com and the library available at **Library.IvyTech.edu**

ASKING QUESTIONS IS PART OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

- Remember, eventually everyone will need to ask for guidance and help in the virtual classroom – including you – so don't be shy
- Reach out to your instructor with any questions; s/he wants you to succeed in the course
- Make sure to familiarize yourself with online resources to help you be successful with your academic work
- Access free tutoring on Tutor.com or connect with your campus to find a tutor there
- Online students have the same resources available to them as face-to-face students. If you need help, need food for your family so you can stay in school, need to talk to a therapist to help you work through a crisis in your life, please reach out to the person in charge of student resources on your campus-they will often have the resources to assist you or know who to refer you to in the community. Many times, the instructor or your IvyOnline Faculty Lead can help you find this person

UTILIZING ONLINE IVY TECH RESOURCES

The IvyLearn Student Resource Center contains many helpful resources that can also be accessed through the Help icon in IvyLearn. The content found here should teach you everything you need to know about Ivy Lean, including:

- Introduction to using IvyLearn (1:00:18): A 60-minute video covering all the basics for using IvyLearn, our portal housing online content for courses
- How to use the Discussion Board (3:32): Is your instructor asking you to use a discussion board in class? Watch this video and you'll know what to do
- How to take an online test or quiz (2:39)
- How to submit your homework and assignments online (2:08)
- Using Zoom: Use this Zoom Quick Guide and watch this video (50:14) on how to use your computer to interact with your class with a video lecture

Finally, always keep in mind that the best resource available to you for succeeding in your classes will be your teachers. Be sure to follow their instructions closely and stay in contact with them!

STUDENTS REQUESTING NEW OR UPDATING EXISTING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Whether you have a permanent or temporary disability, you can register for services through Disability Support Services (DSS). DSS provides a number of services, including arranging for academic accommodations. Academic accommodations are modifications or adjustments that ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to course instruction, materials, and evaluation. The accommodations must be reasonable and cannot alter the essential requirements of the course. Some examples of reasonable accommodations include extended time on exams, testing in quiet settings, permission to record lectures, or using a laptop to take notes.

DSS can help you arrange academic accommodations for your courses and communicate that accommodation to your instructor. To request or learn more about academic accommodations, click here or contact the DSS office on your Ivy Tech campus. The contact information for your DSS office can be found at **IvyTech.edu/DSS**.

Ivy Tech students who are currently registered with DSS can renew their existing academic accommodations for the new semester on-line. This document will guide you through the process of renewing accommodation. Contact your DSS office for additional support. DSS students receiving academic accommodations are encouraged to communicate this information with their faculty member at the start of the course.