

Online education vs traditional classes essay

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Education has taken on many forms during the course of human history. The ancient Greeks sat outdoors while their teachers used a series of questions and answers to communicate their ideas to their students. This idea of a teacher standing before a student and either delivering information verbally or using a series of questions and answers would remain the predominant method of instruction until the wave of educational theories that began to crop up with the discovery of different learning styles. Group-based learning became popular in the 1970s, but the idea that all of a teacher's students, at least within the same section, would come and sit in a classroom for a set amount of time on various days during a semester or year, still characterized the delivery of instruction. However, the advent of the Internet changed all of this. Suddenly, it became possible to watch lectures online instead of driving or walking to class. Instead of in-person discussion groups, online forums became a way for people to interact in response to instructional materials or assignments, either through a series of posts or through a scheduled online chat session. Online education is more convenient than traditional classes, because you do not have to go to a room on a campus at any particular point, in most cases. Instead, you log in, take in the material, and complete and submit your assignments. While you don't get the benefit of face-to-face interaction with your instructor or with your peers, online education has advantages – and drawbacks – of its own.

Time management is a difficult issue for many college students, whether in online or traditional classes. It's not just about finding time to go to class, it's about organizing your schedule so that you get your homework done in time for the class when it is due, making sure you are in class on time, and

studying for tests and completing papers. In an online class, you'll still have deadlines, but you won't usually have as many, and they won't be as spread out over the semester as they are in a traditional class (Jackson). You might have to complete a midterm exam by a particular date, and a semester exam during finals week, and some papers by different dates (and even some blog postings or forum responses), but you generally won't have to turn something in two or three times a week, which is when you are expected to go to a traditional class, usually. Spreading the class out in a traditional format, where you're in a room for an hour three days a week, or 90 minutes two days a week, helps keep students focused on the tasks on a short-term basis. Printing out a series of deadlines in August that may begin in October and not end until December can present a major challenge for people who struggle with time management, and who may end up procrastinating until two months' of work is due in a week, or a few days.

Cost can vary significantly for online classes in comparison to traditional instruction. With an online classes, many schools offer 24/7 access to instructors via chat, and that can be an expensive service for classes to offer. The technological challenge with online classes is that students must be able to access the class materials from any Internet connection. This means that institutions of learning must have the capacity to post materials, including handouts and videos of lectures, for student access (Study finds). This is one reason why online education can be just as expensive as traditional university study, even though it has little of the overhead associated with traditional college studies.

One of the more valuable aspects of traditional instruction is the opportunity to build rapport with one's professor and classmates. Sitting in a lecture hall or section classroom two or three days a week allows students and professors to form a relationship that grows during the class. It's just not the same posting forum comments, or even talking in a chat room. This rapport can help students build valuable interpersonal connections that will help them find a great job after graduation; those connections are simply not possible to build with the same depth in an online class (Hough).

The online classes do offer the advantage of convenience. If it's sleeting outside, you can still log in and view the lecture, or read your book, and complete your assignments. Your class, on the other hand, will probably not meet during an ice storm. If it's cold and raining outside, you may be likely to stay in bed and skip a traditional class. With an online class, all you have to do is roll out of bed and log in to your class website.

There are also some similarities between online education and traditional classrooms. While the time management varies between the two formats, as discussed above, it is still true that traditional and online students both have to manage their time carefully. Traditional students may have the semester broken down into smaller chunks, but they still turn in papers and take tests – and they have to be in a specific room at a certain time, two or three times a week. Either way, time management is an important skill.

With both formats of education, you'll still have to buy textbooks and other ancillary materials. You will have readings to finish on a regular basis, because your assignments and examinations will be based on those

materials. Homework and examinations are also part of both formats, as teachers need a way to assess their students' progress, even if it's all done online.

Finally, both formats of education impart important information and skills to their students. While it is more difficult, at times, to understand information that you only receive online, because it is not possible to ask your teacher to stop and answer a question online (although you CAN ask a chat representative for help, depending the online school that you attend). If you are skilled at independent learning, you can gain the same skills from online education that you can from a traditional classroom.

Online education offers many of the advantages associated with traditional education, and it also offers additional convenience for students who would have difficulty commuting to a traditional campus. Depending on the school, online education can actually cost more than a traditional school based on tuition, and the opportunity to develop connections is not as strong as it is on a traditional campus. However, you can often complete your degree more quickly, and if that is the only obstacle between you and the profession of your choice, or if your lifestyle is such that online education offers the convenience that you need, then there is no reason not to consider it for your degree.

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