

## John A. Logan College

### INFORMATION FOR ADVISORS ON DISTANCE LEARNING CLASSES

Online courses and Telecourses (distance learning) are often thought of as "easy" or as courses that can still be taken when other courses fill up. The problem with this idea is that students may find themselves in classes they cannot handle, or in classes not well suited to their needs. This creates problems with retention and students performing poorly.

While telecourses and online classes are designed to accommodate students with time and place restrictions, these factors are not necessarily the most important in placing students in distance learning classes. Freedom from time or place of traditional classes is only useful to students if the distance learning classes meet the students' needs. Students with strong academic abilities, good study skills, and excellent time management skills will perform well in distance learning classes, just as they will in the traditional classroom. However, students who do not possess good study and time management skills are particularly likely to perform poorly in distance learning classes.

Please remember the following when advising students:

Students who perform well in online classes and telecourses:

- Are good time managers
- Can study independently
- Have good study skills and habits
- Realize that distance learning classes are as hard, or even harder than traditional classes
- Communicate with their instructors, despite not being in a traditional classroom on a daily basis

Students who perform poorly in online classes and telecourses:

- Expect classes to be easy
- Expect to put in little time or effort
- Wait until the last minute
- Do not communicate regularly with instructors

Online classes:

- Require good computer and typing skills, and are therefore not for people who are afraid of computers
- Require knowledge of the Internet, web browsing, and email
- Require reading. Most classes have a textbook, just like any other class.
- Are often heavily dependent on writing skills
- Have deadlines and assignments, just like other classes
- Require communications with other students and the instructor

Telecourses:

- Require reading, as well as watching videos. Most classes require a textbook, just like any other class.
- Often require strong writing skills
- Have deadlines and assignments, just like any other class