

Sycamores At A Distance

Plagiarism Alert!

It may seem easy or a quick fix for writer's block; however, cutting and pasting website information onto a discussion board or into your research papers, is considered plagiarism unless you cite the source. Be warned!

:) Emoticons :(

You might be thinking, "What on earth are emoticons?" Emoticons are a way to help the reader infer the writer's intended emotion in an email, text or quick note. Although considered somewhat unprofessional and should be reserved for casual communication, there are times when they are helpful, especially for distance students who may have little face-to-face contact with their classmates. Think twice before using them with instructors unless you know them well, but including emoticons in a post or on a message board could be appropriate and fun. Try it! :) :\\



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Writing Center for Distance Ed Students

Written by Aaron Pelloquin

Sometimes writing can be difficult if you feel you need feedback or guidance from a writer's perspective. This can be especially true for students who do not have direct access to campus, but help is as close as your fingertips when you use the ISU Writing Center. The Writing Center provides special support for distance education and commuter students. By submitting a paper through the submissions manager on the Writing Center website, you receive interactive one-on-one support from a tutor who has been specifically trained to be a peer editor.

Graduate and undergraduate distance education students can use the Writing Center, and all

services are free.

"We emphasize the writing process in general, not just grammar," said Nicole Bailey, the Writing Center Director. "We can help with reports, term papers, resumes and creative writing. We focus on the student and try to help them be successful. We want to help students

turn writing assignments into practical learning experiences that will build their writing skills."

Located in the Cunningham Memorial Library, the Writing Center is in the process of expanding and promoting services to distance and commuter students. For more information, go to [http://](http://libguides.indstate.edu/content.php?pid=18359&hs=a)

[libguides.indstate.edu/
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Blackboard Tips:

- When Blackboard is not working on your computer, call the O.I.T. Help Desk at 1-888-818-5465 or email it-help@indstate.edu
- Checking the “Gradebook” tab helps you stay aware of your standing in a particular class.
- Blackboard users should download “posted” files to their personal desktops. Click on the file in Blackboard, press “save,” and it will download to your computer.
- Be aware! Blackboard will cause problems if your Internet connection is not secure. This is especially important during tests and when submitting assignments.
- Make sure that your computer security software is updated. You can find free software for ISU students at: <http://downloads.indstate.edu>
- If you are having persistent issues utilizing Blackboard and you have contacted the O.I.T. Help Desk, make sure you remain in contact with your professor.

WHAT IS BLACKBOARD?

Written by Amy Taylor

Blackboard is a computer software program used at ISU to streamline the flow of information between students and teachers. It helps students keep directly linked to their classes and grades and allows instructors to post tests, quizzes, grades, emails, Power Points, and other teaching aids in one organized place.

Distance education and commuter students can log in to Blackboard and see a complete listing of the classes they are taking. From that point students can access everything related to a specific class, including assignments, due dates, grades, and posts from professors and fellow students.

Few things are more frustrating



Blackboard

than a software application you don't understand so ISU has created a tutoring tab to help those who are unfamiliar with Blackboard. The tab is at the top of the main log-in page at <https://blackboard.indstate.edu>. Many

find it helpful and informative even if they have used Blackboard before.

Once you know how to navigate in Blackboard, you'll find it a great organizational and learning tool.

Blackboard keeps students directly linked to their class assignments and grades.

IT'S WHO YOU KNOW

Being a distance or commuter student with limited access to campus can be frustrating when questions or problems arise.

For coursework issues, your first point of contact should be your professor. Creating and maintaining a good relationship with your instructor is key to a successful online education experience.

For basic questions or problems that do not involve a class, try searching Sycamore Express at <http://www.indstate.edu/express/menu.htm>. This is an ISU website that contains links to information regarding academics, billing, admissions, registration, graduation, transcripts,

financial aid, technology, and other important matters.

If your questions or problems are complex or you are having difficulties that cannot be resolved online, there is an excellent resource exclusively for distance students – me! I am Amy Taylor, the Student Services Assistant for Distance Education. I am here to answer basic questions regarding Distance Ed and act as an advocate to help you resolve problems. You can reach me by phone at (812) 237-2288, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (EST) or by email at ISU-distancestudent@mail.indstate.edu. I am here to help!