Quick References for Online Students  

Winter 2019, 12/26/19 - 1/16/20  
Spring 2020, 1/22/20 – 5/16/20  

Middlesex Community College

I. Preparation prior to the start of the semester
Visit [http://mxcc.edu/distance](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: Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer)
b. Go to: [my.commnet.edu](http://my.commnet.edu)
c. Enter your NetID and 8 - character (or more) password. Information about NetID and password can be found at [http://mxcc.edu/distance](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. The most updated course information will be available on the first day of a class.
e. Change password should be done at [my.commnet.edu](http://my.commnet.edu).

III. Questions and Help
a. Password Reset
   - [http://supportcenter.ct.edu/netid/pswdmenu.asp](http://supportcenter.ct.edu/netid/pswdmenu.asp)
   - Stop by the following offices with your photo ID or call during 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Mon-Fri.
      - The Records office, Room 153 Founders Hall, (860) 343 – 5724
      - IT Department, Room 304, Wheaton Hall, (860) 343 – 5711
      - Distance Learning, Chapman 701B/C, (860) 343 – 5756
b. For myCommnet/Blackboard technical problems, contact the Help Desk:
   Voice: (860) 723 - 0221
   Web: [http://websupport.ct.edu](http://websupport.ct.edu)
c. For questions related to course requirements, content, assignments, etc., contact your instructor in Blackboard course site.
d. For other questions, contact Distance Learning:
   Chapman 701B/C, (860) 343 – 5756, mxccdistantemail@mxcc.commnet.edu

IV. Orientations for Online Students
All new online students MUST go through an online orientation at [http://mxcc.edu/distance](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. Before coming to the orientation, please check the finalized schedule at [http://mxcc.edu/distance](http://mxcc.edu/distance) (Click on “Campus Orientation” link at upper left.)

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<tr>
<th>For Winter 2019 Online Students</th>
<th>For Spring 2020 Courses Starting on January 22</th>
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<tr>
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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 via WebEx online. 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.commnet.edu) are needed at the orientation.

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<tr>
<td>(1) Logging on to Blackboard</td>
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<td>(2) Navigating in Blackboard</td>
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<td>(3) Participating in Class: Assignments, Discussion Board, Messages, Tests, etc.</td>
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<td>(4) Troubleshooting Tips and Help Contact</td>
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<td>(5) Success Tips</td>
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No seat reservation is needed to attend a campus orientation. Students 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).
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 mxcc.smartermeasure.com and logon with:

**Username**
- **mxccwin19** for Winter 2019 Students
- **mxccsp20** for Spring 2020 Students
- **mxccsum20** for Summer 2020 Students
- **mxccfall20** for Fall 2020 Students

**Password:** mxccstudent

**By knowing your weaknesses you can receive help from:**

MxCC Distance Learning
**Email:** mxccdistance@mxcc.commnet.edu
**Phone:** (860) – 343 -5756
Chapman Hall, Room 701B/C

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 on 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. Seven days before a course 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. You may check out a laptop at MxCC library overnight. 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.

Visit our comprehensive site for more information: http://mxcc.edu/distance
Achieving Success in Online Learning

1. Take a self-assessment test to see if you are well prepared for learning online.
   Visit [http://mxcc.edu/distance/take-a-smartermeasure-test](http://mxcc.edu/distance/take-a-smartermeasure-test) for information on how to take the test and understand the test results.

2. Visit [http://mxcc.edu/distance](http://mxcc.edu/distance)
   Click What to do (upper-left) link at the left panel and carefully go over the instructions step-by-step to ensure that you are ready.

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 provided by your professor.
   - 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 when 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 until 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. When students experience technical difficulty with their own computer, they may check out a laptop at the MxCC library overnight.
   - 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 24/7 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 and ask an extension.
   - Should technical problems persist, report to the MxCC Distance Learning department using one of the following methods:
     Email to mxccdistantem@mxcc.commnet.edu, call (860) 343 – 5756, or stop by the Distance Learning offices in Chapman 701B/C, Middletown Campus (M-F, 8:30 am – 4:30 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.
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](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 faculty and Staff
IT Service, Room 304, Wheaton, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 – 5711

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, 8:30 am - 4:30 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 701B/C, Chapman Hall, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 – 5756
c. 24/7 Technology Support Center
860-723-0221, Web: http://websupport.ct.edu
For access to all of your computing needs at MxCC, enter your NetID and password to log on to myCommNet at my.commnet.edu. myCommNet gives you access to:

- Final grades, registration, transcripts, course searches, textbooks, course evaluation,
- Student email, Office 365 (free download MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, and more)
- Online courses and on-ground courses that use Blackboard,
- Financial aid awards with history and billing records with history,
- Library database access from off-campus, and more!

Blackboard Learn site

All online/hybrid courses use Blackboard course management system. Many on-ground courses also use Blackboard to provide students with supplemental materials.

1. Log in at my.commnet.edu with NetID and password.
2. Click on the Blackboard icon. Popup blockers need to be disabled.
3. Click on your course title to enter your course Blackboard site.

Free Online Tutoring!

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

To access this service, log onto Blackboard via MyCommNet. On Blackboard My Institution page, click on “Virtual Campus-Student Activities” site. Click on Online Tutoring link in the left panel. You may submit your paper or schedule an online tutoring session.

Campus Computer Labs

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. Secured wireless network is available in the buildings of Middletown campus and Meriden campus. To use your laptop for Internet connection, you will need to log on with your NetID and password.

- Middletown:
  
  Wheaton 305 – Open Computer Lab with PCs and Macs
  Chapman – Library and Learning Center – Open Lab with PCs and Macs

- Meriden:
  PC labs

More resources such as Campus Wi-Fi, Office 365 Advantage and Library Research Help can be found at http://mexc.edu/distance/student-technology-resources
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.  

- **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.  

- **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.  

- **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.  

**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.