Dispelling the Myths of Taking an Online Course

Myth #1: It's easier to take an online class than a face-to-face one.

The Reality: An online class has the same learning objectives, content and requirements as its face-to-face equivalent. The difference is that instead of sitting in a classroom or lab with your instructor and classmates, the learning experiences are transferred to a learning management system. However, some students struggle with this format of learning because it generally takes more time, energy, and self-discipline to work through than the on-campus equivalent. You really have to be self-motivated. The trade-off, though, is that it's more flexible. You're able to learn anywhere, anytime.

Myth #2: Online classes are self-paced.

The Reality: The flexibility of taking an online course refers to your ability to work on it from remote areas. Professors usually have strict deadlines, reinforced by Moodle due dates/times that will prevent any type of late submission. Participation and "checking in" to your course (like Announcements, Mail, Discussion Boards) should be a daily routine. In some cases, professors will drop you if you haven't logged on after a period of time. You need to "be there".

Myth #3: You have to be tech-savvy to take an online class.

The Reality: Maybe at one time that was the case, but the learning management systems that are used today make navigating online courses straightforward and intuitive. In addition, considering all the technology support offered, you’ll have the resources you need to help you in any online course.

Myth #4: You don't receive personal attention in online education.

The Reality: This is really a matter of the quality of the instructor. There are professors who are attentive in class and do a great job facilitating the class. However, you may also have professors who are not "present" enough in the course to help you through. The same is true for face-to-face classes, though, right? Reach out to your professor and your classmates so that it is not an isolated experience for you.