Shaw University Online Courses FAQ

This FAQ addresses questions you might have about taking online courses.

General

**Q: What is an online course?**

**A:** At Shaw, online courses are regular courses delivered over the Internet with Blackboard software. Online courses support collaborative learning. You may be assigned homework and/or projects, or be involved in problem solving and case studies. Online, you may do research, take tests, quizzes, surveys and exams, and participate in online discussion forums, real-time chats and e-mail. Offline, you may participate in individual study using textbooks, CD-ROMs, or other materials.

**Q: Why is Shaw offering online courses?**

**A:** Most of our students leave campus for the summer. We believe that a program enabling students to take courses from home or other locations provides a valuable service.

**Q: What courses are offered?**

**A:** A complete listing of online courses may be found on online courses home page by calling The Registrar’s Office at 919-546-8415

**Q: Why should I consider taking an online course?**

**A:** Online courses have many benefits:

First, you have the ability to take the class from your home or anywhere you have access to a computer.

Second, you take the course and do the bulk of your work at a time that works well for you – day or night. You can work on your course during the weekends and on days you select as long as you are able to get assignments in by the required day or time. **Note:** Professors may schedule synchronous chat sessions as part of the required work.

Third, Shaw Online courses allow you to study under professors you know. Typically, online courses have a high degree of interaction, so you'll get the same amount of personal attention you're used to as a Shaw student. Finally, you won't have to hassle getting credits transferred, as you would if you took a summer course at another institution!

**Q: Who is eligible to take an online course?**

**A:** Students who are enrolled at Shaw prior to the summer may register for an online course.

**Q: Can I take both an on-campus course and online courses?**
A: No prohibition against this exists. However, the amount of work and the time it takes to complete online courses, particularly in a short summer session, make it advisable to take just one A: the Course Description, Course Objectives, and Student Learning Outcomes are the same for a given course whether it is taught at Raleigh Regular, CAPE, or Online course.

Q: Can I take online courses and live on campus?
A: Yes. As long as you have Internet access, you can take online courses while living anywhere, including the Shaw campus.

Q: Do I get the same credit as in-class courses?
A: Yes. Most Online courses are worth three (3) credit hours.

Q: What about transfer credit for online courses?
A: Transfer credit is always arranged with the registrar of the college or university from which you seek transfer credit. Credit for Online courses should be handled in the same manner.

Q: Isn't a course taught in a classroom better?
A: While it is true that some students function better when they have regular meetings, face-to-face contact with other students and access to the professor in person, many students of all ages are beginning to take part in Online learning because it’s so convenient. Many studies show there is little difference in the amount you learn. The real question to ask is, “Am I suited for online learning?” Complete the questionnaire that begins on page 20 to help you make that decision.

Q: How does the quality of an online class compare to a traditional class?
A. The course description, course objectives, and student learning outcomes are the same for a given course whether it is taught on the main campus, CAPE or online.

Fees and finances

Q: What are the costs for online courses?
A: The tuition for taking online courses is the same as for traditional courses.

Q: What are the hidden costs?
A: There are no hidden costs associated with online courses, if you have the required computer, the required software, and an ISP (Internet service provider).
Q: Will my financial aid still apply?
A: Yes. An application will have to be submitted and approved.

Q: What is the refund policy for online courses?
A: The refund policy for online courses is the same as with traditional courses in regular school session. But it is different for summer school.

Requirements

Q: Do I need any special computer skills to take online courses?
A: To enroll in an online course, you should be able to:

• Log into and use Blackboard. Note: Students who enroll in online courses are required to attend a training session prior to the summer term. This session will ensure that you're familiar with the Blackboard features that will be used during your online course.
• Operate your computer.
• Use Microsoft Word and other programs in the Office suite, as required by your course.
• Send and receive e-mail.

Check with the faculty member to determine if other computer-related requirements exist for the course.

Q: What are the computer hardware and software requirements to take online courses?
A: Check the Web link.

Logistics

Q: How do I register for an online course?
A: Follow the same registration procedures as for traditional courses. See the 2008 Shaw Summer Courses booklet or contact the Registrar's Office for more information.

Q: Will I have to come to campus during the course?
A: No. You can complete the entire course from a remote location. However, please note that faculty may require that you attend a course orientation session before leaving campus for the summer. An on-campus final exam is required unless students can find an authorized proctor approved by instructors. If any fee involved in hiring an authorized proctor, students will be responsible.

Q: When can I begin the course, and how long do I have to complete the course?
A: Online courses begin the same day as traditional classes. Online courses end on the same date that traditional courses end.
Q: How do I get textbook or other supplementary materials?
A: Arrangements should be made through your instructor to get your textbook or other supplementary materials in person, before you leave campus.

Q: How are tests and exams given, and how are assignments turned in?
A: Online courses will require tests and exams to be given online. Generally, assignments are turned in by e-mail or uploaded by the Blackboard digital drop box.

Q: Will the course be available day and night?
A: The course will be available on the Web 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Q: What if I have problems accessing Blackboard?
A: Once you register for online courses, you’ll be provided with troubleshooting information that will help you diagnose and resolve technical problems that may occur.

Q: How can I contact the professor?
A: Each professor who teaches online courses will have contact information in the course syllabus. This will include phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

Q: Will I be given more time to complete the course if I have a hardware or software problem?
A: Sorry! Extensions will not be granted because of technical problems. We strongly encourage you to plan ahead and decide what you will do in case of computer trouble.

Q: How do I get my grades?
A: As with traditional courses, your final course grade is posted on Jenzabar. Professors may place grades for specific assignments on their course website. Check with the instructor to see how grade information will be disseminated.

Q: If I need help, how do I get in touch with campus services?
A: All students registering for online courses will receive an online courses guide. This guide lists the relevant campus services, phone numbers and e-mail addresses for obtaining assistance. You are encouraged to communicate with any of these departments if you have questions or problems.

Workload

Q: How much work will the course require?
A: Online courses typically take a minimum of 20 hours per week. For many students, the number of hours will be higher.

What to do if you’re interested
Q: Where do I begin?

A: To find out more about the online courses that will be offered, plan on attending an upcoming information session. Faculty who are teaching online courses can supply you with information about how their courses will operate. Many of the faculty teaching these classes will offer an orientation session for their course. Make plans to attend this session. Finally, additional information may be found in course syllabi, and preliminary syllabi will be posted on our website.