

What is Digital Learning at North Island College?

10 Things to Know for Academic Success



For New and Returning Students: This handout outlines 10 components of digital learning that may be different than what you experienced learning via an on-campus, in-class course. Created by the Centre for Teaching and Learning Innovation at North Island College.

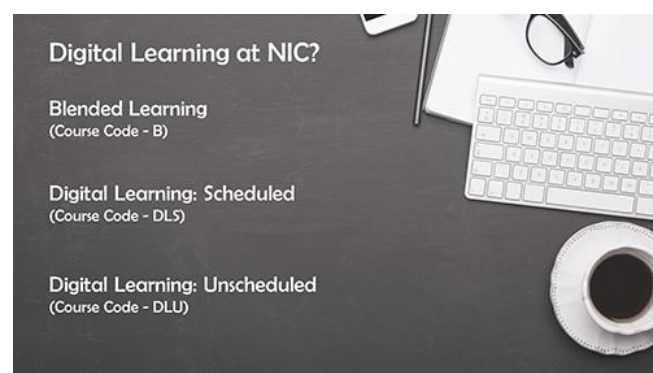
What Does Digital Learning Mean?



Digital learning is when students and instructors predominantly use technologies to engage in learning experiences and opportunities. The digital tools and platforms, software and hardware, and other digital resources aid in the access, engagement, assessment and sharing of learning.

Digital learning is a term that encompasses a variety of different learning experiences using digital tools and technologies each with different names such as blended learning, online learning, hybrid learning, virtual learning, asynchronous and synchronous learning and so forth.

Digital Learning with NIC Formats



At NIC, there will be three different digital learning formats for all classes this Fall 2020 and Winter 2021.

Courses will be coded as **Blended Learning**, **Digital Learning Scheduled** or **Digital Learning Unscheduled**.

In a nutshell, some classes will be a combination of digital and on-campus (called blended), some classes will be scheduled with live online class experiences at certain times and days of the week along with independent and group work done between live sessions (called Digital Learning: Scheduled) and some classes will have no scheduled sessions but students will

work independently and in groups on activities and learning experiences according to instructor expectations (called Digital Learning: Unscheduled).



Let's get started on sharing the 10 things to know about digital learning for academic success at North Island College.

Each one of these 10 items will help prepare you for learning digitally.

1. Digital learning creates a new schedule of when you will learn, how you will learn and where you will learn.



Instead of coming to campus and sitting in a classroom, doing activities with your classmates or talking to your instructor, your days will follow a new schedule.

Your new schedule will be created and organized by you.

Every day you should check your northislandcollege.ca email, check your MyNIC Student Portal and your Blackboard Learn courses – as there will be more use of these platforms to communicate with you.

Every day you may have to engage with learning activities, assignments, and projects, communicate with classmates, answer questions, reply to emails and create posts – these are just some examples. Digital learning means being flexible and adaptable following a new learning schedule.

2. Digital learning has a new set of technology tools that you will be using daily.



You will need specific computer hardware and software along with comfort with NIC's core learning platforms (BlueJeans, Blackboard Learn and Kaltura).

You will need a desktop or laptop computer as your primary learning device and use your smartphone as a secondary communication device.

Digital learning also means acquiring or enhancing your digital literacies and competencies so that you have good comfort and confidence with all technologies.

Access the three [Student Technology Readiness Checklists](#) and [Digital Literacies and Competencies Checklist](#) found on the Learn Anywhere website. These checklists will help you be prepared for learning.

3. Digital learning often needs a good Internet connection.



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Much of your learning will depend on reliable and strong connections to the Internet. Digital learning is mostly web-based and so you will require wired Internet connectivity to your laptop or desktop computer.

If you are unable to be on a wired connection, ensure you are receiving a strong signal from a Wi-Fi modem.

If you are away from home and require access to your web-based learning materials, make sure you are using free Wi-Fi so you don't incur extra charges from your data service provider.

During times when you need good Internet connections, ask your housemates to refrain from activities that will also use some of the Internet bandwidth coming into your house – such as pausing gaming, stopping large downloads and holding off on streaming TV shows. Check out your network connection speeds at <https://www.speedtest.net/>

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You most likely will encounter technology issues.

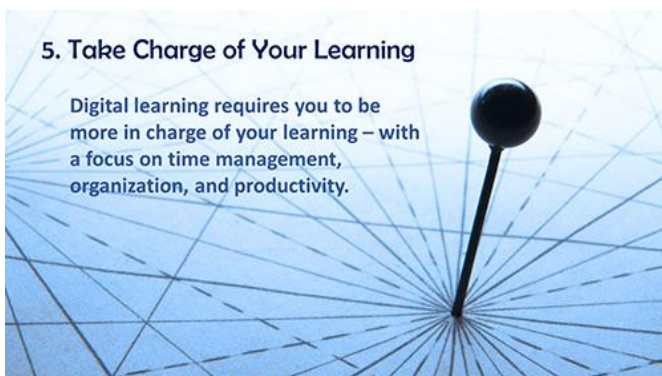
You will need to learn how to fix common computer problems, figure out why things are not working and be patient as you acquire new skills and abilities.

You may need to use Google more frequently to solve technology issues by reading solutions from others and learning from technology tutorials.

The NIC Student Technical Services team

<https://library.nic.bc.ca/studenttech> are still there to help you with questions, but you may have to do more technical problem-solving on your own.

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5. Take Charge of Your Learning

Digital learning requires you to be more in charge of your learning – with a focus on time management, organization, and productivity.

You will need to be more self-directed and organized to manage the various tasks, expectations and due dates that will be somewhat different than your in-class experiences.

You will need very good time management skills to ensure you have sufficient time to do all the learning tasks in a course.

Working independently, you may need to adjust your learning strategies for the digital learning formats.

6. Digital learning presents you with different ways to interact with content.



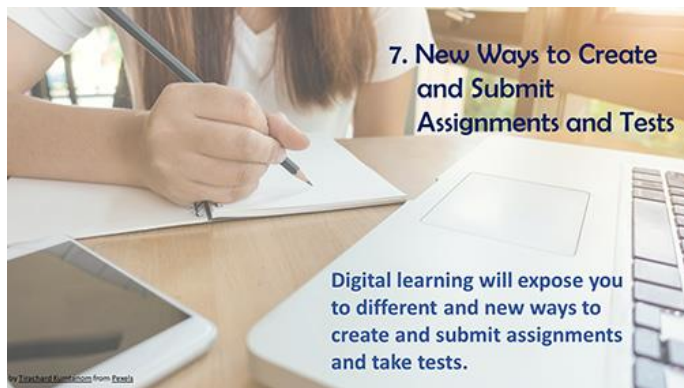
You will experience different ways to interact with content.

Some courses might involve accessing a Blackboard Learn course to watch videos and then post answers to questions on the discussion board.

Some courses might have you connect with a digital textbook site, do some related exercises, and take a quiz on the content before you attend a live online class with your instructor.

Some courses might have you work with classmates to prepare a digital presentation of what you have learned. The ways you will interact with content and concepts will expose you to new ways of learning.

7. Digital learning will expose you to different and new ways to create and submit assignments and take tests.



Doing assignments, projects and tests will be a bit different than before. You may still be typing a paper but may have to hand in via Blackboard Learn assignments tool.

You may have to create a video demonstrating a task and then upload that video and provide the link to your instructor.

You may have to create a portfolio website of your work throughout the course. You may have to do an

open book test or open book exam.

There will be lots of new ways to share and show your learning, along with new ways to be evaluated. Ask questions of your instructor to ensure you know what is expected of you.

8. Digital learning may involve different ways of participating.



While you may still 'raise your hand' - but now it will be in the BlueJeans video conferencing platform to participate, you may also be asked to post a response in the chat area or go to a breakout room to work with a smaller group of students.

Participation may mean posting answers to questions in Blackboard Learn's course discussion area or it may mean messaging classmates while working on a project.

Instructors may reach out to students individually via email or may send weekly videos outlining the instructions and activities for your participation. Participation is just different with digital learning.

9. Digital learning means communicating in new ways with your instructor and classmates.



Digital learning formats rely heavily on professional and respectful communication skills and abilities.

You might be communicating via email, during live online office hours, on a discussion board, or working with team members in a collaborative web space.

Remember to always practice compassion and care in your written and spoken words and always seek permission from others before you record, copy, or share anyone's communications.

10. Digital learning means you show up and be ready to learn.



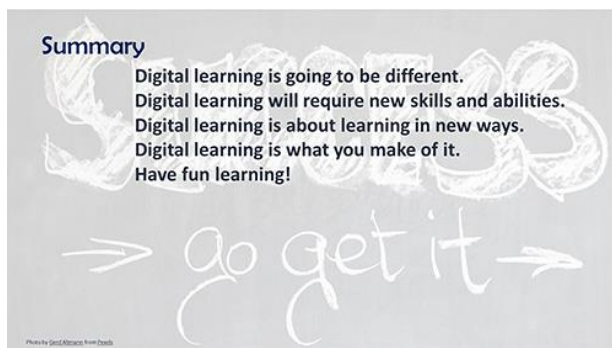
Digital learning requires you to show up for classes regardless of course format.

You may be in a video conferencing class, sharing thoughts via a threaded discussion taking place over a whole week or in-class for applied learning activities.

Be ready to follow your instructor's directions and the course schedule of expectations.

You need to stay on top of assignments, readings and activities and be ready each day to set aside time and space to do your work. You need to show up, be present and ready to learn!

Summary



Digital learning is going to be different.

Digital learning will require new skills and abilities.

Digital learning is about learning in new ways.

Digital learning is what you make of it.

Have fun learning!

Terms

Blended Learning will include a combination of in-class/on-campus learning and digital learning from home. There will be scheduled on-campus class time to engage in shops, studios, and labs for hands-on learning. There will be unscheduled learning time for attending to theory, readings, and content learning. There will be no scheduled video conference class time, but your instructor may offer optional sessions for office hours, review sessions or class gatherings. All your learning will follow the instructions, due dates and expectations of the instructor shared through email, websites, course learning platforms and in-class experiences.

Unscheduled Learning will be fully digital with all learning done from home and no need to come to campus. There will be no scheduled video conference class time, but your instructor may offer optional sessions for office hours, review sessions or class gatherings. All your learning will follow the instructions, due dates and expectations of instructors shared through email, websites, and course learning platforms. You will have to check your Blackboard Learn course area frequently and stay on top of all the course activities. Your instructor will be in touch near the beginning of the term to point you in the right direction.

Scheduled Learning will be fully digital with all learning from home and no need to come to campus. There will be scheduled video conference class time on specific days and times as outlined when you registered for the course. For example, scheduled times may be Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 – 2:30 pm. Your instructor will be in touch near the beginning of the term to point you in the right direction. Between your live digital classes, you will follow the instructions, due dates, and expectations of the instructor shared through email, websites, course learning platforms and video conference classes.