

Dear Newbie,

Welcome to online statistics. If you're a whiny, sniveling, student who expects a lot of hand-holding, run like hell while you still can. If you're an independent student who's already developed strong study skills and if you're good at managing your time, congratulations! You've made a great choice. Even independent students need help sometimes but don't despair, there are many resources available to you. Take advantage of them. Ms. Moss is highly accessible through the online discussion board, virtual class room, regular office hours and Saturday study sessions. You can also get help from fellow students on the discussion board and free tutoring in the Skyline Library Learning Center. In addition to the online homework and quizzes, CourseCompass contains several useful teaching aids located in their "Multimedia Library" section. Take advantage of these as well. I found the videos, animations, ActivStats and chapter review exercises very helpful.

Be forewarned regarding online classes. They may require more time, not less, than an on-campus course. It takes me longer to understand math concepts on my own than it takes when I have a professor explaining them to me during daily lectures. That said, nothing beats the convenience of an online course. You make your own hours but, be careful. If I were to take this class over, I would maintain a consistent study schedule. In the beginning, my study hours were very erratic. I spent several hours one day studying and didn't touch my statistics material for several days after that. You will find this course easier and less stressful if you dedicate an hour or two daily to your studies instead of trying to cram several assignments all into one day (or one weekend).

This class is somewhat demanding but if you stay on top of it, never getting behind in your coursework, you'll be fine. Do NOT wait until the last minute to get your online work done. I did this once and, although I did complete the assignment on time, it was not fun working under the looming deadline - especially when I got stuck on a particularly difficult problem. Get into the habit of completing online assignments at least one day early, not

only for extra credit but so you won't have to worry about last minute computer problems.

When it comes to doing homework, be flexible. Initially, I always tried doing the online homework first. What I found was that, for some chapters, it was easier to do the online homework with its "show me an example" and "help me solve this" features before I did the textbook homework. But, for other chapters, doing the textbook homework first was actually easier. It just depended on which chapter I was tackling at the time. If you get stuck doing one type of homework, try switching to the other type. This worked well for me.

Remember to use all the resources provided to you by Ms. Moss. Before you start your homework, make sure you have read her lecture notes thoroughly. This is *very* important, it can save you a lot of grief! You don't always have to learn the difficult formulas recommended online or in the textbook. Sometimes you get to use the much easier calculator methods instead. The lecture notes will indicate which process to use. Also, I found the unit checklist was an extremely helpful organizational tool. I used it to track all my online and textbook assignment due dates. Additionally, it helped me track my mastery of the topics I needed to know for the exams and checking off each completed assignment or topic was encouraging. It made me feel as though I was making progress.

Be careful not to fool yourself into thinking you know the course material better than you really do. This is an easy mistake to make because you can repeat the online homework and quizzes until you get 100%. Remember, if you have to keep peeking in the book or your notes while taking the quiz, you don't know the material well enough and you'll find that out when you take a Saturday exam! Taking the old practice exams is very helpful but you need to study more than that if you want to do well. If you get nervous on exam day, like me, try taking a long walk in the morning and bring some chocolate to class. These things helped me relax. Figure out what helps you relax on exam day.

Above all, just remember not to get behind and get help if you need it. Good Luck!

Class of Spring '08