

Asynchronous vs. Synchronous Online Courses

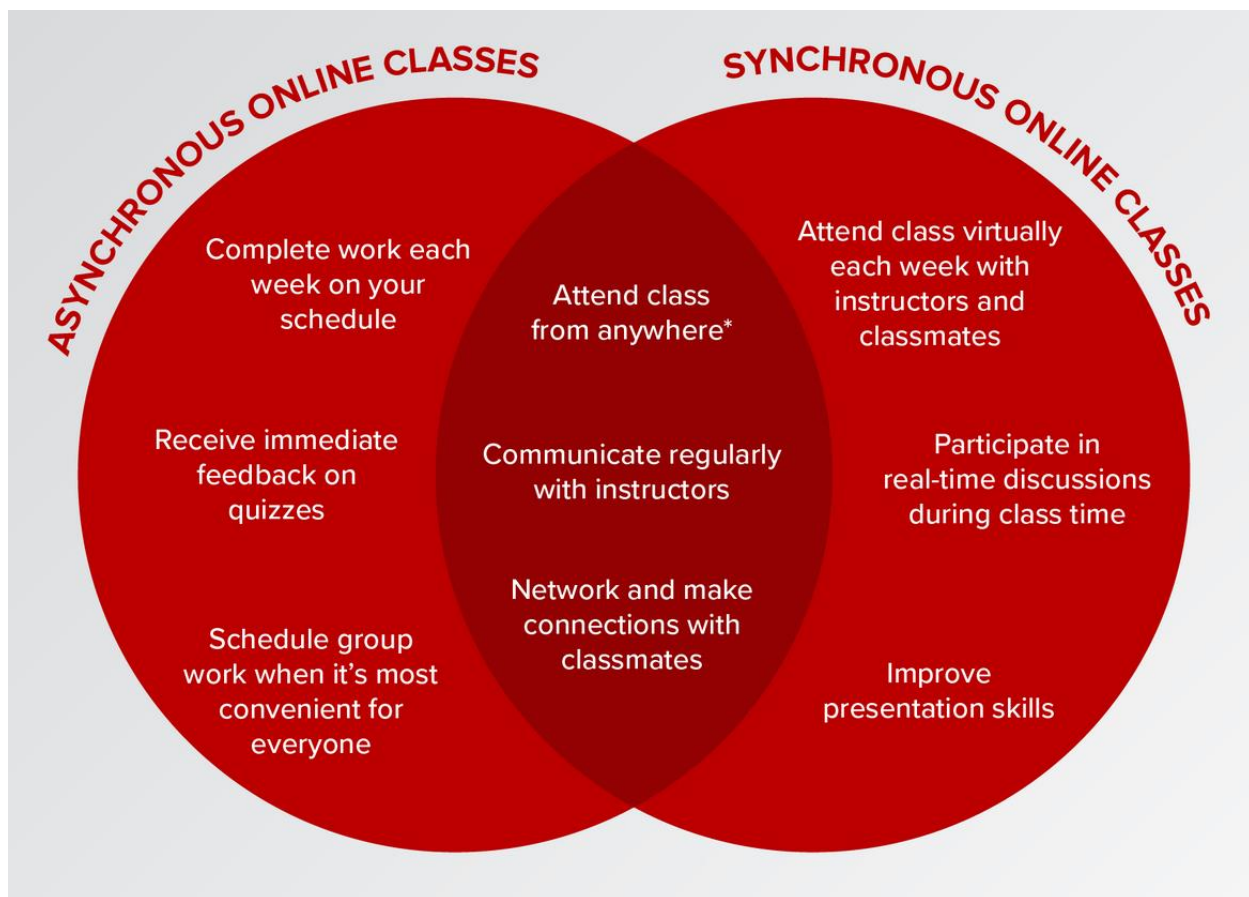
Different schedules, but the same commitment

No matter if your course is [asynchronous](#) or [synchronous](#), you will need to be deliberate with your time in order to be successful. Make sure to follow the course schedule carefully so you don't miss any deadline.

Remember that an online courses are time-consuming and they require a lot of self-discipline. You will need to block off time in your schedule to study and complete coursework.

Some students fear they'll feel disconnected or disengaged in an online course. To combat feelings of isolation, we recommend that students always reach out to their instructors and classmates and attempt to make meaningful connections.

In an online class, student engagement needs to be more purposeful than an in-person class. It is critical that all students are invested in their coursework.



Asynchronous Online Courses

- Asynchronous courses mean that you don't always need to be online at the same time as your instructor or classmates. A great benefit to asynchronous online courses is the time flexibility.
- Asynchronous learning allows you to learn on your own schedule within specified deadlines. You can access and complete lectures, readings, homework and other learning materials at any time before the assigned due date.
- You will need purchase all required course materials (i.e. books, lab kits, etc.).
- You will need to maintain **consistent access to a computer with high speed internet** to complete the course.
- Online asynchronous classes might include PowerPoint presentations or short videos teaching key concepts that you can view over and over again, if necessary.
- We caution students not to get the idea that asynchronous classes are any less rigorous than their synchronous or on-campus counterparts.
- Just like a student on campus, you should expect to be doing work one week at a time. You should also expect to have contact with your instructor and classmates every week in a substantial way.

Synchronous Online Courses

- Synchronous courses means that although you will be learning from a distance, you will virtually attend a class session each week, at the same time as your instructor and classmates.
- **Class meeting time is a firm time commitment** with the expectation that you will attend each class sessions using Blackboard Collaborate or Microsoft Teams. **Instructors will take attendance.** Class discussion and interaction occurs mainly during these meetings.
- You will need purchase all required course materials (i.e. books, lab kits, etc.).
- You will need to maintain consistent access to a **computer, webcam, microphone, and high speed internet** to complete the course. You can use a cell phone with wifi to access online synchronous sessions if your computer does not have a webcam or microphone.
- Much like an on-campus class, you will have readings and assignments to complete outside of class time to help prepare you to participate in the discussion. This kind of preparation from students, along with a dedicated agenda set by the instructor, ensures each class session is productive.
- Online synchronous learning doesn't always just take the form of a live video lecture or an instructor-led discussion. Often, students will lead discussions themselves or give presentations to the rest of the class.
- Specific types of activities included in a synchronous online course depend on the course and the program. There is a lot of discipline-specific, really active things that go on during synchronous class sessions that aren't just the equivalent of a recorded lecture. It is similar to doing some sort of activity in the classroom, just in a virtual setting.