

Quick References for Online Students

Fall 2015, 8/31/15 – 12/18/15

Middlesex Community College

I. Preparation prior to the start of the semester

Visit <http://mxcc.edu/distance> and click on **What to Do** (upper left) and go over step-by-step instruction to get yourself ready.

II. Log on to your online class

Within seven days before the first day of a class, courses will be listed in My Institution page on Blackboard and registered students will be able to view an online course in Blackboard with orientation, tutorials, or help information. Please test your computer, get familiar with the course interface, and go over the online orientation. The most updated class information is available on the first day of a class, and information shown before the first day of a class is subject to change.

- a. Open a web browser (ex: Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox)
- b. Go to: my.commmnet.edu
- c. Enter your **NetID** and 8 - character (or more) **password**.

Information about NetID and password can be found at <http://mxcc.edu/distance>.

- d. Click on **Blackboard** icon at upper right, click on your class name to enter your class site.
Courses will be available within 7 days before the first day of class. Most updated course information will be available on the first day of a class.
- e. **Change password** should be done at my.commmnet.edu.

III. Questions and Help

a. Password Reset

- <http://bor.ct.edu/netid/password.aspx>
- Stop by the following offices with your photo ID or call during 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Mon-Fri.
 - The Records office, Room 153 Founders Hall, (860) 343 – 5724
 - IT Department, Room 304, Wheaton Hall, (860) 343 – 5712
 - Distance Learning Office, Founders Hall 131/131A, (860) 343 – 5756
 - Staff Desk (1st floor), Meriden Center, 203-238-6202

b. For **myCommnet/Blackboard technical problems**, contact the **Help Desk**:

Voice: (860) 723 - 0221

Web: <http://mxcc.edu/distance> (under **Help** icon at upper right)

c. For questions related to course requirements, content, assignments, etc., contact your instructor in Blackboard course site.

d. For other questions, contact Distance Learning:

Founders Hall Room 131/131A, (860) 343 – 5756, mxccdistance@mxcc.commmnet.edu

IV. Orientations for Online Students

All new online students **MUST** go through an online orientation at <http://mxcc.edu/distance> (Click **Online Orientation** in upper-left). First time online students with MxCC are strongly encouraged to attend an on-campus orientation at the following tentative schedule. The most updated Fall 2015 schedule is posted at <http://mxcc.edu/distance> (Click on “Campus Orientation” link at upper left.)

For Fall 2015 Courses

Middletown Campus, Library Computer Classroom

Monday, 8/31, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Monday, 8/31, 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm – for Spanish Online Courses

Tuesday, 9/1, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Wednesday, 9/2, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Thursday, 9/3, 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Monday, 9/14, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm – for late start English courses

Meriden Center, Room 407

Wednesday, 9/1, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Orientation for Online Students

All new online students **MUST** go over the online orientation posted at <http://mxcc.edu/distance> (click on “Online Orientation” at upper left). On-campus orientations will be offered in Middletown and Meriden. First-time online students who need personal assistance are strongly encouraged to attend a campus orientation. The orientation will help you get familiar with the **Blackboard** interface and will provide success tips for your online learning. Your NetID and password for myCommNet (my.commnnet.edu) are needed at the orientation.

For Fall 2015 Online Students (8/31/15 – 12/18/15)

Middletown Campus, Library Computer Classroom

Monday, August 31, 1:00 pm- 2:30 pm

Monday, August 31, 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm –for Spanish Online Courses

Tuesday, September 1, 5:30 pm -7:00 pm

Wednesday, September 2, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Thursday, September 3, 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Monday, September 14, 1:00pm – 2:30 pm – for late start courses

Meriden Campus, Room 407

Tuesday, September 1, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Topics:

- (1) Logging on to Blackboard
- (2) Navigating in Blackboard
- (3) Participating in Class: Assignments, Discussion Board, Messages, Tests, etc.
- (4) Troubleshooting Tips and Help Contact
- (5) Success Tips

If you would like to attend a campus orientation but cannot travel to any of our campuses, please email to mxccdistance@mxcc.commnnet.edu to request an access to the orientation via WebEx online.

No seat reservation is needed to attend a campus orientation. Those who cannot attend an on-campus orientation should go through the online orientation at <http://mxcc.edu/distance> (Click on “Online Orientation” at upper-left).

Before you come to an orientation, please visit <http://mxcc.edu/distance> (click on “Campus Orientation” for most updated schedule and location.)

Updated on 8/25/2015



Do you ever ask yourself?

- *Is online learning suitable for you?*
- *Are you ready for learning online?*
- *Are you best prepared for online learning?*



Take a Self-Assessment Test to Find Out!



- **SmarterMeasure** test (formerly **READI**) finds out levels of student readiness for online learning.
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses.
- Indicates the degree of a student's attributes, technical knowledge and skills, reading comprehension, learning styles, etc.
- The data analysis of 3300 cases at MxCC shows that the higher the score of personal attributes in SmarterMeasure test, the higher the grade students will receive.

How Do I Start?

Go to <http://mxcc.smartermeasure.com> and logon with:

Username

mxccf15 for Fall 2015 students

Password: mxccstudent

By knowing your weakness you can receive help from:



MxCC Distance Learning Staff
Email: mxccdistan@mxcc.comnet.edu
Phone: (860) – 343 -5756
Founders Hall, Room 131/131A



For More information On SmarterMeasure:
Visit <http://mxcc.edu/distance/take-a-smartermeasure-test>

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do first after I have registered an online course?

Go to <http://mxcc.edu/distance>. On the left side of the page, you'll see a list of links. Click **What to do?** link (upper left). This will give you detailed information on what to do before the class. After you've registered and purchased your books, you need to log on to the course. One week before a semester starts, feel free to look around the course if any information is available—any information posted prior to the first day of class is subject to change. Once the class has started, you should read the syllabus and, if it's available, the welcome message.

How does it (an online class) work?

You use **Blackboard**, our online learning system. You have a syllabus that you'll follow and you'll submit all assignments, exams, and projects online. Many classes use weekly online discussions to generate class participation.

How much time does it take?

You will be studying and completing assignments each week for the same amount of time or more you would be in a classroom. Just like in an on-campus class, every week you must complete the class objectives by doing assignments, papers, projects, exams, and reading text, articles, etc.

Do I have to attend an orientation?

All fully online students are **REQUIRED** to go over the online orientation. You are strongly encouraged to attend an on-campus orientation if you are new to taking fully-online classes at MxCC. The orientation schedule can be found at <http://mxcc.edu/distance>, click on **Campus Orientation** link (upper left). If you cannot physically come to campus to attend the orientation, you will contact distance learning to request the virtual access information.

Do online classes cover the same material as on-campus classes?

Yes, the same information is covered. Course descriptions can be found in the course catalog or online at the college website: <http://mxcc.edu>.

Do I need to log on at a certain time or on a certain day?

Check with your instructor. Most of our fully online classes are asynchronous. This means that as long as you are meeting the deadlines set by the instructor, you do not have to log on at specific times. However, some instructors require you sign on for a chat session. Read the syllabus for information on how many times and how long you are supposed to be logged onto the course each week. If the information is unclear, ask the instructor. It is important to know what is expected of you as your usage statistics might be used when calculating grades.

How do I communicate with the instructor?

You can use the internal course email in Blackboard unless the instructor specifies otherwise.

Where do I go for technical help? Where do I go for help with my class content?

<http://mxcc.edu/distance> has instructions on solving the most common technical issues and the **Help Desk** contact (under **Help** icon). The Help Desk will assist you resolve technical problems on Blackboard or MyCommNet.

Learning the navigation in Blackboard, how to attach files, post messages, take exams, submit assignments, etc. can be found at <http://mxcc.edu/distance> (click on **Online Orientation** and then click **Step 3** link – left column.). You may also contact Distance Learning staff for technical issues. The distance learning office hours and contact information are posted at this site. Questions related to class content can be addressed to your professor.

What happens if I have computer problems during the semester?

You must have a back-up plan if something happens to your computer. You can use computers on campus but you will be limited to the open hours of the lab facilities. Using computers at public libraries, Internet cafes, mobile phones, or tablets can be problematic because the version of Java or browser might not be compatible with Blackboard. Your back up plan must include using a computer to which you can download and install programs if necessary (or the MxCC lab computers). All computers must have high-speed internet connection.

Achieving Success in Online Learning

1. Take a self-assessment test to see if you are best prepared for learning online.

Visit <http://mxcc.edu/distance/take-a-smartermeasure-test> for how to take the test and interpret the test results.

2. Visit <http://mxcc.edu/distance>

Click **What to do** (upper-left) and carefully go over the instructions step-by-step to ensure you are ready before a semester starts.

2. Carefully read all class documents and follow the instructions closely.

- Read the welcome message from your instructor.
- Read the syllabus, course overview, course outline, etc.; these documents provide an overview of the course.
- For a specific assignment, follow the assignment requirement or instruction provided by your professor.
- During semester, print or download the most recent syllabus and assignment files to your computer.

3. Keep pace with the class reading and assignments.

- Check announcements and email every time you log on. Your instructor may use announcements and internal emails as a major communication channel to keep you updated. Read announcements and emails from your instructor regularly.
- Follow the deadlines your instructor sets. The deadlines for assignments may be indicated in syllabus and course overview/outline or posted on the course calendar.
- Do not put off assignments till the last minute. Be proactive—submit your assignments early. By doing this you can ensure that you have time to deal with a last-minute technical issue that might arise and still meet all deadlines.
- When you have questions about the class, ask your instructor immediately.
- Have an alternative plan to access your course in case you have technical difficulty at home. Use a computer in a MxCC lab and local library or at a local school or friend/relative's home.
- If you are unable to complete a class assignment on time due to illness, technical trouble, textbook problem, or family emergency, please inform your professor immediately.

4. Mobile Devices

Do not use a mobile device (e.g. Smartphones and tablets) to submit any work (e.g. discussion, assignment, tests, etc.) since Blackboard is not fully compatible with a mobile device. You may be able to browse course information on a mobile device.

5. Report and resolve technical problems promptly.

- Whenever you encounter a technical problem with your class, contact the **Help Desk** immediately at 860-723-0221 or submit a ticket at <http://websupport.ct.edu>.
- If you have missed a deadline due to technical issues, you **MUST** notify your instructor immediately.
- Should technical problems persist, report to the MxCC Distance Learning department using one of the following methods:
Email to mxccdistance@mxcc.comnet.edu, call (860) 343 – 5756, or stop by the Distance Learning offices in Founders 131/131A, Middletown Campus (M-F, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm).

Disclaimer: It is your responsibility to ensure your computer is set up correctly for accessing online class information. You must also complete all class assignments on time in order to satisfy the academic requirements of an online class. You are responsible for dealing with technological issues proactively so your course performance will not be affected.



STUDENT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES



myCommNet

For access to all of your computing needs at MxCC, enter your **NetID** and **password** to log on to **myCommNet** at **my.commmnet.edu**. myCommNet gives you access to:

- Final grades, registration, transcripts, course searches, textbooks, course evaluation,
- Online courses and on-ground courses that use Blackboard,
- Financial aid awards and history and billing records and history,
- Library database access from off-campus, and more!

Blackboard: Virtual Campus

MxCC's Virtual site for information on campus events and announcements, Blackboard orientation and tools practice areas, and links to tutoring and MxCC services!

1. Log in at **my.commmnet.edu** with **NetID** and **password**.
2. Click on the **Blackboard** icon. Popup blockers need to be disabled.
4. Click **MxCC- Virtual Campus- Campus Activities and Academic Resources**.

Free online tutoring!

Stuck on a math problem? Need an expert to help you with your English paper? Having trouble with your homework? Online tutoring is available in Math, English, Business, and Technology.

To access this service, log on to Blackboard via MyCommNet. Click on **Virtual Campus—Campus Activities and Academic Resources**. Select **Online Tutoring** link in the left panel. You may submit your English paper or request an online tutoring session there.

Campus Computer Labs & Wi Fi

Computer labs are available on the Middletown and Meriden campuses. Computer lab hours are determined each semester and open hours are posted in labs. Computers can be used by any student who has an active **NetID** and **password**. WiFi access is available on the campuses.

Middletown:

Wheaton 305– Open Computer Lab with PCs and Macs

Snow 412– Open Mac Lab

Chapman– Located in the Jean Burr Smith Library– Open Lab with PCs and Macs

Secured wireless is available in all buildings for students with laptops that are capable of wireless connectivity.

Meriden:

Room 404 and Room 407

Blackboard site: Research Help

Every MxCC student and instructor is enrolled in the Blackboard course **MxCC – Library – Research Help**. Here you can find:

- How to access the library resources from home
- Information about library services for distance learners
- Online research tutorials
- How to contact the library for help

Here's how:

- Login at **my.commmnet.edu** with **NetID** and **password**.
- Click on the **Blackboard** icon. Popup blockers need to be disabled.
- Click on **MxCC – Library – Research help**



Getting Started with Microsoft Office 365

Access

You can access Office 365 in two different ways:

Login directly at
<http://login.microsoftonline.com>

Access it from
<http://my.comnet.edu/>
(View a tutorial on how to access from within myCommNet).

Tutorials

For Office 365 tutorials, guides, and more please visit the Office 365 Support Center:
<http://supportcenter.ct.edu/service/office365.asp>

Support

If you have any issues with Office 365, please contact us:

<http://websupport.ct.edu/contact-us>
(860) 723-0221

The Connecticut Community Colleges (CCC) are pleased to announce a partnership with Microsoft to offer Office 365, a suite of online services, to all CCC students.

What is Microsoft Office 365?

From home to school, from desktop to web and the devices in between, Office delivers the tools to get work done. Office 365 is a subscription-based service to use Microsoft's popular Office tools including Word, Excel, Outlook, OneDrive and Skype.



What comes with Office 365?

- **Office 365 Email:** Email account with 25 GB (gigabytes) of storage, calendaring, contact info, to-do lists, etc.
[More Information: http://supportcenter.ct.edu/service/Office365_email.asp]
- **Office 365 ProPlus:** The Office suite including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote which you can install on up to 5 devices including Macs, PCs, and tablets with Android, Windows, and even iPads and iPhones.
[More Information: http://supportcenter.ct.edu/service/Office365_ProPlus.asp]
- **Skype for Business:** Instant messaging, online audio and video calls and meetings, screen sharing, and integration with Office apps such as Outlook, Word, and PowerPoint.
[More Information: http://supportcenter.ct.edu/service/Office365_Skype.asp]
- **OneDrive for Business:** Store, sync, and share your files online. As part of Office 365, *OneDrive for Business* provides 1TB of online storage, lets you update and share your files from anywhere, and work collaboratively on Office documents with others at the same time.
[More Information: http://supportcenter.ct.edu/service/Office365_OneDrive.asp]

Where can I learn how to use Office 365?

Visit the Office 365 Support Center (<http://supportcenter.ct.edu/service/office365.asp>) to access free tutorials on Office 365.

Instruction: NetID and Password

To log on to MyCommNet or a campus computer, you'll need your NetID and Password.

NetID

Your NetID is composed of the following two items:

1. Your college ID (without the @ sign)
2. Domain: @student.commnet.edu for student and @mxcc.commnet.edu for MxCC faculty and staff

For student, if your college ID is @00658324, then your NetID would be:

00658324@student.commnet.edu

For faculty or staff, if your college ID is @00658324, then your NetID would be:

00658324@mxcc.commnet.edu If you were first employed at another CT community college, you use the same NetID with that college.

You can look up your NetID at <http://supportcenter.ct.edu/netid/lookupnetid.asp>

NetID Password

If you have logged on to myCommNet or have logged on to a campus computer at other CT community colleges, use the same password. Otherwise, use the initial password, which is a combination of personal information:

1. 1st three characters of birth month with the first letter CAPITALIZED
2. Ampersand character (&)
3. Last 4 digits of your social security number (SSN)*

If your birthday is 10/24/79 and your SSN is 123-45-6789, then your NetID initial password is: Oct&6789

*If you don't have a social security number, you need to request that we generate a default password at the offices indicated under **Reset Password** section of this instruction.

Change your Initial Password

Once you have logged on for the first time, you will be required to change your initial password. The following requirements must be followed when selecting a NetID password.

- At least eight characters in length
- Must contain characters **from three of the four** categories:
- Uppercase characters (A through Z)
- Lowercase characters (a through z)
- Numeric digits (0 through 9)
- Special characters (for example, !, \$, #, %)

*Your new password cannot contain all or part of your name and it must differ from previous passwords.

Instruction: NetID and Password

Forgotten NetID

For **students, faculty, or staff**, you may go to this site to locate your NetID.

<http://supportcenter.ct.edu/netid/lookupnetid.asp>

If this site does not provide you with your NetID after you entered your personal information,

For **Students**, check the Banner ID shown in payment receipt or course schedule obtained during registration. You may bring a photo ID and stop by Records Office or Meriden Front Desk to make inquiry on your NetID. A student NetID is composed as BannerID@student.commnet.edu

For **faculty**, ask your department secretary or contact IT Service (860-343-5711).

Reset Password

For students

a. Web Password Reset Utility

You can create a new password at <http://supportcenter.ct.edu/netid/pswdmenu.asp>

You need to verify your identity by entering the following personal information in addition to your NetID.

- Birth Date
- Social Security Number
- Answer to your security question

b. If you are not able to reset your password at the above site, stop by with your photo ID or call the following offices (Mon-Fri, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm) to make your request with your Photo ID.

IT Service, Room 304, Wheaton Hall, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 - 5711

Records Office, Room 153, Founders Hall, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 - 5724

Distance Learning, Room 131/131A, Founders Hall, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 - 5756

Front Desk (1st floor), Meriden Center, (203) 238 - 6202

For faculty and Staff

IT Service, Room 304, Wheaton, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 - 5711

Front Desk (1st floor), Meriden Center, (203) 238 - 6202