

DISTANCE LEARNING STUDENT INFORMATION GUIDE



CALDWELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

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CCC&TI Mission

Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute is a public, comprehensive postsecondary institution whose primary service area is Caldwell and Watauga Counties. Operating under the legal framework of the State of North Carolina and in partnership with the NC Community College System, CCC&TI is an open-door institution, which values the diversity of its constituencies and offers equal opportunities.

Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute is committed to providing an environment conducive to student success through institutional integrity, ethical practices, and an expectation of excellence. The institution provides leadership during social, economic, and cultural transitions through teaching, promoting lifelong learning, improving the quality of life, and fostering academic and civic enrichment.

The mission of Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute is to

- provide accessible, quality instruction to enhance student learning;
- support economic development through comprehensive resources to business, industry and agencies;
- offer diverse services and opportunities which improve the quality of life.

What is Distance Learning?

Definition: According to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Distance Learning is defined as “a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous” (“Distance and Correspondence Education,” 2018).

Mission: CCC&TI Distance Learning strives to enable the use of technology-based instructional delivery methods to ensure each student has access to and enhanced opportunity for using such technologies for learning and achieving. CCC&TI uses all feasible means for providing instruction in and access to the technology needed for each student’s participation in all forms of distance instructional environments as well as throughout all aspects of the college community.

Admission process: Students enrolled in distance learning courses must adhere to all the admissions requirements of the college. Additionally, students must meet the prerequisite requirements of individual courses through appropriate placement test scores and /or course completion as documented on official transcripts. There are no special admissions to a separate program. Students are strongly advised to limit the number of distance learning courses for which they register, for these courses require a high level of commitment and self-discipline.

What types of Distance Learning Courses are offered?

Internet (Online) Course: College or continuing education course in which 100% of the instruction is delivered via the Internet/online. These courses may have proctored testing, but instruction is delivered online. CCC&TI uses Moodle to deliver our Internet (Online) courses. These courses are distinguished in the course schedule by having a section number in the 620s.

Hybrid Courses: College or continuing education course in which >50% but <100% of the instruction is delivered when the student and the instructor are separated by distance. Instructional delivery methods may include, but are not limited to: Internet, LMS, licenses instructional video, CD, TV, DVD, instructional software, or other media. Hybrid courses combine traditional classroom instruction with the interactivity of an Internet course. These courses are distinguished in the course schedule by having a section numbers ending with a *C* or *W*.

Blended Courses: College or continuing education course in which <50% of the instruction is delivered when the student and the instructor are separated by distance. Instructional delivery methods may include, but are not limited to: Internet, LMS, licenses instructional video, CD, TV, DVD, instructional software, or other media. Blended courses combine traditional classroom instruction with the interactivity of an Internet course. These courses are distinguished in the course schedule by having a section numbers ending with a *C* or *W*.

Information Highway (Video Conference) Courses: Information highway courses use video conferencing medium, which enables students to come together from multiple locations with instructors for face-to-face instruction, discussion, collaboration, and problem solving. These classrooms are equipped with two-way audio and video equipment that permit all students to participate fully in the class, regardless of location. All necessary technologies are available in the classroom. Information Highway courses have section numbers in the 700s and 780s.

What is Asynchronous and Synchronous Learning?

Asynchronous Learning: “is a general term used to describe forms of education, instruction, and learning that do not occur in the same place or at the same time. The term is most commonly applied to various forms of digital and online learning in which students learn from instruction—such as prerecorded video lessons or game-based learning tasks that students complete on their own—that is not being delivered in person or in real time”.

Synchronous Learning: “is a general term used to describe forms of education, instruction, and learning that occur at the same time, but not in the same place” (Great Schools Partnership, 2013). Examples of this are ... “video conferences, interactive webinars, chat-based online discussions, and lectures that are broadcast at the same time they delivered would all be considered forms of synchronous learning” (Great Schools Partnership, 2013).

Is Distance Learning for Me?

Distance learning provides another avenue of education. Through this avenue, students can fit study around work, social, and family time. If you are serious about your education and want the flexibility of being able to take a college course any time day or night, then you should consider a distance learning course. To be a successful distance learner, students must discipline themselves to structure their own learning time and be proactive about communicating with their instructor.

You should have a personal computer/laptop or easy access to one and be familiar with using it for word processing and connecting to the Internet. If you do not own or have access to a personal computer, CCC&TI also provides computers on campus in the Broyhill Center for Learning Resource located in 'E' building on the Caldwell Campus and in W372 Rm 105 on the Watauga campus. Also, computers can be found in the computer labs located in 'F' building/2nd floor on the Caldwell Campus and in W372 Rm 104, 102, and 100 on the Watauga campus.

Distance learning courses assume that you are eager to learn and can motivate yourself to complete the requirements set forth by the instructor within the course. Here are some additional benefits of distance learning courses, for faculty and students.

- “Online students gain experience and skills that will make them marketable in the 21st century” (North Carolina Community College System Virtual Learning Community | Learn. Virtually Anywhere," n.d.).
- “Online learning is active, students analyze and evaluate independently while reading, writing, and discussions between students” (North Carolina Community College System Virtual Learning Community | Learn. Virtually Anywhere," n.d.).
- “Online learning is flexible. Based on their preferences and needs; instructors and students can work on a course at 2 PM or 2 AM, at home or at school” (North Carolina Community College System Virtual Learning Community | Learn. Virtually Anywhere," n.d.).
- “More students participate online because they are less self-conscious and less subject to the time pressure that can inhibit classroom discussions. Instructors, in turn, get enhanced one-on-one contact with students” (North Carolina Community College System Virtual Learning Community | Learn. Virtually Anywhere," n.d.).
- Through the Internet the whole world becomes the classroom.

Should I take a Distance Learning Class?

Now that you know what a distance learning course is, how will you know if distance learning is right for you? Distance learning students don't necessarily have to be straight “A” students, but they must have good study habits. The most successful distance learning students . . .

- Are self-starters and self-motivators.
- Know how to learn independently.
- Have prerequisite skills such as a college reading level and a good writing ability.
- Attend the mandatory orientation session to meet the instructor.

- Begin course activities within the first week of the course.
- Are well organized and know how to manage their time.
- Set aside specific time on a routine basis for study.
- Have good study habits.
- Can prepare for, study for, and ably complete both objective and subjective tests.
- Can take notes well, whether from "online lectures," textbooks, or television programs.
- Know how to work with others to complete group projects timely and responsibly.
- Know that they themselves, ultimately, are responsible for their own education.
- Contact the instructor promptly when they have questions about any aspect of the course.
- Prefer to get things done today and not put them off until tomorrow.
- Don't give up easily, even when the going gets tough.

Distance Learning Tips for Success

Characteristics of Successful Online Learners

People learn in different ways. Understanding your own learning style will help you be successful in this online course

Successful Online Students Have the Following Personality Traits

- Responsibility: Following through with duties
- Initiative: Starting thoughts and actions
- Perseverance: Being persistent in pursuit of tasks
- Industrious: Getting your work done; not procrastinating
- Self-Reliance: Having trust in yourself and feeling confident
- Works with Others: Working as a team toward common goal
- Keep in touch with your instructor

Successful Online Students have the Following Skills

- Organization
- Time Management
- Concentration
- Adaptability
- Strong Reading
- Good Writing
- Test Preparation

What Do I Need to Succeed in a Distance Learning Course?

Each CCC&TI Distance Learning course provides you with dozens of resources to help you succeed, including connections to discussion groups, libraries, writing guides, and a student manual for using all of the courses resources. To succeed in a distance learning course, you also need the following equipment and skills:

Internet Access: You must either own or have frequent access to a computer connected to the Internet. You should have access to this computer at least 3 hours per week for online discussion groups, for doing online research, for sending and responding to email messages, and for writing

papers and submitting them via the Internet. You will, of course, need to spend more time reading textbook assignments, viewing videotapes (if required), and participating in other types of learning experiences. If you connect to the Internet with a modem, 56K is the minimum modem connection.

Computer Knowledge: You must also know how to use your computer to save files, access those files on your computer, copy files, use word processing, cut and paste text, copy text, and send and receive email.

Email: You will need to utilize your student email account to send messages to your instructor and classmates. To access your student email, login to the [MyCCCTI student portal](#) (opens in new window). Email is how CCC&TI and your instructors will communicate important message with you

Up-to-date Browser: Current browser recommendations: Firefox, Safari, Microsoft Edge, or Google Chrome.

Writing Skills: Aside from the technical requirements, you must be able to read and write effectively. Using the Internet is a point and click experience, but the Internet and Internet courses are reading intensive experiences. You must also be a self-motivated person who can maintain a schedule. CCC&TI Distance Learning courses are not correspondence courses that you will complete in the far-distant future completely at your leisure. CCC&TI Distance Learning requires weekly activities just as in any course, although you can complete these activities any hour of the day or night during that weekly period.

Five Crucial Tips for Success

“Schedule your own class time: Be sure that you have time to take a distance learning course. While these courses are convenient, they do require time and the ability and willingness to study independently. You should schedule time several hours each week to work on your distance course and adhere to that schedule just like you would attend an on-campus class. If you are taking an online course, plan to spend considerable time online. You will need to log into the course web site several times each week to keep current with assignments and announcements. You will also need to check your e-mail frequently for communications from your instructor or from other class members. Keep up with the assignment schedule, submitting all assignments promptly” (Fichera, n.d.).

Limit the number of distance classes you take: Because of the time and effort you will put into each distance learning class, you should limit the number of classes taken in this manner. If you have never taken a distance class before, do not take more than one class at a distance. This way, you can decide if distance learning is for you before signing up for other distance classes. Even if you are an experienced distance learner, it would be wise to take only two or three DL classes at the most. Many students find that distance classes require more time than their on-campus classes, so take this into consideration as well.

Distance learning courses have many different materials: Remember you are not just

watching or listening. You are learning from those various materials. Take notes. Imagine questions that might be on a test from your study guide, from your textbook, from video or audio files.

Set deadlines for yourself: Set deadlines for yourself by keeping a calendar showing the number of weeks in the semester and mark it off with the amount of work you need to do each week. Mark in the days when you will expect to submit assignments and take tests.

Keep in touch with your instructor: Keep in touch with your instructor. Do not hesitate to phone or send e-mail anytime you have questions or problems. If you've e-mailed and gotten no response, don't assume that your instructor is ignoring you. E-mail is not always reliable. In cases like these, just pick up the phone and call your instructor.

What Minimum Technical Competencies Should I Have Before Taking a Distance Learning Course?

Basic Computer & Troubleshooting Skills

Although you do not need to be an expert with technology, you do need to be familiar with your computer system and be able to solve problems when they occur. Lack of the following skills will hinder your success in a distance learning class.

Recommended Technology Skills

- Search the Internet and World Wide Web using a Web browser efficiently and effectively
- Know how to start and use computer applications such as a word processor (Microsoft Office or Open Office)
- Use of electronic mail (e-mail): know how to compose, send, retrieve, read, respond to, forward messages, and know how to attach a file
- Know how to connect a printer/copier/scanner to your computer
- Understand netiquette
- Basic file management
- Evaluate sources found on the Internet for validity and reliability
- Access library books and periodicals over the Internet

Hardware Requirements

- **For PC Computers:** Windows 7 operating System (or better)
- **For Macintosh Computers:** OS X (or better)
- **For all computers:** 2 GB or more of RAM, 1 GB of Free disk space, Sound card and speakers or headphones, Broadband internet connection (DSL or cable recommended), Internet Capable, CD-Rom or DVD drive and Printer
- **Webcam and Mic**

Software Requirements

- **Current anti-virus software,** updated weekly-at least
- **Current browser recommendations:** Mozilla Firefox, Safari, Microsoft Edge, or Google Chrome

- [Office 365 for students](#) (opens in new window)
- **Word Processing Skills:** You should know how to name, save, and retrieve a document as well as how to enter and edit text properly through a word processing program. You should also know how to change text format and style, set margins, line spacing, and tabs. Check spelling, grammar, word usage. Insert page numbers, page breaks, or section breaks

Distance Learning and Inclement Weather

If the college is closed for inclement weather, you will still need to log onto your courses (online/hybrid) to complete the syllabus quiz and work on course assignments. Online and hybrid courses are NOT closed for inclement weather. You are expected to complete coursework regardless of whether the campus is opened or closed.

Moodle

What is Moodle?

Moodle is a learning management system that houses all the online, hybrid, and web-enhanced (seated courses using Moodle) courses at CCC&TI.

Where do I access Moodle?

You can access Moodle from within the MyCCCTI student portal (<http://my.cccti.edu/>) (opens in new window) CCC&TI home page (<http://www.cccti.edu>) (opens in new window), or through the direct link <http://cccti.mrooms.net/> (opens in new window).

What Browsers Work Best with Moodle?

- Mozilla FireFox, Safari, Microsoft Edge, and Google Chrome

How do I log into Moodle?

Step 1: Go to <http://www.cccti.edu/> (opens in new window) and click on the Moodle link located on the top left hand side of the screen or you can access Moodle directly by going to <https://cccti.mrooms.net/login/index.php> (opens in new window).

Step 2: Enter your username and password on the login screen.

- **Login Information**
 - Your username is the first 4 letters of your first name followed by your middle initial followed by the last 5 digits of your student id. Do NOT append your username with @students.cccti.edu.
 - Your initial password is the capital letter C followed by your full 7 digit student id followed by the * (asterisk).

- If you have already changed your portal password, your Moodle password has been changed to that same password.
- **Caution**
 - We strongly recommend that you change your password after you log in the first time.

Distance Learning Orientation

A *Distance Learning Online Orientation* presentation can be found within the Student Support Section. This presentation provides tips to aid your success as a student enrolled in online and/or hybrid courses.

Distance Learning Courses and The Syllabus Quiz

Distance Learning (DL) courses will become available on the first day of the semester. Log into Moodle on the starting date of the course, locate all of your distance learning courses, and complete the syllabus quiz for each of your courses.

Students will be withdrawn from their DL courses if the syllabus quiz is not completed by the date indicated in your courses. If you have multiple courses online, you must complete the syllabus quiz for EACH COURSE. Also, failure to complete the syllabus quiz may result in you receiving a grade of *Never Attended*

The quiz will cover information pertaining to the course syllabus. You must make sure to complete the syllabus quiz before the rest of your course is visible.

Caution: Instructors may have other assignments due before this date. Please keep in mind you will not have access to your other assignments until you complete syllabus quiz.

Online Course Expectations

The design and management of your course will depend on the course demands and your instructor. Most courses, though, will consist of the following components. If you have a question about your coursework, call or email your instructor immediately. Don't wait until the assignment is due because it may take a day or more to get an answer. Most instructors will return calls or emails within one business day. Please remember to keep your instructor informed of any problems you might be having and how those problems are being resolved. If you need accommodations while learning online, please contact Disabilities Services and notify your instructor.

Course Information

Course Information will be the first block you will see when you go into your course. In this block you will have access to your course syllabus, instructor's information, and how to contact him/her. The Syllabus Quiz (when applicable) and Academic Integrity Policy will also be housed here.

Announcements in Moodle

Announcements will house in the *Course Information* section and are used by your instructor to communicate important updates, information about the course, any changes in assignments/quizzes, due dates and news to the class. You should check announcements daily in all of your courses in Moodle. When you click on the *Announcement* link in your course, it will show you the announcement details.

Another way to check your announcements is to click on the *Latest News* Block in your course.

Assignment, Quizzes, and Class Participation Tools

Your instructor will post assignments, quizzes, class participation tools, and/or other learning tools/activities for you each week. Each instructor has their own design in their course(s) but the concept is generally the same. Some set up a weekly format and some set up modules.

Quizzes/Test may be timed or set to display at certain times in the course. While most tests are conducted online, your instructor may require that you visit the testing center on campus and/or be monitored online to complete your tests.

Viewing Your Grades

Clicking *Grades* takes you to your user report which shows you every grade you've made in the course so far. Use your course total at the bottom to determine where you stand in the course and your final grade.

Grading and Feedback

- Most instructors respond to your emails and messages within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. Although some instructors respond over weekends and holidays, you cannot be guaranteed a response during these times.
- Some assignments, like large projects and essays, require extensive time to grade.
- Instructors will designate a preferred method of communication, either email or messages. Follow your instructor's guidelines for communication to ensure your questions and concerns are addressed.
- If you fall behind in a course, immediately contact your instructor.
- In most online courses, your grades and feedback will be posted in Moodle's Grade Center. Check the Grade Center to keep up with your progress in the course.

Distance Learning Team

The team works together to provide technical support to students, faculty, and staff. Each member completes specific tasks in order to provide on-going program support.

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DL Helpdesk Support

Having login issues or technical issues. Contact the CCC&TI Distance Learning Help Desk (<http://www.cccti.edu/DL/BBHelpRequestform.asp>) (opens in new window). This service is monitored from 8:00 am-5:00 pm Monday through Friday.

24-7 Moodle Log in Support

If you need Moodle assistance after operating hours or on a Holiday you can access our Online Support Center Website (<https://help.edusupportcenter.com/shplite/nccscaldwell/home>) (opens in new window) or call **1.866.851.5713**.

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