Student Guide to Success in an Online Course

- Take advantage of the course orientation at the beginning of the semester. Often, this is conducted face to face and it gives an excellent opportunity to review course content and clarify expectations.

- On-line courses provide the student and the instructor with the flexibility of when and where instruction is given. This does not mean the student can expect less work. You can expect (on average) to spend 3 hours per credit hour each week working on learning activities related to on-line coursework.

- Do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignments.

- Clear and concise communication via the web can sometimes be a challenge. Instructors design the courses so that key information regarding assignments can be found in a variety of locations (syllabus, course modules, course calendar, etc.). However, if you are uncertain of something, ask. If it is something you think your classmates will benefit from, post your question on the Bulletin Board. If you have a question that is of a personal nature, email your instructor.

- If you are having difficulty in a course, ASK FOR HELP. The UTMB School of Nursing has number of resources available to you. Contact information is provided to you at the beginning of the semester during orientation and in the syllabus of each course. Don't wait until you get frustrated to ask for assistance.

- You will have greater access to technical support during normal working hours (Monday through Friday, 8-5). Plan on testing your computer system and Internet access during the first week of the semester.

- Plan your environment. Think about where and when you will be doing your course work. If your computer is in a noisy or high traffic location, you might want to consider moving it to another, more quiet location. Organize your course materials so they are accessible and easy to locate.

- The main difference in on-line education and the traditional classroom method is that the learning is student centered rather than instructor/teacher centered. You are responsible for your learning and your instructor is an essential guide and professional resource who will assist you as you move through the content.

- Characteristics of successful distance students are listed below. If you know you have a weakness in one of these areas, seek ways to address the need. If you need help, the School of Nursing and UTMB may be able to refer you to someone who can help.
  - Being a self-starter and self-directed
  - Have an ability to prioritize
  - Established time and stress management skills
  - Minimum competency regarding computer skills (word processing, email, etc.)