

E-learning: It's Not Just for Distance Education Students Anymore

Ryan Watkins
Mike Corry
George Washington University

For both instructors and students, the introduction of many technologies has significantly changed the college classroom and experience. From Microsoft PowerPoint presentations to instant messaging software that allows students to communicate immediately with each other, the technology commonly found in today's college classrooms offers instructors and students many new tools with the potential to improve the college experience dramatically. For on-campus students whose instructors are using web sites and Internet tools to supplement course experiences, to online students who may never come to campus, the preparation of students for e-learning success is becoming a critical component of first-year experience programs.

Two essential strategies for student success in online courses are: (a) adapting old skills and habits from the traditional classroom for use in the online classroom and (b) developing and applying new e-learning skills and habits to the online classroom (Watkins & Corry, 2004). From building a robust vocabulary of technology-related terminology to adequately preparing for success in asynchronous discussions, building the learning skills for the online classroom takes many of the skills and habits for success from the traditional classroom and applies them in new ways. In addition, some technologies have dramatically changed how students interact with their instructors, peers, and course materials, thus requiring the development of new study skills (see Figure 1).

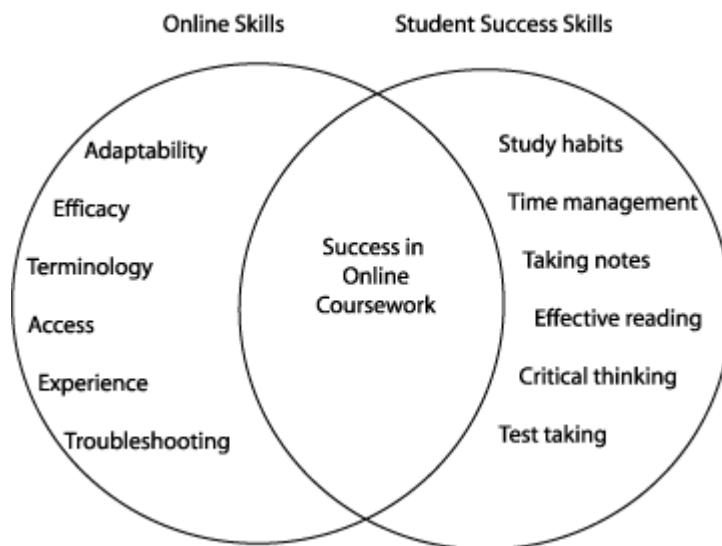


Figure 1: Relating Online Success with Traditional Student Success Skills (from the *E-learning Companion*, Watkins & Corry, 2004).

Transforming first-year courses and materials to include a focus on e-learning skills does not, however, require a great amount of work. By integrating online activities, resources, and materials into current courses, instructors can build online success skills into their courses and provide students with the information, practice, study skills, and experiences necessary for academic success.

Below are six tips for helping students succeed in online coursework:

[View Past Issue](#)

In This Issue...

[Assessing First-Year S](#)

[Connecting to Student](#)

[National Resource Cer
Activities and Initiative](#)

[Facilitating Learning
Communities](#)

[E-learning and Studen
Success](#)

[New Diversity Resourc](#)

[Institutions of Exceller](#)

Publications Staff

Tracy L. Skipper
Editorial Projects Coord

Inge Kutt Lewis
Editor

Michelle Mouton
Alicia Phillip
Editorial Assistants

Mey Wu
Web Master

Barbara Tobolowsky
Associate Director

Mary Stuart Hunter
Director

E-Source (ISSN 1542-574) published bi-monthly by the National Resource Center First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at University of South Carolina Columbia, SC 29208. Tele (803) 777-6029. A one-y

- Include at least one online activity or assignment in the first-year seminar or similar course.
- Become familiar with the technology terminology (e.g., USB memory, instant messaging, discussion boards, 802.11b technology, Blackboard, WebCT, servers, firewalls, Ethernet).
- Provide students with the necessary information for getting technical support and accessing campus computer labs.
- Offer students opportunities for assessing and improving the technology skills they will likely require in their college courses.
- Supply web links that assist students in accomplishing the college success skills covered in each lesson of the course (e.g., learning styles, time management, diversity, critical thinking, personal health).
- Encourage students to interact and communicate with other students via e-mail and other online technologies (e.g., establish a course listserv).

subscription is \$40. The C nonprofit organization, wi proceeds from the newsle defray publication costs, s research, and disseminat information. The First-Yea Experience is a trademark University of South Caroli license may be granted u written request to use the The First-Year Experience license is not transferable the written approval of th University of South Caroli

References:

Watkins, R., & Corry, M. (2004). *E-learning companion: A student's guide to online success*. New York: Houghton Mifflin

Contact:

Ryan Watkins, PhD

<http://www.ryanwatkins.com>

Michael Corry, PhD

<http://home.gwu.edu/~mccorry>

Educational Technology Leadership

The George Washington University

2129 G Street, NW #103

Washington, DC 20052

202-994-2263



NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE & STUDENTS IN TRANSITION

ret

