Start Here: Online Course Guide

Before beginning the Course Content section, please follow the steps on this handout to become acclimated with the course. Print this guide and use it as a checklist as you complete each task. **There are two activities to complete towards the end, so do not bypass this introduction.**

**Step 1: Announcements**
Click the *Announcements* tool link located to the left on the Course Menu. The course professor may often create announcements to keep you informed of updates or other important information. Check this tool daily! This tool may be used in lieu of, or in addition to course emails. After reviewing the *Announcements* tools, return to this checklist to resume with **Step 2: About Your Professor**.

**Step 2: About Your Professor**
Click on the *About Your Professor* link located to the left on the Course Menu. The page provides a welcome message from your professor. The message will provide you with a course overview and introduce you to your professor. After reviewing the About Your Professor link, return to this checklist and resume with **Step 3: Course Syllabus**.

**Step 3: Course Syllabus**
Click the *Syllabus* link located to the left on the Course Menu to review the course syllabus. Review the course syllabus in its entirety. It will provide you with the professor contact information, course objectives, explanations of assignments and assessments, and grading policies. It also includes relevant information on how online students should conduct themselves in an online environment. After reviewing the course syllabus, return to this checklist to resume with **Step 4: Course Schedule**.

**Step 4: Course Schedule**
Click the *Course Schedule* link located to the left on the Course Menu to review the course schedule. It will provide you with a schedule of due dates for the graded assignments in this course. You are responsible for adhering to the due dates provided, so manage your time wisely. The policy for missed deadlines is explained in the course syllabus. After reviewing the course schedule, return to this checklist to resume with **Step 5: System & Technical Requirements**.

**Step 5: System & Technical Requirements**
Please click and review the *System & Technical Requirements* information to identify the list of supported browsers and other technical and skill requirements that you will need in order to enjoy the full functionality of the course. Take this opportunity to review the for the *Blackboard Help* link for students relating to many of the common features you will use in Blackboard. After reviewing the technical requirements, return to this checklist to resume with **Step 6: Tips for Online Success & Online Netiquette**.
Step 6: Tips for Online Success and Online Netiquette
Please click and review the Tips for Online Success. There is a misconception that online courses are easier than classroom courses and that is not the case. Online courses require a great deal of time management and discipline.

In addition, click and review the Core Rules of Netiquette web page for expected behavior in an online learning environment. Other expectations may be listed on the course syllabus. After reviewing the tips for online success and the online netiquette web page, return to this checklist to resume with Step 7: Student Support Services.

Step 7: Student Support Services
Visit the University’s Gregg-Graniteville Library site to learn about the many resources that are available for undergraduate students. To receive help regarding the University Library, please use the Ask a Librarian support feature.

The following links are also provided for you to be a successful student throughout this course and the program:

- **Citations Tools:** Use the following two links to assist you in using style guides for your writing:
  - USCA, Gregg-Graniteville Library Citation Style Guides
  - Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)

- **Academic Success Center:** Use the Academic Success Center to access Academic Advising, the Writing Room, the Tutoring Center, and other resources.

- **Campus Life:** Retrieve information on Academic Support, Enrollment Services, Organizations, Student Services, and Housing Services.

- **Disability Services Office:** The University provides accommodations to ensure that educational programming and services are accessible to students with disabilities.

- **Counseling Services:** The University offers counseling and crisis services as well as outreach services, self-help, and frequently asked questions.

- **Computer Services Help Desk:** Visit this page to find out how to receive technology support and what technology services are available to you. Refer to the Important Tools/Links section located on the Course Menu for additional support, guides, and tutorials for Blackboard.

After reviewing the student support services resources, return to this checklist to resume with Step 8: Student Handbook.
Step 8: Student Handbook
Click and review the USC Aiken Student Handbook in its entirety to become familiar with various institution policies. Become familiar with the Academic Integrity policy, the Honor Pledge, and Avoiding Plagiarism resources. The University has a zero tolerance policy towards plagiarism. After reviewing the student handbook, return to this checklist to resume with Step 9: Confirmation of START HERE Completion Survey.

Step 9: Confirmation of START HERE Completion Survey
Click on the Assessments link to the left on the Course Menu to complete the Confirmation of START HERE Completion Survey. Afterwards completing the survey, return to this checklist to complete Step 10: Introduce Yourself Discussion Activity.

Step 10: Introduce Yourself Discussion Activity
Click on the Discussions link to the left on the Course Menu to participate in the Introduce Yourself discussion forum activity. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the activity.

Upon completion, you may begin with the Course Content section on the Course Menu. Explore all of the links so that you are familiar with the navigation and location of course materials.