

Professional & Graduate Studies (PGS) Information

In order to provide students with the opportunity to expedite their degree completion if they choose to do so, the Professional and Graduate Studies program runs courses year-round. Because of federal guidelines that govern the distribution and use of student financial aid, we must adhere to strict guidelines regarding when classes begin and end. The combination of those two factors means that there are times when a scheduled face-to-face course conflicts with a holiday. In those cases, in order to keep on track with the course calendar, face-to-face courses do not meet on campus, but the class session is still held through an online session. If you are not familiar with online coursework, don't worry! These instructions should help you navigate the course expectations easily. Please review this memo carefully before beginning your online session and contact us if you have any questions.

Black Board Open LMS is the name of the learning management system that houses our online courses; it was formerly called *Moodle*. You will find your courses at myWPClasses.warnerpacific.edu.

First, note that online courses have unique expectations in terms of **attendance and participation**. Because there is no actual class session, your attendance and participation in class is measured by posts in the Discussion Forums in the myWPClasses shell. Your online session will begin on the day following the previous face-to-face class session (or, if it is the first session of the course, six days prior to the first scheduled class session) and ends on the scheduled class date. You must post in a discussion forum at least **two separate days during the week** in order to be considered present for the full week. Typical discussion forums require an initial posting by day three of the week and responses to other students' postings by the final day of the week (i.e., the date of the regularly-scheduled class). Therefore, posting your own responses to the discussion questions and then responding to other postings fulfills the *attendance* requirements for the online session. Online course attendance is reported after the week concludes.

Your instructor will contact you with any specific instructions for the online session. If the instructor does not provide you with any specific instructions, then simply follow the instructions/assignments in the myWPClasses course for the week that your face-to-face course is canceled.

Posting in a Discussion Forum

1. **Go** to myWPClasses.warnerpacific.edu and login using your regular community password.
2. **Click** on the course in which you have the online session. All of your active courses should be on your home page, in the tab marked In Progress.
3. **Scroll** down to the Week that is going online. Under *Assignments*, you should see a link for *Weekly Discussion*. (If you don't see a Discussion link, please contact your instructor.) Click on the link.
 - a. This will take you to the discussion question.
4. **Read** the question and compose your answer. It is often helpful to type your answer in a Word document first so you can save it – then cut and paste it into the forum when it's ready.
5. **Click** on *Add a new discussion*, if this is an initial posting.
6. **Type** a title for your posting in the first box, and then paste your response into the second box.
7. **Click Submit**. This will post your response and make it ready to be reviewed by your classmates.

NOTE: that the discussion forum takes the place of your normal interaction in a face-to-face class, so these postings become part of your classroom conversation. Once you have posted your response, review the responses of your classmates. When you have questions or additional comments to add to their thoughts, submit responses as follows.

Posting a Response in a Discussion Forum

1. **Click** on the *Weekly Discussion* link again.
2. **Scroll** to the posting to which you wish to respond and click on the title of the posting.

3. **Click** *Reply* at the bottom of the student's posting and type your response. (Again, it's not a bad idea to compose your thoughts in a Word document and cut-and-paste them.)
4. **Click** Submit when you're ready to post. This will allow others to read your response.

Just as in a face-to-face conversation, responses should be made directly to the person you're addressing. If you wish to respond to someone's response posting, click the *Reply* button under their posting – so the conversation thread is *nested* appropriately.

In Online format classes, this grade is based on participation in online discussion and activities and is graded according to the Discussion Rubric (located on your **Academic Success and Learning Team Resources** page) and the following requirements unless otherwise indicated:

- **By 11:59 p.m. on Day 3 of the week:**
 - Post a substantive initial response of at least 250 words to each discussion question thread.
- **By 11:59 p.m. on Day 7 of the week:**
 - Post at least three substantive follow-up responses to your instructor or classmates.

For All Posts:

Substantive posts must advance the conversation. Comments such as “good point” or “I agree” are not considered substantive, unless they are followed by additional insights, provide relevant illustrations, or raise additional questions. Language used may be conversational, but must be professional. Use appropriate spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Cite all sources using APA format. Remember that in an online classroom, discussion forums take the place of open dialogue in a face-to-face classroom.

NOTE: Do not post anything in an online forum that you would not say to a colleague in a face-to-face engagement.

Submitting an Assignment

Assignments for an online session will be due by 11:59 p.m. on the last night of that week, unless the instructor gives you a different deadline. To submit your assignment:

1. **Click** on the link for the assignment you are submitting.
2. Follow any instructions listed for the assignment. Prepare your assignment in a separate document and save it before uploading.
3. When you are ready to submit your assignment, go to the *File Submissions* box. Here you have two options:
 - a. You can drag and drop your assignment file into the first large box, OR
 - b. You can click on the icon with the + sign and hit *Browse* to search for the file you want to upload. When you find the file, click on it and select *Open*. The Attachment file will populate with your file name.
4. **Click** *Upload this file*.
5. **Click** *Save changes*.

Additional Resources

- Links to support services are available in the myWPclasses site. If you are having IT problems (connections, etc.), you can click on the *24 hour Support Helpdesk* for assistance. If you have a question about the course content, you may contact your instructor via email or by clicking on the link for the instructor that you will find on the left-hand side of the myWPclasses site, under *Participants* (right under the bolded course number).
- Links to other community contacts and support resources (such as the Academic Success Center and the Library) are available in the navigation bar at the top of myWPclasses webpage under *Student Resources*.
- Feel free to contact your instructor or your advisor if you have any problems navigating your online session.