

What to know if your course temporarily moves online

(G. Decker)

1. Most importantly, read carefully and follow the instructions that your instructor sends to you (watch your email, your Blackboard announcements, or if there is another usual source outside of in-class announcements your instructor uses). This will be your first and best guide for what to expect and how your course will work over these weeks.
2. If you do not understand the instructions, reach out and ask! Your instructor will not know that you need clarification if you don't let them know!
3. If your instructor has chosen to post anything online, unless you are told differently, you will find your course listed in Blackboard. (If you have not used Blackboard, here is a [Link to a handout for how to log-in to Blackboard](#).)
 - a. If you are new to using Blackboard, you can download a [Quickstart Guide](#).
 - b. After you log in to Blackboard, look for the Blackboard tutorial where you can walk through how to use various Blackboard tools. On the portal, look for the area called **"Help Links"** and click on **"Blackboard Tutorial for Students"**
4. In Blackboard, click on the link to your course site. There will be a navigation bar down the side. Look for:
 - a. New announcements (typically shown right away)
 - b. The syllabus and schedule. Be sure to review it again in case it has been updated!
 - c. Current course reading materials and assignments.
 - i. These could be reminders of book chapters already assigned, or PDF files that you will download, or that are available from a website, or documents found in the library databases. (Note that if your reading assignment requires you to access materials from the [GVSU Library](#), you will find tremendous resources for help directly from their website.)
 - d. Current lecture materials. These may be in the form of:
 - i. Documents to read (that download as .docx or .pdf files, or .html that open directly in

Blackboard rather than download)

- ii. PowerPoint files (either as .PDF, .PPTX, PPTX Show, and with Sound files embedded)
 - iii. A video played through Panopto or YouTube
 - iv. A sound file
 - v. Or even another type of technology that you already have access to.
 - vi. *(Note that Blackboard provides the opportunity for you to access materials through a different format from how they were posted. [\(Learn more about how to do this.\)](#) If you have technical difficulty accessing any of the files posted, you should contact your instructor immediately so any problems can be resolved right away.)*
- e. Your instructor might tell you that your assignments will be submitted directly in Blackboard. If this is new to you, you will want to review the guides posted under Assignments, Tests and Surveys on the [Blackboard Help page](#).
- f. In most cases, your quizzes and tests will be in Blackboard. There are several factors to consider, so if this is new to you, you will want to review the guides posted under Assignments, Tests and Surveys on the [Blackboard Help page](#).
- g. You may be asked to participate in online discussion. Ideally, this is an opportunity for you to deepen your understanding of course content and have learn from each other. you can learn more about the Blackboard Discussion board under the TOOLS heading on the [Blackboard Help page](#).
- h. In some cases, your instructor may ask you to meet with them, either as a whole class, in groups, or for individual appointments. Within Blackboard, Collaborate Ultra is often the tool used, and you can learn more about this under the TOOLS heading on the [Blackboard Help page](#).

Important to remember! When you have questions, be sure to reach out to your other classmates, to your instructor (especially when your question is content related) and the IT HelpDesk (616.331.2101 or helpdesk@gvsu.edu) for technology related questions.