Are Online Courses Right For Me?

Take out a pencil/pen and a piece of paper. Answer the following questions. Look at the bottom of the page for scoring information to see if Internet courses are right for you.

1.) My need to take this course now is:
   a. High -- I need it immediately for a specific goal.
   b. Moderate -- I could take it on campus later or substitute another course.
   c. Low -- It could be postponed.

2.) Feeling that I am part of a class is:
   a. Very important to me.
   b. Somewhat important to me.
   c. Not particularly necessary to me.

3.) I would classify myself as someone who:
   a. Often get things done ahead of time.
   b. Needs reminding to get things done on time.
   c. Puts things off until the last minute or does not complete them.

4.) Classroom discussion is:
   a. Rarely helpful to me.
   b. Sometimes helpful to me.
   c. Almost always helpful to me.

5.) When an instructor hands out directions for an assignment, I prefer:
   a. Figuring out the instructions myself.
   b. Trying to follow the directions on my own, then asking for help as needed.
   c. Having the instructions explained to me.

6.) I need faculty comments on my assignments:
   a. Within a few weeks, so I can review what I did.
   b. Within a few days, or I forget what I did.
   c. Right away, or I get very frustrated.

7.) Considering my professional and personal schedule, the amount of time I have to work on an online courses is:
   a. More than enough for an on campus course.
   b. The same as for a class on campus.
   c. Less than for a class on campus.
8.) Coming to campus on a regular schedule is:
   a. Extremely difficult for me -- I have commitments (work, family, or personal) during times when classes are offered.
   b. A little difficult, but I can rearrange my priorities to allow for regular attendance on campus.
   c. Easy for me.

9.) As a reader, I would classify myself as:
   a. Good -- I usually understand the text without help.
   b. Average -- I sometimes need help to understand the text.
   c. Slower than average.

10.) When I need help understanding the subject:
   a. I am comfortable approaching an instructor to ask for clarification.
   b. I am uncomfortable approaching an instructor, but do it anyway.
   c. I never approach an instructor to admit I don't understand something.

Scoring

Add 3 points for each "a" that you chose, 2 for each "b," and 1 for each "c."

If you scored 20 or over, an online course is a real possibility for you.

If you scored between 11 and 20, online courses may work for you, but you may need to make a few adjustments in your schedule and study habits to succeed.

If you scored 10 or less, online learning may not currently be the best alternative for you; talk to your advisor.

Explanation

1. Online learning students sometimes neglect their courses because of personal or professional circumstances. Having a compelling reason for taking the course helps motivate the student to stick with the course.
2. Some students prefer the independence of online learning; others find the independence uncomfortable and miss being part of the classroom experience.
3. Online courses give students greater freedom of scheduling, but they can require more self-discipline than on-campus classes.
4. Some people learn best by interacting with other students and instructors. Others learn better by listening, reading and reviewing on their own. Some online courses provide less opportunity for group interaction than most on campus courses.
5. Online learning requires you to work from written directions.
6. It may take longer to get comments back from your instructor in an online course than an on-campus course.
7. Online learning requires at least as much time as on-campus courses. Students have found that online courses are as hard or harder than on campus courses.
8. Most people who are successful with online learning find it difficult to come to campus on a regular basis because of work/family/personal schedules.
9. Printed materials are the primary source of directions and information in online courses. 
10. Students who do well in online courses are usually comfortable contacting the instructor as soon as they need help with the course.