What is ECN?

ECN (Electronic Course Network) is Walsh University's online collaboration and learning environment. ECN was designed by educators for educators. It is an enterprise teaching, learning, and academic collaboration platform that best meets the needs of today's learners, instructors, and researchers.

ECN has extensive built-in online tools — online learning modules, discussion boards, announcements, chat rooms, a grade book, a wiki, and even resource areas for sharing files.

All students, faculty, and staff at Walsh already have an ECN account - it is accessible using your Walsh ID and password. Once you log in to ECN, you will see any courses that you are enrolled in (that are using ECN) or, in the case of faculty, any courses that you are teaching. Faculty members can determine which courses they would like to activate a ECN site for.

You do not need to know anything about web design to use ECN - just basic web navigation. ECN can be accessed from any web browser 24/7. Additionally, instructors and students can create non-course-related ECN projects for group and research collaboration.

This course is designed to help get your computer ready to use ECN and help you get acquainted with the ECN learning environment. This course is designed to be used as a reference. You will be able to refer back to it, as needed, for help and clarification on the use of ECN and it's tools.

Tips for Online Success

Students must be self-disciplined, organized, and willing to interact with the instructor and classmates in order to be successful in an online environment. The instructor will make their expectations clear about what is expected of you, the student. If they are not clear or you need further clarification, **BE PROACTIVE** and **ASK** them what you are unsure about. Instructor contact information and help desk information are always found on the course homepage.

Here are some tips that will help you along the way. Select the topic you wish to read more about and you will jump down the page to that section.

1. **Many students describe online classes as more challenging than face-to-face classes.**
2. **You can access your course from just about anywhere.**
3. **Collaboration and interaction are vital to the online learning environment.**
4. **Support is just a phone call or email away.**

5. **Make time for the time commitment necessary for success in an online class.**
6. **Textbooks are typically required of online courses.**
7. **Just because you are an online student, doesn't mean that you don't have access to all of Walsh's student resources. You are not alone!**
8. **Read the syllabus thoroughly!**
9. **Be patient - with yourself and with your instructor - it takes time to become comfortable in an online environment.**
10. **Create an ideal study environment.**

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1. Many students describe online classes as <u>more challenging</u> than face-to-face classes.

Many students feel that they learn more and work harder in online classes. This may be because **the responsibility for learning is solely yours** – you need to have self-discipline and self-directed time management skills. You must be the one to remember to turn on your computer and login and complete your assignments. Online learning requires a great deal of motivation. If you are motivated by an immediate need for a degree or course, you will probably be determined to be successful, regardless of the format.

2. You can access your course from just about anywhere.

To access a course in ECN, you can use any computer with internet access. It is YOUR responsibility to have access to a working computer for the entire length of the course - typically eight (8) weeks - but sometimes longer. Viruses or spyware can interfere with your ability to complete a web course on your computer. It is recommended you scan for viruses and spyware regularly. You will be able to access your online course on the first day of the semester and the course will end at the end of the semester. Most instructors will have minimum weekly login requirements. You will have due dates to meet. Your instructor can track your activity in the course to ensure that you are participating often enough to be successful in the class.

3. Collaboration and interaction are vital to the online learning environment.

Class participation will be required. You will typically be required to communicate with your fellow students and your instructor through email and discussions regularly. Your instructor will let you know the preferred communication tools for your class. Collaboration is a large component of most online courses and has been shown to be one of the best learning practices. Your participation will be your key to success in an online environment and often will be a significant portion of your grade.

4. Support is just a phone call or email away.

Walsh University's Help Desk can help you with computer problem and login questions. How do you know whether to contact the Help Desk or your instructor? If you need help writing a paper, contact your instructor. If you need help submitting the paper you wrote to that instructor, contact the Support Center. The phone number for Walsh's Help Desk is 330-244-4357 (330-244-HELP) or you can email the Help Desk at helpdesk@walsh.edu.

5. Make time for the time commitment necessary for success in an online class.

A common mistake students make is to forget to schedule time to participate in the online course. If you are taking a 3 credit hour traditional course, your class is part of your schedule 3

hours each week and you will have planned additional time for studying and homework. A general suggestion is to allow 2 hours "outside of class" for each hour "in class" for typical classes. The same rules can be applied to online courses. The difference is that you can typically set your schedule, just be sure to fit in each week's requirements. Just like in a traditional class, you may have assignments and requirements to complete every week. Planning ahead and staying organized are your best strategies for success in an online course.

6. Textbooks are typically required of online courses.

Check your syllabus and with the [Walsh University bookstore](#) for textbook requirements.

7. Just because you are an online student, doesn't mean that you don't have access to all of Walsh's student resources. You are not alone!

Walsh has many student services that are available to ALL students - regardless of whether they are taking a course online or in a traditional, face-to-face format. Make yourself aware of these services and utilize them if you need them.

- [Library](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [Academic Support Center](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Counseling Services](#)
- [Campus Ministry](#)

8. Read the syllabus thoroughly!

The syllabus will cover the critical content you need to know such as topics and activities that will be covered, how you will be graded, and even how often you are expected to log on to the course in ECN. Like traditional courses, each online course and instructor is unique and each will have different expectations. Look for participation requirements and due dates for assignments as you review the syllabus. Review how much reading (both textbook and outside reading) is required and how many assignments you will need to complete each week. You should also find out what the preferred method of communication with fellow students and the instructor is for the course. Plan to read the syllabus several times and ask your instructor if you have any questions about the course requirements.

9. Be patient - <u>with yourself and with your instructor</u> - it takes time to become comfortable in an online environment.

For many of you, this may be your first course delivered online. Be patient - it will take some time to become comfortable in an online environment. Once you read the syllabus and become familiar with the course and instructor expectations, it will only be a matter of time before you start feeling confident about learning online. With every interaction (email, discussion posting, assignment submission, etc.) you will become even more comfortable. Be patient with yourself and let your instructor know if you have anxiety. They are here to assist you and aid in your success!

As an online student, it is not always possible to visit an instructor's office to ask a question in person. Just as on-campus instructors are not in their office 24 hours a day, online instructors are not able to monitor their virtual classroom 24 hours a day, either. <u>Be patient when you ask a question of your instructor</u>. A reasonable response time is considered to be 48 hours. Your

instructor may also post information in the course or the syllabus about when they are most likely to be available online and the preferred contact method.

10. **Create an ideal study environment.**

An ideal study environment is just that – ideal. Some students need absolute silence while others can't seem to concentrate without noise in the background. No matter what your preference is, a well-lit place that is free from distractions is recommended. Note that you'll make much better use of thirty minutes of disruption-free study than an hour's worth of commotion-filled learning. If you can't escape in-home interruptions, try the library or a coffee shop. Schedule your designated study time when you can be in a distraction-free environment and your chances for success will increase and the time you need to devote to your course will decrease

How are online courses at Walsh structured?

Most online courses have eight modules that include presentations, discussions, assignments, resources, websites, tests/quizzes, etc. Many courses have a quiz at the end of each module and some courses have midterm and final exam that are completed online. Certain courses may not use quizzes or tests for assessment at all - they rely on activities such as discussions and written assignments for student evaluation.

The HOME PAGE of each course always contains a course overview, course outcomes, the course syllabus, Walsh's technical requirements for ECN, and instructions on how to get started.

Online course modules at Walsh are designed in a consistent manner.

Each module in a course contains the following sections:

1. *Module Overview & Outcomes*
2. *Key Concepts*
3. *Learning Activities*
4. *Learning Assessment*
5. *References & Supplementary Readings*

Modules are set up this way to ensure students are clear about the learning outcomes, instructor expectations, and the activities and assessments that must be completed during each module.
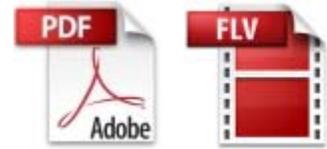
ECN Technical Requirements

It is extremely important that you check your computer and make sure that it meets the minimum technical requirements that Walsh has established for using ECN.

For ease of use and consistancy, Walsh had developed standards for document and video formats. All documents posted are in Adobe Acrobat files (PDF) and all audio files, videos, and presentations are

posted in Flash video (FLV or SWF) format.

On occasion, a course will link to an outside source which may use an alternative format. In that case, links will be provided to the appropriate software needed to view the document or multimedia file.

Use the link below to review the technical requirements for ECN:

→ ECN TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Course Navigation

Page Navigation

Each module's title and page number are located at the top of the page. Use the Previous and Next links at the top or bottom of each page to change pages. Use the Table of Contents link to get back to the full module listing.

Prev | Table Of Contents | Next

Course Navigation

ECN has two navigation areas - the top tabs and the left side navigation bar.

The top tabs allow you to switch from one course to another in ECN.

The left side navigation bar contains the course menus. The tools in each of these menus are grouped based on their function within the course.

🏠 Home

Course Tools
- Syllabus
- Modules
- Assignments
- Drop Box
- Gradebook
- Tests & Quizzes
- Resources

Communication Tools
- Discussion Forums
- Messages
- Announcements
- Wiki

Administration Tools
- Site Info
- Statistics

- Help