

Distance Learning at PVCC Guidelines and Best Practices

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If you are interested in teaching a Distance Learning course, please contact your Academic Dean.

Contacts

Center for Excellence in Instruction
 Coordinator, Colleen Bishop
 434-961-5305
cbishop@pvcc.edu

eLearning Specialist, Tim Hoffman
 434-961-5316
thoffman@pvcc.edu

Room 719 (through the Betty Sue Jessup Library)
Monday through Friday: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Student Blackboard Support: bbsupport@pvcc.edu

MyPVCC Login

Access to Blackboard, PeopleSoft, Student Email <https://pv.my.vccs.edu/jsp/home.jsp>

How to Log in <http://www.pvcc.edu/teachingcenter/MyPVCC.pdf>

Syllabus

An online syllabus contains much of the same information as a traditional print syllabus. You might consider including the following:

- Course description, including an overview of topics covered.
- Clear course goals and learning objectives.
- Instructor contact information, including office hours, email, phone numbers, and fax.
- Virtual office hours (if used). Include day, time and location (Virtual Chat/Classroom).
- Prerequisites.
- Course Material, including required text and supplemental packets, web sites, etc. It may be useful to post a link to the PVCC Bookstore .
- Additional technical requirements such as, PowerPoint viewer, WinZip, Acrobat Reader, and the browser requirements. Include a link to the technical requirements so that students can download them if necessary.
- Grading policy for attendance, participation, grading, and assessment (assignments, tests, and exams). Include policies for late assignments. Also provide specific details on academic honesty, with a link to the college's official policy on academic honesty and plagiarism.
- Instructor responsibilities and roles. This could include items such as how often the instructor will answer email, the instructor's role in the discussion area, and so on.
 - It is recommended that instructors respond to student inquiries within **24 hours Monday through Friday**

- Student responsibilities. Provide guidance, protocols, and deadlines to keep students on track. Within those bounds, allow students to be flexible and pace themselves.
 - How should student communicate with the instructor (i.e. through email, in the Discussion Board, by phone)?

Course Outline

A Course Outline (or schedule) is most efficiently presented as a chart or table. Recommended columns include the following:

- Module/Unit – Chapter 1, Chapter 2, etc.
- Assignments – List each assignment on its own line: Text reading, online content reading and self tests, etc.
- Completion date – distinguish between recommended dates and required due dates.
- Additional Instructions – physical location (for in-person orientation and exam) or online course location (e.g., Discussion Board).

Course Structure

The course structure contains information about how the course is organized. This gives the students an idea of what they can expect to see and do within the course; from the semester start date until the final exam. You might consider including the following:

- A summary of the course progression.
- Initial assignment posting. Prior to starting Unit 1, students can be asked to go to the Discussion Board and post a message introducing themselves to the rest of the class. Students should be required to post by a particular date, and can be encouraged to respond to each other's messages. A topic folder such as "Introduce Yourself" would be set up in the Discussion area for this purpose. Instructors are also encouraged to post an introduction to the class. This assignment offers helpful practice in the use of the Discussion tool and is usually not graded.

- Reading assignment description and other pertinent information relevant to the readings.
- Discussion assignment outline, including the requirements for participation and the etiquette. Provide a description of the different forums that are located on the Discussion Board, ex. "Introduce Yourself," "Q&A," and "Unit 1."
- Homework, quiz and exam details such as, dates, times, submittal procedure (online assignment manager, email, etc.), and the penalty information for late homework.
- Explanation of the main sections in the course, including the Blackboard tools.

Getting Started http://www.pvcc.edu/docs/bb_getting_started.pdf

- Who has access to Blackboard?
- Where can Faculty find Blackboard support?
- Where can Students find Blackboard support?

Accessibility

Use this sample ADA statement for your online syllabus:

If you are a student with a disability who needs classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to meet with the Disability Support Services Counselor, Susan Hannifan to request accommodations. Her office is located in Rm. 132, The Counseling Center. Phone: (434) 961-5281, Email: shannifan@pvcc.edu. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper forms and meet with me at the beginning of the semester.

All colleges are required to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (<http://www.ada.gov/>). All college web sites should also be in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (<http://www.section508.gov/>).

[Blackboard Statement on Accessibility](http://www.blackboard.com/company/accessibility.aspx) (<http://www.blackboard.com/company/accessibility.aspx>)
(<http://www.blackboard.com/Teaching-Learning/Learn-Resources/Accessibility.aspx>)

The [Blackboard Learning System Screen Reader Tutorial](#) provides users that access Blackboard through a screen reader with information to help them use the Blackboard Learning System successfully.

dotSUB is your gateway to finding 'Any Video in Any Language' You can upload your video and help translate it into multiple languages <http://dotsub.com/>

Technical Requirements

Instructors teaching and students taking a distance learning course at PVCC should meet the following minimum technical requirements

- Windows 2000, XP, or Vista; MacOS X 10.2 – 10.4
- Internet connectivity
- A web browser with JavaScript and cookies enabled.
 - Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 or 7
 - Netscape 7.1 or 8.0
 - Firefox 1.5 or 2.0
 - Safari 1.2 or 2
- Microsoft Word or another word processing application capable of saving files in Rich Text Format

Students should immediately review the course syllabus for specific technical requirements set by the instructor. For example, some courses may require students to have a CD or DVD drive/player or other courses may require that students have a DSL or faster internet connection.

Students should also be aware of the open computer lab on campus. The hours are:

M–Th: 8am–10pm

F: 8am–5pm

S: 9am–12pm

Response Time

It is recommended that instructors respond to student inquiries within **24 hours Monday through Friday**. This should be stated in the syllabus and/or with the instructor's contact information.

Other things to consider:

- Instructors should try to be available more frequently during tests and project submissions.
- Students can use a discussion board forum for course-related questions. The instructor needs to create the forum for the class and include directions for using this area.
- Instructors should also consider the course length and intensity. 8-Week courses may require a shorter response time.

Distance Learning and Blackboard Online Student Orientation

<http://www.pvcc.edu/blackboard/tutorial/>

Is Distance Learning right for me? (a Self-Evaluation for Potential Web-Course Students) and Study Tips

http://www.pvcc.edu/center_for_excellence/self_evaluation_study_tips.php

Frequently Asked Student Questions

http://www.pvcc.edu/center_for_excellence/faq.php

Copyright

<http://www.pvcc.edu/library/faculty/copyright.php>

Intellectual Property

Materials developed or created while employed by the Commonwealth of Virginia are subject to [Section 12, Intellectual Property of the VCCS Manual](#). Any materials developed or created in full or part through PVCC's funds should acknowledge the contribution of the college and the VCCS.

Proctor Activity Requirement

PVCC requires all distance learning courses to have at least 2 proctored activities.

As stated in the Academic Standards for Distance Education Courses [[Virginia Distance Education Network \(VDEN\) Standards](#)]

Requires proctored or supervised learning activities (exams, quizzes, labs, demonstrations, etc.,) to demonstrate that the student has mastered the course content. Proof of student identify may be required by the delivering college. If course assessment is portfolio based, such as writing or painting, students must discuss their work, as part of the assessment, in synchronous conference with their instructor.

Learning Resources (Tutoring, Academic Coaching, Placement and Academic Testing)

It is recommended to post the Learning Center contact and hours of operation in your online course. Instructors should contact the Learning Center for testing information and requirements.

The Learning Center
Piedmont Virginia Community College
501 College Drive, Room 607
Charlottesville, VA 22902
434-961-5320
434-961-5274(fax)
learningcenter@pvcc.edu
http://www.pvcc.edu/learning_resources/

Testing Hours:

M-TH: 8am-8pm

F: 8am-5pm

S: 9am-3pm

Tutoring Hours:

M-TH: 9am-7pm

F: 9am–3pm

S: 9am–3pm (students may need to call for an appointment)

This is on Blackboard's homepage and Instructors might want to include it in the online course:

[Learning Resources at PVCC](#)

- **Tutoring**
- **Academic Coaching**
- **Placement and Academic Testing**

Schedule your appointment now!

[Get a Tutor](#)

See the tutoring schedule.

get SMART

<http://www.smarthinking.com/>

Online Tutoring *NOW* Available

Visit the Learning Center

[Hours](#)

http://www.pvcc.edu/learning_resources/

Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education

Institutional Context and Commitment

1. Establish a campus-wide policy on academic integrity that articulates faculty and student responsibilities.
2. Make information on academic integrity easy to find on the campus Web site, library Web site, department Web site, course, within the syllabus and within specific assignments.
3. Include ethics instruction within the core curriculum and/or area-specific within

degree plans.

4. Address academic integrity at student orientation programs and events.
5. Encourage faculty to report every suspected violation and act upon it.
6. Secure student logins and password to access online courses and related resources, discussions, assignments and assessments.

Curriculum and Instruction

1. State the academic integrity/academic honesty policy within the online learning environment and discuss it early in the course.
2. Require student engagement with the academic integrity policy. For example:
 - a. Ask students for their input on how to create a community of integrity at the start of the course. This establishes the students as stakeholders in the community and the process of its formation.
 - b. Develop and ask students to commit to a class honor code.
 - c. Require students to read and sign an agreement to the campus academic integrity policy.
 - d. Write a letter to students about integrity and post it in the course.
 - e. Ask students to restate the academic integrity policy (this can also be used as a writing sample to use when grading and reviewing student work).
 - f. Ask students to reflect on the academic integrity policy in the discussion board.
 - g. Include a lesson on avoiding plagiarism.
3. Have assignments and activities in which appropriate sharing and collaboration is essential to successful completion. Foster a community of integrity by choosing authentic learning tasks that require group cohesiveness and effort. For example, focus assignments on distinctive, individual, and non-duplicative tasks or on what individual students self-identify as their personal learning needs.
4. Provide students with a course or course lesson on research and/or study skills. Work with library staff to design assignments and prepare materials on plagiarism and research techniques.

5. Include a statement that the instructor reserves the right to require alternative forms and/or locations of assessments (e.g., proctoring).
6. Ask students follow-up questions to assignments such as, “expand upon this statement you made,” “tell me why you chose this phrase, description or reference,” and “expand upon the ideas behind this reference.”
7. Select one or two difficult concepts from the paper and ask the student to restate/rewrite the information.
8. Require students to share key learning from references for a paper or self-reflection on an assignment in the discussion board.
9. Include an ethical decision-making case study within the course.

Faculty Support

1. Incorporate academic integrity strategies into professional development and faculty training offerings.
2. Publish academic integrity strategies and policies in faculty handbook and Web-based faculty resources.
3. Publish guidelines for handling/reporting individual student infractions.
4. Assign a department academic integrity liaison to support faculty.
5. Use a plagiarism detection service.
6. Use Google to search for a unique text string or unique phrase from the paper.
7. Keep student papers filed in the department by topic for reference.

Student Support

1. Define academic integrity and cheating and clearly explain what is considered dishonest and unacceptable behavior.

2. Provide information and examples to help students understand the difference between collaboration on assignments and cheating, and identify plagiarism. Teach the proper use of citations.
3. State how much collaboration is permissible on each assignment.
4. State what the instructor's expectations are for the students and explain what they should expect from the instructor. For example:
 - a. Include a statement in the syllabus encouraging honest work.
 - b. Repeat the campus academic integrity statement and provide a link to campus policies.
 - c. Describe academic dishonesty.
 - d. Describe the repercussions for academic dishonesty.
 - e. Describe permissible and impermissible collaboration.
 - f. Include outside links to information on plagiarism, self-tests and examples.
 - g. Include information on acceptable sources.
 - h. Include information about the college's writing center, library or other support.
5. Provide a writing style sheet or handbook with information on plagiarism and campus policies.
6. Indicate assessments may require follow-up documentation, questions or assignments.
7. State expectations for the time needed to complete coursework.
8. State whether the instructor/college will use a plagiarism detection service.

Assessment and Evaluation

1. Provide rubrics, or detailed grading criteria, for every assignment at the beginning of the course so students understand how they will be graded.
2. Give students different versions of a test. For example, randomized quiz or exam questions from a database of optional questions, such as a "test bank."
3. Change test items and assignment topics each semester.

4. Use test timing or forced completion. Setting a completion time reduces a student's ability to access the test, look up the answer, and re-enter the test. Most test-taking software applications keep track of time on the server, not on the student's computer.
5. Clarify that students with disabilities and requesting testing accommodations (extended time for completion of examinations and quizzes) must identify themselves to the college's office of disabilities and provide appropriate documentation.
6. Emphasize assignments that require written work and problem solving (e.g., essays, papers, online discussions).
7. Use a variety of assessment strategies (quizzes, short and long papers, test questions that require the application of a theory or concept).
8. Give open book exams.
9. Other than grades, do not provide students feedback on tests until all of the students in the class have completed them.
10. Use proctored test sites where appropriate.
11. Use a browser lock-down service during testing.
12. Adopt the following practices to encourage authentic written work:
 - a. Require students to turn in copies of reference articles with cited text highlighted.
 - b. Require annotated bibliographies.
 - c. Do not allow last minute changes in assignment topics.
 - d. Require specific references be used (this might be the course text).
 - e. Require an abstract.
 - f. Give narrow assignment topics (tied into class experience) and require thesis statements prior to topic approval.
 - g. Require students to turn in a draft, and their bibliography or references prior to the paper's due date.
 - h. Require students to write a concept paper and project plan prior to completing an assignment.

13. When evaluating student written work, consider following these practices:
- Be wary of student writing that reads like an encyclopedia, newspaper article or expert in the field.
 - Look for whether a paper reflects the assignment, has changes in tense, includes odd sentences within a well-written paper, is based on references older than three years, refers to past events as current, or uses jargon.
 - Compare student writing on the discussion board with that on assignments and papers. A writing sample collected at the start of the semester can be helpful.
 - Compare the writing at the beginning and end of the paper with that in the middle of the paper -- language, sentence length and reading level.
 - Check references; compare quotations with cited sources; look for the same author in multiple references.
 - Read all papers on the same topic together.
14. Make assignments cumulative (students turn in parts of a project or paper throughout the semester).
15. Evaluate the research process and the product.
16. After an assignment is due, have students post in the discussion board, describing the assignment and the research method used, a summary of conclusions and an abstract (a meta-learning essay).

VCCS Instruction Modes

The following are the Instruction Modes and their definitions.

Hybrid –In Person & Web (HY) – Hybrid is the combination of face-to-face and electronic delivery where 50–99% of the course content is electronically delivered. The electronic delivery can be either asynchronous or synchronous.

Interactive Classroom Video (CV) – Interactive classroom video courses are synchronous distance learning and either offer students access to a program not offered at their home campus or the ability to attend a course at any campus or

center where it is offered. Courses taught via CV are two-way real-time video and audio, also known as interactive television. Classes and programs taught via CV can be received by and sent from any other college within the VCCS.

Independent Studies (IS) – Independent Study is planned study, highly individualized, not addressable through any other course format, accepted for supervision by a faculty member, and approved by the student's academic adviser and the teaching unit at the beginning of the semester.

In Person (P) -- Classroom lecture

Media Delivery (VT) – These courses are delivered using media such as videotapes, CD's, or DVDs. Media Delivery courses are asynchronous. They may employ content that originally aired on broadcast television. Content of a Media Delivery course is the same as that of an on-campus course, but the study materials are specially prepared and may vary in topic sequence. Some Media Delivery courses require individual appointments with the instructor.

Print Based (PB) – Course is presented via a package of printed materials sent to the student. Student is self-directed with limited instructor interaction.

Telecourse (TV) – These courses are broadcast over a local television network or cable station. Telecourses are synchronous and typically consist of two 30-minute programs shown in a one-hour block each week and are repeated during the week. Class meetings or meetings with the instructor may be scheduled two to four times during the semester.

WWW Online (WW) – Instruction for these courses is online using the internet. Most courses are taught using Blackboard, but may also include the World Wide Web, PowerPoint, special software, listservs, and email.

World Wide Web ER (ER) – Use of the E-Rate is optional for colleges. E-Rate courses are offered exclusively over the web. World Wide Web ER (E-Rate) is selected for online courses that have been designated by the college to be E-rate courses. The E-rate is the tuition rate charged to out-of-state students enrolled in designated online (ASYNC) courses. The financial set-up is triggered off of this instruction mode and the student's residency. An E-Rate course would have a Location of VIRTUAL and Course Attributes DLM and ASYNC. For

more information on the set-up for E-Rate in SIS see:

http://www.vccs.edu/admin/Controller_Office/Fiscal_Services/602SetUpforSpecial%20Rates-E-Rate.pdf