
The Benefits of Taking Online Classes for College Students

Whether or not to take an online class is something almost every college student has to decide at some point in their college career. Taking an online class has both advantages and disadvantages, and students differ on their opinions of online classes. Despite some disadvantages, the flexibility and convenience of online classes are significant advantages over a traditional classroom setting. However, these advantages must be used correctly. A student who takes an online class, but has poor time management skills, may end up dooming themselves by procrastinating all their homework until the very last minute. When time management by the student is used, the major advantages of online classes is the flexibility and convenience that they offer to the student.

The convenience of an online class is one of the major advantages of taking an online class. According to a research paper by Dr. Derar Serhan of Arizona State University, 80% of respondents to his survey said that “being able to study and work at the same time was the main advantage of online learning...” (21). The ability for students to work while taking college courses is an essential part of attending college. Working allows students to gain experience for future jobs, earn income to start paying off college loans, and have a little spending money.

Some students indicated that they would not be able to attend college without the convenience of an online class. Student responses included: “I work in shifts and this is the only way I can get a degree without quitting work” and “Without this convenience, I would not be attending college in any form” (Serhan 21). This is a great advantage because it is actually allowing people who want to seek higher education the ability to do so without compromising their financial needs. Overall, the convenience of an online class is one of the major advantages described by many students.

The flexibility of an online class is closely related to the convenience of an online class. However, while convenience seems to be more focused on work, flexibility is focused more on creating less stress for the student by allowing the student to choose when they do their work. According to the same survey by Dr. Serhan, 77% of respondents “listed the flexibility of being able to take the class at any time and in any place as a major advantage and reason for taking online classes” (21). This proves that students enjoy being able to learn whenever and wherever works for them. This flexibility saves students the time and hassle of traveling to and from school, as well as removing the “rush” and stress of getting to class on time (Serhan 21).

In a separate survey done at Johnson & Wales University, 29% of respondents who took an online class said that flexibility of your schedule is the greatest benefit of online classes (Shi, Di,

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Jiang, and Bin 8). This benefit is likely because online classes can be placed anywhere in your schedule – free of the constraints of traditional classes, work, and other extracurricular activities that have set schedules. It is clear that having the option of picking when and where to learn is something that students consider a major advantage of online classes.

As mentioned previously, the convenience and flexibility of online classes can only be taken advantage of with good time management. Students that are successful in online classes have to be self-motivated and capable of managing their time and technology (Daae 1). Without time management, students can struggle with the workload of online classes. One article suggests that “scheduling daily or weekly study times can help students ensure that they meet their study goals” (Daae 2). The success of a student’s online class is dependent on their ability to use time management effectively. With time management, convenience and flexibility become the major advantages of online classes.

The majority of students that were surveyed in these articles responded positively about the advantages of flexibility and time. Being able to set your own schedule lets students continue with their work and life schedules. The convenience is sometimes necessary for students to attend college at all. With the flexibility of online courses, students should be able to relieve some of the stress that is put on them during college. When using appropriate time management skills, online classes can utilize the flexibility and convenience of an online course to achieve success in their class. Overall, the major advantage of online courses is being able to learn the material of traditional courses at your own rate and schedule.

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