
Non-traditional ways of going to college

With the advancement of technology today, everything in our life has been made better and easier. Even colleges have jumped on the technology bandwagon and have begun to offer non-traditional ways for their students to obtain a college degree. For the student who has a family to the student who works full time, there is a way to further your education without attending the normal weekday 8am classes.

ONLINE

Online classes have become the most popular way for students who can't attend classes to complete a degree. Basically, your whole class is taught online. There are different ways to conduct an online class, which is up to the professor. There are sometimes chat rooms where students meet, or videos that are streamed online for students to watch. There are usually forums for students to participate in as well. You can even take your quizzes and tests online, however to actually test the student, these tests are usually timed to ensure that the student is not using their notes or book. Some professors will make you come on campus or have a proctor for your tests as well.

However, in order to succeed at an online class, you must be disciplined. It is easy to say that you will do your work the next day or read the chapters later. It is easy for the work to pile up and for you to fall behind. Online classes also require a lot of individual learning. Of course your professors are available for questions, but you are basically teaching yourself.

NIGHT/WEEKEND CLASSES

Since some students work full time during the day, most colleges have started offering night classes as well as Saturday classes. This way, students can still attend their full time job and attend classes at night or on the weekends. The one thing you should note about night and weekend classes are the class time. While weekday-daytime classes are usually an hour or so, night and weekend classes can last a few hours. This is because the class is only held once or twice a week so to fit in all the necessary hours, the classes are extended and can be as long as four hours. If you are tired from working all day, it can be very easy to lose your attention span or fall asleep while in class. Keep this in mind when considering night and/or weekend classes.

HYBRID

Some colleges offer what is known as a hybrid course. This is where the course is taught online as well as in class. Usually all of the work is conducted via a forum or chat room online. The professor may want to meet once a week or so to go over questions from students or to hand in papers.

COMMUTE

While most students will live on campus and attend class, a lot of students will live at home or in an apartment and commute to class. This will save the student money on room and board at the college.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Some colleges offer classes as "independent study". Basically, you are given the book, and materials needed to "teach" yourself. You also have access to a mentor if you have questions. You are given a specified amount of time to complete your studies and you are tested at the end of that time frame. The test is usually taken on campus or proctored by the librarian at your local library. These classes are generally harder since you are teaching yourself, however they are perfect for the student who likes to work at their own pace.

No matter what type of class you choose, just make sure to keep up with the work and ask questions if you begin to get lost. It is easy to fall behind or get frustrated with these non-traditional courses, however, they have proven to be successful to thousands of students and they have opened up many more opportunities for students to complete their

degrees.