

# I 302: Academic Success in the Digital University

There is a lot of important information on this page that you will need to know to be successful in this course, so be sure to read it carefully. You can also always come back to these pages again if you need to.

Please note that any announcements made within the Canvas instance during the semester regarding changing deadlines, assignments, or other course information take precedence over the syllabus. If, at any time throughout the semester, you have questions about the syllabus, please contact your instructor for clarification.

Note: The best way to navigate this course is through the "Modules" page, where you can see all of the course content, assignments, and due dates organized by module.

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## Contact Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Stephen C. Slota

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Email: Please Contact me Through Canvas** (stephen.slota at Austin.utexas.edu)

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## Course Overview

Academic Success in the Digital University (I 302) is a course designed for undergraduate students that provides an overview of important digital and information resources, tools, and skills that students enrolled in a modern “digital” university should know in order to complete their studies and as graduates of such a university going out into society. Academic Success in the Digital University allows students to explore and share key resources available at UT-Austin, to learn some important guidelines and background about the information and communication technologies that they will encounter, and prepares them for interacting within the digital world while at UT-Austin and for the rest of their lives as digital citizens. This course is designed to expose students to a wide variety of information and academic resources, tools, and skills while simultaneously teaching students how to interact with many different features of the primary learning management system used at UT-Austin (namely, Canvas).

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## Learning Objectives

In this course, students will learn:

- about the basic digital necessities that are required in order to be a successful student at UT-Austin;
- how to use the primary learning management platform at UT-Austin (namely, Canvas);
- about useful digital tools that are available to students at UT-Austin;
- about the full variety of resources (both online and off-line) available through the UT library system;
- how to find, evaluate, and cite information resources, especially using the UT library system;
- about the expected standards for academic honesty at UT-Austin (and beyond) and how to uphold them;
- about the history and practice of academic scholarship and of citation and copyright practices;
- about the history, technical applications, and protocols that make the Internet possible;
- about the political, financial, and social implications of creating and sharing content online and in the digital world;

- about the basic concepts of ethical digital design, accessibility, and usability;
- about a basic framework for understanding how to balance and protect their information privacy and security in the digital world (and why this matters);
- how to understand, prevent, and recover from different types of malicious cyberattacks;
- about digital citizenship and some of the significant issues in information ethics;
- how to create and share content responsibly and ethically with others online, including on a website (particularly using a visual content editor, and some HTML).

Students will enact the following learning techniques:

- reading about history and current news related to information, information evaluation, information processing, and information and communications technology;
- discussing history, current news, and personal opinions related to information and information and communications technology, especially the Internet and digital world;
- taking interactive quizzes in order to reiterate and reinforce the course content;
- completing hands-on projects (both individual and group) in order to practice presenting and assessing information related to the course topics in a variety of contexts.

Students will additionally develop a personal website portfolio that is both a formative and summative evaluation of their work and learning over the course of the semester.

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## Schedule

In this course, you will complete fourteen instructional modules, entitled:

1. Introduction to the Course and to Online Learning
2. Navigating the Digital University
3. Academic Scholarship in the Digital Age
4. Getting the Most from your Academic Research
5. Evaluating Information
6. Academic Honesty, Copyright, Creative Commons, and Academic Publishing
7. Presenting Information
8. The Internet and the Digital Revolution
9. The Impact of Emerging Digital Technologies
10. Designing for the Web
11. Tools for Designing for the Web
12. Guarding your Digital Privacy
13. Defending your Digital Security

## 14. Digital Citizenship and Information Ethics

A few things to note about modules.

- Each of the modules consists of text/video content and graded elements/assignments
- Each module is designed to last for approximately **one week of the semester**, however all the modules are unlocked at the beginning of the semester so you can somewhat work ahead if you desire.
- The final portion of each module project and all final assignments will (usually) be due at the end of the final day (typically a **Sunday at 11:59 p.m.**) of that module.

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## Assignments

The modules have several types of assignments that contribute points towards your final grade:

1. **In-class Discussions**
2. **Quizzes**
3. **Activities (one-off and project-focused)**
4. **Group project assignments**
5. **Individual Project assignments**

Each of these types of assignments are briefly outlined below. All assignments are always due at 11:59 p.m. on the due date.

### **In-class Discussions**

Several times throughout the semester, you will be asked to participate in a discussion during our class meetings as part of your participation in the class.

PLEASE NOTE: Although there are no points specifically allocated for attendance, these discussions will be held in person and cannot be made up.

All discussions will be related to the course content we are covering that week, so it is important that you go over the content in each module before our weekly meetings.

These discussions will take place in breakout groups and/or as an entire class, and everyone should participate. In order to receive points for these activities, you must contribute to discussions.

### **Quizzes**

The content of each module has been broken down into quizzes in order to test your comprehension of the main module content and of the required outside media as you are progressing. These quizzes are intended to encourage you to be more interactive with the content of this course (which can be quite passive), rather than being meant to punish you for guessing the wrong answer.

All quizzes in this course are “**open-book**” and are not timed: you may refer back to the module content and readings while you take the quiz. Most quizzes will also allow you to re-take the quiz one more time (and Canvas will keep the higher score). However, some quizzes can only be taken once, so be sure to read the quiz instructions carefully!

## Projects

There are four individual assignments and two group assignments you will complete throughout the semester that relate to the main topics of the modules or build on information learned in previous modules. Project formats and requirements will differ from module to module, but each project is also designed to incorporate skills taught throughout the course.

It is important that you to start these projects early, particularly since many of these projects will be group projects. You can contact your Instructor or your peers early if you need help. Each project will require you to submit some component in Canvas (although in different formats) in order to be evaluated prior to the end of the module.

☆ **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL PROJECTS IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE.**



All written components of a project that are submitted to Canvas will be passed through the Turnitin plagiarism check software. The results of this software analysis are not the only method that I will use to determine whether something is plagiarized. **If I find blatant plagiarism (copying and pasting from Wikipedia, for example, presenting other students' work as your own, or self-plagiarizing, which means re-using content you created for another course in high school, college, or elsewhere) you will be referred to Student Judicial Services and you will likely fail this course.** Plagiarism is unfortunately one of the most common mistakes that students make in an online course. Follow the guidelines provided in this course content carefully and ask for help if you are unsure at any point about what might constitute plagiarism. Do not assume that your previous school programs and education have fully prepared you to avoid all forms of plagiarism—there's no shame in admitting that you are unsure!

The final submission of each project in each module will vary. You are required to read the assignment description page for each project carefully: you will be held responsible for submitting your projects (group or individual)—and then checking that submission—according to the requirements and any assignment not following these guidelines will not receive any credit.

If submitting a website URL, it is critically important that you submit the correct URL, since your project will be graded based on the screenshot that Canvas takes at the time

of your submission. If you submit the incorrect URL and Canvas takes a screenshot of your login screen (for example), you won't receive credit for that part of the assignment.

Double check all of your submission before you walk away and contact your peers immediately if you are experiencing problems. Additionally, if you do not have the correct "viewing" permissions set (this is mostly in Google Drive) to allow us to view your assignment, then you will not receive full credit. If I cannot view your assignment when I first to access it, then it will be considered LATE. Don't let technical errors get in your way of succeeding in this course!

I will make every effort to fairly evaluate your participation and effort in every project, including group projects. Students will be afforded the opportunity to evaluate their groupmates' performances, especially in extreme cases. However, the reality is that working with others (in both the academic context and beyond) can sometimes be difficult and unfair. So treat your teammates with respect and make the effort that you would want others on your team to make! Good communication between teammates always makes for better projects and better grades.

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## FAQ

### What should I do to succeed in this class?

While there are no prerequisite classes for this course, there are a few things that you should know before starting this course. **Online courses require a higher level of self-motivation and self-pacing than most classroom-based courses.** Your instructor is here to help you understand the material of this course—I am not here, however, to manage your work schedule for you or to remind you of deadlines.

Accordingly, you should know that:

1. You are responsible for contacting (as soon as possible) your instructor and/or peers in order to ask questions or to get help.
2. You need to **pay very close attention each week to the course Canvas** instance (especially the "Modules" page, the "Announcements" page, and the "Assignments" page) in order to keep up with what's going on in the course.
3. You will need to **monitor all of your communications** through Canvas (including in your "Inbox" within Canvas) and through email **once a day (or at least every 48 hours)** in order to keep up with the course.
4. You need to organize your time effectively so that you can **spend up to 12 hours a week (some weeks will require more than 9 hours and some less) working on this class.**
5. Although you will have some degree of freedom in deciding how to pace your work in this course, **there are strict deadlines for all assignments** that you will be held responsible for meeting.

6. Students who are unable to motivate and to organize themselves (and especially those who don't communicate with their instructor) tend to be unsuccessful in a virtual classroom environment.
7. Although it is not necessary to be a computer expert to complete this course successfully (and, in fact, I will teach you more about this!), you do need to know the basics of operating a personal computer and navigating the Internet in order to even access this course. You are additionally expected to know how to:
  - a. access this course on the Canvas Learning Management Platform;
  - b. create folders and view the contents of a disk (e.g., your computer);
  - c. open an application or program;
  - d. send and receive e-mail;
  - e. search the Internet.
8. **You must submit work that meets college-level writing standards.**
9. You must participate **civily and ethically** with your classmates in discussions and with your group-mates in projects.

If you don't know how to do any of these things, or if you have documented disabilities that prevent you from doing them, let your instructor know during the first week of class. We can then decide on the best course of action.

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## How should I contact my instructor?

It depends on what kind of question you have -

- If you have questions about the **course structure, your grades, or more urgent issues**, contact your **instructor** through your Canvas Inbox. If you do not receive a reply to your Canvas message within 48 hours, then you should use the instructor's email address (listed in the syllabus) to contact your instructor
- If you have **technical issues** or questions about how to use Canvas or navigate the course, please email the iSchool IT Help Desk at [help@ischool.utexas.edu](mailto:help@ischool.utexas.edu).

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## How and when will my assignment be graded?

Each assignment will have a rubric attached to it, so you can see the requirements your instructor will use to evaluate your grade. They may also leave comments in the rubric if they want to comment on a specific item, or explain why points were deducted.

Your instructor will make every effort to have your submissions graded within a week of the assignment deadline. However, there are some assignments that take longer to grade. If you have any questions or concerns about your grades, please let your instructor know!

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## How can I determine my grade in the course?

This class uses an accumulation of points to determine your grade, not a percentage. This can be confusing if you are used to looking at averages, so the chart below should help.

☆ **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL PROJECTS IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE.** ☆ If you fail to turn in even one important part of one of the projects, you will not pass the class—**regardless of the number of points that you have collected.** Mistakes or technical errors are not an excuse!

You will find your grades in the left hand menu of Canvas. If you have any trouble with your grades, please contact the instructor directly.

A	93%-100%	278 – 300 points
A -	90%-92%	269 - 277
B +	87%-89%	260 - 268
B	83%-86%	249 - 259
B -	80%-82%	239 - 248
C +	77%-79%	228 - 238
C	73%-76%	218 - 227
C -	70%-72%	209 - 217
D+	67%-69%	201 – 208
D	63%-66%	189 - 200
D-	60%-62%	1790 – 188 (minimum for pass/fail students to pass)
F	0%-59%	Below 178 points



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## Will I be able to receive any credit for my late assignment?

**Late quiz and discussion assignments will not be accepted for any credit**, except in cases of serious, multi-day (well documented) illness or emergency. You will receive a **zero** if you do not submit these assignments on time. 🤖

A few things to keep in mind:

I use the Canvas upload time as the official time of the submission, so if you submit your assignment even one second after the deadline, Canvas will mark your assignment as late and you will receive a zero for that assignment.

Submit your assignments in advance of the deadline: computer problems, network outages, and other “technical” issues will not be considered a valid excuse for submitting an assignment late, so make sure you submit your work early.

### **For project-related assignments ONLY:**

**You may submit your assignments up to 7 days late (by 11:59 p.m.) after the assignment is due.** The MAXIMUM amount of credit that you can receive for late project assignment submissions is 50% of the total points possible (rounded DOWN to the nearest whole point). You may still receive less than 50% of the total possible points, depending on your work or on the situation. After 7 days, you will not be able to submit any late project assignments, except in cases of serious, multi-day (well documented) illness or emergency.

Plan ahead. You have all of your deadlines for assignments, so it is up to you to pace yourself adequately in order to finish them on time (being sick one day should not disrupt your submission of these assignments.) As there is no scheduled class time, you must be responsible for getting all work (including the reading) done in a timely manner. This course allows for a lot of flexibility for you to schedule your work, so I will be very strict about excused late work.

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## Are there an extra credit opportunities?

This class contains some assignments that are considered extra credit - the points you can earn from these assignments will add on to your total points for the semester.

You also have the opportunity to turn in individual or group projects specified below for extra credit points - you can turn in your assignment up to a week ahead of the due date for a max of 5 extra credit points. The goal of this incentive is to help you learn to plan ahead and work on your assignments and submit them ahead of time, rather than 10 minutes before they are due.

An assignment turned in:

- 5 days early will receive 5 extra credit points
- 4 days early will receive 4 extra credit points
- And so on.

You can receive "early submission" extra credit on a maximum of 3 assignments - but you are always encouraged to plan ahead and turn in your assignments ahead of time!

Please note that just turning in an assignment early **does not guarantee you will receive a good grade** - if you turn in a half completed assignment or do not follow the instructions, the extra credit will not make up for that.

You can resubmit an assignment anytime before the due date. If you resubmit your assignment, the latest submission time/date is taken into consideration when applying extra credit points.

Ask your professor if you have any questions about this extra credit policy.

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## How do I use Canvas?

You can learn how to navigate and use Canvas on the Introduction to Canvas page in Module 1.

Here are some highlights:

**Modules** - Modules are "chapters" of the class that will each last for approximately two weeks of the semester - the next module will unlock on the final day of the current module. Each of the modules consists of two graded elements: quizzes, and a project (which may be in multiple parts). Once a module "closes" at 11:59 p.m. on the final day of that module, you will not be able to submit any more assignments for that module.

**Announcements** - Announcements are the most common way that your instructor will keep you updated with any new or changing information that you need to know about this course. You can view all of the announcements on the Announcements page. Announcements will not show up on the Modules page, so you will need to visit the Announcements page or set up your communications/notifications settings to inform you of new announcements by email.

**Assignments** - You should be able to see all of your assignments listed as "assignment" description pages within the separate modules on the main Modules page. However, you can also go to the Assignments main page to see all of the available (and past) assignments organized into categories based on the assignment types.

**People and Groups** - Most assignments (including discussions and several projects) will require you to work in a group with your peers. You should become familiar with navigating the People page in order to find out which group you are in and who your groupmates are for this module. (Groups will change from module to module, in order to give you the opportunity to work with a larger number of your peers.)

**Grades** - The Grades page is where you will find all of your grades for each assignment collected into one place. An assignment may appear "muted" if the instructor is still reviewing your submission. You can also check the rubric on any graded assignment to look for any detailed comments or explanations about your grade for an assignment. All grades will be listed in terms of points, and not percentages. Check the full syllabus in order to see a conversion of points to grade percentages for the final course grade.

**Inbox and communications settings** - Although you are required to have an UTMail address for this course, you are also responsible for checking your Canvas Inbox regularly. You can set up your communications settings for many different types of notifications (including email forwarding) on your personal Canvas Account page. No matter what settings you choose, you will be responsible for receiving any notifications or communications made through Canvas, so be sure that you test your settings and make sure that they are working correctly. Missing an important communication or update is not an excuse for missing any required tasks.

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## Are there any required texts for this course?

There are no required texts that must be purchased for this course.

All required readings, video, images, and audio files are available online in our Canvas course. Required media can be found listed (and embedded) directly on each content page of the course modules.

Because there is no textbook, you are instead responsible for reading all content and assignment pages of this course. In addition to this "main content," I will be introducing you to additional outside resources through links. Some of these materials may be reference by quiz questions and assignments, so if the module asks you to read something, keep in mind you may need it later.

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## Is there a final exam for this course?

There is no comprehensive final exam for this course. 🙌

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## Since the class is online, is there any attendance grade or policy I need to know about?

There is no grade for attendance for this course - it is 100% entirely online!

However, there will be at least 5 in-class discussions throughout the semester. Students are expected to come to class regularly and participate in discussions. Discussions, and the points from these activities, cannot be made up.

Since we will only be meeting for one hour a week, it is important that you spend all of the rest of the time that would normally be spent in a classroom towards reviewing the course content.

Additionally, there are strict deadlines for all of the assignments in this course that you must plan very carefully for. You can always choose to submit your assignments ahead of the deadline in order to avoid any schedule conflicts!

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## What is the university policy on academic integrity?

All students at UT-Austin are expected to maintain high standards of Academic Integrity. You can [learn more about these policies here](#). Please abide by the University's policy on academic integrity. All work that you submit must be your own: "*Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism... Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. University policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.*" (From: The University of Texas: General Information, Appendix C.)

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## What should I do if I have documented accommodations or think I need accommodations?

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. If they certify your needs, then I will happily work with you to make appropriate arrangements. Be sure to let me know about any certified special needs that you may have.

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## What is the university policy for religious or holy day observance?

I am happy to provide any necessary arrangements for religious or holy day observances. However, you should know that the University policy states that "*A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.*" (<http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/>) Additionally, except in very specific cases, a religious observation does not necessarily preclude you from submitting assignments early (a day or two in advance of the deadline).

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## What is the university policy on email/communications?

You are required to check your email regularly for this course, especially because the course is conducted completely through electronic means. **For this course, this includes checking your Canvas messaging “inbox,” as well.** The recommendation is to check your email and Canvas inbox once a day.

University policy states that “*Electronic mail (e-mail), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send e-mail communications to all students, and the University will expect that e-mail communications will be received and read in a timely manner.*”

(<http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/official-communications-with-the-university/>).

The instructor will do their best to reply to student emails and/or Canvas messages within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends, barring rare and extenuating circumstances.

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## Where can I get help meeting basic needs?

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. UT maintains the UT Outpost

(<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/utoutpost.php>) which is a free on-campus food pantry and career closet. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that they may possess.

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## How do I update my name and pronouns?

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender identity & expression, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name, unless they have added a “chosen name” with the registrar’s office, which you can do so

here: [https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/ais/chosen\\_name/](https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/ais/chosen_name/). I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the pronouns you use (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas,

visit <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns>. More resources available on the Gender and Sexuality Center’s website, [www.utgsc.org](http://www.utgsc.org).

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## Where do I go for mental health support?

I urge students who are struggling for any reason and who believe that it might impact their performance in the course to reach out to me if they feel comfortable. This will allow me to provide any resources or accommodations that I can. If immediate mental health assistance is needed, call the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) at 512-471-3515 or you may also contact Bryce Moffett, LCSW (iSchool CARE counselor) at 512-232-2983. Outside CMHC business hours (8a.m.-5p.m., Monday-Friday), contact the CMHC 24/7 Crisis Line at 512-471-2255.

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## What are the current COVID guidelines?

For any illness, students should stay home if they are sick or contagious, not only to stop the spread, but also to promote their personal wellness. The university will continue to provide rapid antigen self-test kits at [distribution sites](#) throughout campus. Students can receive up to four tests at a time. The university will provide [symptomatic COVID-19 testing](#) on campus for all students, faculty and staff.

UHS maintains up-to-date resources on COVID, which can be found here:

- - [COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)
  - [COVID-19 Exposure Action Chart](#)