

Quick References for Online Students

Fall 2024, 8/28/24 – 12/16/24

CT State Community College Middlesex

I. Preparation prior to the start of the semester

Visit <https://mxcc.edu/distance> and click on **What to Do** (upper left) and go over step-by-step instruction to get yourself ready. *Some Fall 2024 courses have various starting/ending dates. Please check your course schedule for your course starting and ending date.

II. Log on to your online class

*Within seven days before the first day of a class, courses will be shown on the **Courses** page on Blackboard, and registered students will be able to view an online course with orientation, tutorials, and 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.ctstate.edu**.
- c. Enter your **NetID** and 8 - character (or more) **password**.
Information about NetID and password help can be found at my.ctstate.edu.
- d. Click on **Blackboard** icon or link, click on the **Courses** link on the left panel and click on your class title 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.ctstate.edu**. (**Password Reset** link)

III. Questions and Help

- a. **Password Reset**
<https://cscu.edusupportcenter.com>
Stop by the following office with your photo ID or call during 8:30 am – 5:00 pm, Mon-Fri.
 - o IT Department, Room 304, Wheaton Hall, (860) 343-5711
- b. For **Blackboard technical problems**, contact the **Help Desk**:
Voice: 860-343-5756 -MxCC, (860) 723-0221
Web: <https://mxcc.edu/distance>
Email: mxccdistanace@ctstate.edu
Location: Chapman 701B/C
- c. For questions related to course requirements, content, assignments, etc., contact your instructor via Blackboard course.

IV. Orientations for Online Students

All new online students **MUST** go through an online orientation at <https://mxcc.edu/distance> (Click **Online Orientation** in upper left). First time online students with MxCC are strongly encouraged to attend a "live" virtual orientation at the following **tentative** schedule. Before attending an orientation session, please **check the most updated schedule** posted at <https://mxcc.edu/distance> (Click on "Live Real-Time Orientation" link at upper left.). The access link will be available on the page 5 minutes before a session starts.

For Fall 2024 Courses Starting on August 28th

Thursday, August 22, 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm, WebEx for LRON Students
Friday, August 23, 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm, Blackboard Collaborate for LRON Students
Monday, August 26, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm, MS Teams for LRON Students
Tuesday, August 27, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm, Orientation for New Online Students
Wednesday, August 28, 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm, Orientation for New Online Students
Wednesday, August 28, 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Orientation for New Online Students
Thursday, August 29, 10:00 am to 11:30 am, Orientation for New Online Students
Thursday, August 29, 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm, Blackboard Collaborate for LRON Students
Friday, August 30, 10:00 am – 11:00 am, WebEx for LRON Students
Friday, August 30, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm, Orientation for New Online Students
Tuesday, September 3, 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm, Orientation for New Online Students
Wednesday, September 4, 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm, MS Teams for LRON Students

Orientation for Online Students

All new online students **MUST** go over the online orientation posted at <https://mxcc.edu/distance> (click on “Online Orientation” at upper left). Live real-time orientations and technology workshops will be offered via WebEx. First-time online students who need are strongly encouraged to attend a live real-time orientation. The orientation will help you get familiar with the **Blackboard** interface and will provide success tips for your online learning. The technology workshop shows you the basic steps to operate a web conferencing platform: Blackboard Collaborate, WebEx, or MS Teams.

Orientation 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

The access link to an orientation or a technology workshop will be active 5 minutes before a session starts. The following schedule may change as time gets close. Please visit <https://mxcc.edu/distance/campus-orientation> for the most updated schedule and the access link.

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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 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 <https://mxcc.smartermeasure.com> and logon with:

Username

mxccFall2024 for Fall 2024 Students

Password: mxccstudent

By knowing your weaknesses you can receive help from:



MxCC Distance Learning

Email: mxccdistanace@mxcc.comnet.edu

Phone: (860) – 343 -5756

Chapman Hall, Room 701B/C



For More information On SmarterMeasure:

Visit <https://mxcc.edu/distance/take-a-smartermeasure-test>

Frequently Asked Questions

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

Go to <https://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 your class starts. 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, the welcome message, announcement, and other information at the course site.

How does it (an online class) work?

You use **Blackboard**, our online learning system. Under the guidance of your professor, you have a syllabus that you'll follow, and you'll submit all assignments, exams, and projects online by a set timeline. Many classes use weekly online discussions to engage students.

How much time does it take?

You will be studying and completing assignments each week (or unit) 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 a live real-time orientation virtually if you are new to taking fully online classes at MxCC. The orientation is led by distance learning staff to guide students on how to get started with online learning. The orientation schedule can be found at <https://mxcc.edu/distance>, click on **Live Real-Time Orientation** link (left panel).

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: <https://mxcc.edu> (under Menu tab at upper right).

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

We offer synchronous (LRON) and asynchronous (ONLN) online courses. Most of our fully online classes are asynchronous. This means that as long as you are meeting the deadlines set by your professor, you do not have to log on at a specific time. Read the syllabus for information on how often you are supposed to be logged onto the course. For LRON (Live Remote Online) synchronous online courses, you **MUST** sign on to the class meetings at a scheduled time and your professor will conduct class lectures/activities and interact with students virtually.

How do I communicate with the instructor?

You use the Messages tool in Blackboard unless the instructor specifies otherwise.

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

<https://mxcc.edu/distance> has the instructions on solving the most common technical issues and the **Technical Help** contact. MxCC Distance Learning staff will assist you resolve technical problems on Blackboard or MyCTState.

Learning the navigation in Blackboard, how to attach files, post messages, take exams, submit assignments, etc. can be found at <https://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 opening hours of the lab facilities. You may check out a laptop at MxCC library for the semester. Using mobile phones or tablets can be problematic due to the system incompatibility with Blackboard. Your back up plan must include using a computer to which you can download and install programs if necessary. All computers must use high-speed Internet connection.

Achieving Success in Online Learning

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

Visit <https://mxcc.edu/distance/take-a-smartermeasure-test> for information on how to take the test and understand the test results.

2. Visit <https://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 you log on. Your instructor may use announcements and Messages 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 the 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 <https://ccsu.edusupportcenter.com>.
- 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 mxccdistanace@mxcc.commmnet.edu, call (860) 343 – 5756, or stop by the Distance Learning offices in Chapman 701B/C, Middletown Campus (M-F, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm).

Disclaimer: Students must ensure their computers are set up correctly for accessing online class information. All assignments must be completed on time to fulfill academic requirements. Students are responsible for proactively addressing technological issues to avoid impacts on performance.

Instruction: NetID and Password

To log on to MyCTState (my.ctstate.edu) or a campus computer, you'll need your NetID and Password.

NetID

Your NetID is composed of the following two items:

1. Your first name and last name.
2. Domain: @ctstate.edu

Jenny Brown's NetID would be: jenny.brown@ctstate.edu

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

NetID Password

If you have logged on to MyCTState 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 birth month is October and your last four-digit of SS# is 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.

NetID Does Not Work

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

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

Instruction: NetID and Password

Reset Password

Use the Web Password Reset Utility at <https://passwordreset.microsoftonline.com>

If the above site does not work, contact IT service:

Room 304, Wheaton, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 – 5711

or 24/7 Technology Support Center

860-723-0221, Web: <https://ccsu.edusupportcenter.com>

For other questions regarding your online courses or Blackboard, contact Distance Learning

Room 701B/C, Chapman Hall, Middletown Campus, (860) 343 – 5756

For questions about Banner Self-Service, Contact Records Office

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



STUDENT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES



myCTState

For access to all of your computing needs at MxCC, enter your **NetID** and **password** to log on to **MyCTState** at **my.ctstate.edu**.

myCTState 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, MS Teams, 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.ctstate.edu** with **NetID** and **password**.
2. Click on the **Blackboard** icon. Popup blockers need to be disabled.
3. Click on the Courses link on the left panel and 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 using MS Teams.

To access this service, visit <https://mxcc.edu/asc>. You will need to log on to download MS Teams at portal.office.com. Log on with your ID and password. After you have logged on, click on the Launch App icon at the upper left corner. Click on Teams and follow the instruction to download and install MS Teams to your computer.

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
 - Snow 413 A & B – Open Mac Lab
 - Chapman– Library and Academic Success Center – Open Lab with PCs and Macs
- **Meriden:**
 - PC labs

More resources such as Campus Wi-Fi, Office 356 Advantage and Library Research Help can be found at <https://mxcc.edu/distance/student-technology-resources>



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.