



Distant Learner Handbook

FOR STUDENTS OF THE REAL WORLD.

Central Texas College Distant Learner Handbook

Two valuable resources that you should bookmark for easy reference are the Central Texas College (CTC) website at <http://ctcd.edu> and the Distance Education and Educational Technology (DEET) website at <http://online.ctcd.edu>. Content available at these websites will not be repeated in this handbook.

What is a distant learner? You are classified as a distant learner not by your location but by the delivery method you choose for your classes. These include OLL (online), OSL (online self-paced), and OBL (blended). Refer to the **Course Information** tab at the DEET website for detailed descriptions and to the **Schedule** at the DEET website for a listing of courses. Courses may vary in length, but all courses have a posted start and end date. As with any class, you are expected to participate in your distance education courses, meet any deadlines, and demonstrate consistent progress.

What is EagleMail? CTC students are assigned a permanent EagleMail account for all college- and course-related electronic communication. See this website for instructions: <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/current-ctc-students/student-email/>. Missing important information from CTC or your instructor because you didn't check EagleMail is not a valid excuse.

How do I get help?

These are important contacts for academic and technical support:

- Eagles On Call Center for Student Services Advisors at <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/current-ctc-students/academic-advising/distance-education-students/>
- Student Resources tab at http://online.ctcd.edu/student_resources.cfm
- Blackboard technical support at http://online.ctcd.edu/on_demand_blackboard.cfm

As a CTC student, you have access to all student and support services, to include academic advising, disability support, the library, and the book store. See <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/current-ctc-students/> for details.

If you are near Central Campus in Killeen, TX, you can take advantage of the Academic Studio—Student Success Center (<http://www.ctcd.edu/locations/central-campus/student-support/student-success-persistence/academic-studio-student-success-center/>) and the Advanced Math Lab (<http://www.ctcd.edu/academics/instructional-departments/mathematics/advanced-math-lab/>). Free online writing labs and math tutoring are provided in Blackboard.

Where do I get book and course syllabi information?

Go to <http://www.ctcd.edu/academics/booksinstructional-materials/> to identify the instructional materials required for your course(s). You may order from the CTC Bookstore, MBS Direct, or other sources. If you choose “other sources,” be sure that you use the correct ISBNs or you may be lacking an

important item, such as an access code for an online resource. Order early enough to receive your materials prior to the first day of class.

A generic course syllabus is provided at <http://ctcd1.ctcd.edu/syllabus/syllabus.asp> . Your instructor will supply a more specific syllabus in print format or through Blackboard.

What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is used for all blended and online classes and most lecture classes. You will have access to your classes in Blackboard approximately 72 hours prior to the first day of class. Log in at <http://ctc.blackboard.com> using the username and password as described at the log-in screen. Check out the information at the My Institution Page and then select your course from the My Courses box. CTC provides 24/7/365 technical support for Blackboard. Refer to the DEET website at <http://online.ctcd.edu> for further instructions.

How often should I log into Blackboard?

You are expected to demonstrate consistent progress in your distance education courses. Most courses have activities, such as a syllabus quiz, course contract, or discussion board post, that you must complete during the first week of class. Failure to do these activities may result in your being withdrawn from class by your instructor. If you sign up for two or more concurrent classes, don't expect to be able to complete one before starting the other one.

Also be aware that you can be dropped by the business office for non-payment. If this happens and you believe it is an error, take action immediately. It can take a minimum of 24-48 hours to get you back into your classes and into Blackboard.

How do I get an extension?

An extension is a privilege, not a right. Extensions MAY be available at your instructor's discretion. You are responsible for requesting an extension and providing any related documentation. You must request the extension prior to the end of class. Your instructor does not have to grant your request, or he/she may limit the extension to a few extra days based on the amount of coursework remaining. In order to be considered for an extension, you must meet ALL of these requirements listed in your course syllabus.

Who do I contact?

Your first Point of Contact (POC) for course concerns is your instructor. Your instructor's contact information will be listed in the course menu of your Blackboard course, and he/she will send you an introductory email to establish contact. Your instructor's supervisor's contact information will be listed in case you can't get in touch with your instructor or you have a grievance that you have first tried to settle with your instructor.

Other POCs are listed at <http://online.ctcd.edu/contact.cfm>.

Use this checklist to get started. The checklist is also at the Student Resources link at the DEET website.

Distant Learner Checklist

Processes may be slightly different for Texas residents, non-residents, and military students. Please select the track that applies to your situation.

1. Get started (prospective students) at <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/prospective-students/>.
2. Get academic advising at <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/current-ctc-students/academic-advising/>
3. Register and pay for classes at <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/current-ctc-students/registration/>, through a military portal, or at the CTC site.
4. Check your EagleMail account: <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/current-ctc-students/student-email/>.
5. View a syllabus at <http://ctcd1.ctcd.edu/syllabus/syllabus.asp>.
6. Get books at <http://www.ctcd.edu/academics/booksinstructional-materials/>.
7. Explore the Distance Education and Educational Technology (DEET) website at <http://online.ctcd.edu>. Pay particular attention to the Student Resources and Blackboard Help Quick Links.
8. Access Blackboard at <http://ctc.blackboard.com> up to 72 hours prior to your course start date.
9. Read the course syllabus and any start here information and note due dates for assignments.
10. Access your classes frequently and complete assignments as scheduled. You may be administratively withdrawn for non-participation if you do not complete certain required activities the first week of class.
11. Be aware of CTC's Scholastic Honesty Policy and the consequences for transgressions: <http://online.ctcd.edu/plagiarism.cfm>.
12. Communicate with your instructor(s). Contact your instructor for any questions about your course and notify him/her of any situations that may affect your ability to complete your coursework as scheduled. Note that you must meet the qualifications to be considered for an extension, and it is your instructor's prerogative as to whether it will be awarded.
13. Know how to get 24/7 technical support for Blackboard and BioSig-ID at http://online.ctcd.edu/on_demand_blackboard.cfm.
14. Contact the CTC Information Technology (IT) Department at <http://www.ctcd.edu/students/student-it-services/> for help with EagleMail or WebAdvisor.