

# Winter Session

Winter Session is a fantastic opportunity to further your academic goals in an **accelerated** online environment. However, know that Winter Session courses are intensive. You will need to be prepared to spend time on your course **EACH** day. Plan ahead for success by keeping the following Winter Session tips in mind!

**1) Assess your motivation and availability.** Before you enroll in an online winter session, recognize that there is large time commitment involved and **YOU** will need to motivate yourself to stay on track. Will you have enough time each day to dedicate to your winter session course?

**2) Be prepared.** Make sure you have the necessary course materials before the first day of class. Visit the USM bookstore at <https://usm.ecampus.com/> before the start of winter break.

**3) Explore BlackBoard before your course begins.** Much like with face-to-face courses, every online course is different. Learn how to navigate and find course materials, how to upload an assignment, and how to participate in an online discussion. If your course does not use Blackboard, check your @maine.edu email for communication from your professor.

**4) Read your course syllabus carefully to know what is expected of you.** This includes due dates for assignments, how and when you will participate, and grading procedures. Make a game plan day one!

**5) Access Blackboard daily once the course begins,** paying special attention to all announcements your instructor posts on the course homepage. (Often times announcements may offer further explanation of the week's work or even contain important changes to the course content or due dates.)

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## Tips to Maximize your Success in an Online Winter Session Course

**6) Create a daily schedule.** Time management is crucial in Winter Session. Set a schedule for when you will complete course work **EACH** day and stick to it. This includes time for reading, reviewing course materials, participating in discussions, and completing assignments.

**7) Choose the where as well as the when.** Manage your learning environment by completing course work in a space with minimal distractions, ideally a place where there is reliable internet connection and technology support if you need it.

**8) Contact your professor as soon as you have questions.** Since winter courses move so quickly, it is very important to ask questions as they arise so you don't get behind.

**9) Participate actively.** Many online instructors use a discussion forum with specific guidelines for posting. Know what's expected of you! Recognize the value of participating, as interacting with your instructor and other students provides an opportunity for active learning.

**10) Don't procrastinate!** Logging in periodically is not enough in an accelerated course format. Get into a daily routine that works for you and stick to it. If feeling overwhelmed, break larger tasks into smaller pieces to tackle throughout the day.