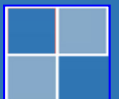


2019

# Distance Learning Student Handbook

Lamar State College Port Arthur

Office of Distance Learning



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# Distance Learning

## Purpose

The purpose of the Online Learning Student Handbook is to provide a framework for the development, implementation, and maintenance of credit-bearing programs and courses offered via Distance Learning at Lamar State College Port Arthur.

## Mission

To provide quality educational opportunities through Distance Learning that meet the needs of our diverse student population. Faculty will provide superior Distance Learning, adhering to the expectations of Lamar State College Port Arthur

Distance Learning at Lamar State College Port Arthur also provides a resource for online faculty interested in upholding teaching excellence, improving student learning outcomes, and encouraging ongoing professional development and scholarly engagement.

## Statement of Congruence

The Distance Learning mission is congruent with the College mission because it provides learning experiences that prepare students to continue their education and enter the workforce.

## Definitions

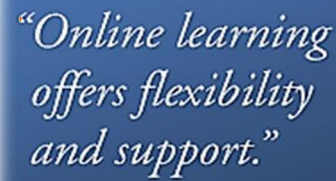
**Accessibility** means that people with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, interact, and contribute in a course. Accessibility in a Distance Learning course is determined by the features of the instructional technologies provided by the College and by the way that faculty members use those technologies to create materials and design courses.

**Asynchronous** literally means "not at the same time." Asynchronous tools, such as e-mail and discussion board, allow participants to communicate without all participants being online at the same time.

**Class Attendance** in Distance Learning courses will be determined by the active participation of the student through the completion of class activities, such as the submission of an assignment, completion of an exam, attendance in an online chat, or the posting of a post to a discussion forum. Simply logging in to the course in the learning management system is not considered attendance.

**Delivery Mode** The primary method or technology used to deliver instructional information to the student and used for communication between the instructor and the students. At Lamar State College Port Arthur, courses are delivered in the following modes:

**Online courses** are taught 100% online using a combination of asynchronous and synchronous activities providing greater flexibility of schedule and convenience of access to students, while allowing them to meet the same learning outcomes and level of rigor achieved in traditional courses. The delivery of online exams will follow College approved processes, including the possibility of using authentication of online test takers or live local proctors. Some instructors administer exams at on-campus meetings, while others administer them online. Dates and times for any required on-campus exams will be published in the official class schedule.



*“Online learning  
offers flexibility  
and support.”*

**Blended courses** take advantage of the best features of traditional classroom instruction and online education. Students meet face-to-face for 50% or less of the course and complete the rest of their coursework online. A blended course is not simply an online course that requires in-class exams. Blended courses allow faculty and students both the opportunity to build strong personal relationships through face-to-face interaction and the opportunity to explore new types of learning activities that were not possible in traditional courses. Dates, times and locations for face-to-face meetings will be published in the official class schedule.

**Traditional courses** are taught in a face-to-face classroom setting. Some traditional (on-campus) courses may require a significant amount of coursework, up to 49%, to be done online. The syllabus and other materials will be posted online and students may be asked to submit some work electronically. The Blackboard grade book will be used by all courses.

**Distance Learning** includes fully online and blended courses and is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Interaction between the instructor and the student is regular and substantive, and can be initiated by the instructor or the student.

**Learning Management System (LMS)** is a web-accessible software application that provides for the administration of course content, delivery of assessments, communication and collaboration between students and instructors, and the ability to track grades and other relevant performance data. Lamar State College Port Arthur is currently licensing Blackboard Learn™ from Blackboard, Inc. as its learning management system.

**Synchronous** literally means “occurring at the same time.” Synchronous tools, such as text chat, require all participants to be online at the same time.

**Questions?** If you have any questions about the policies and procedures for Distance Learning, please contact the Director of Distance Learning at 409-984-6443 or email [offordrm@lamarpa.edu](mailto:offordrm@lamarpa.edu) for further clarification or information.

<p><b>Director of Distance Learning</b> Roszella Offord <a href="mailto:offordrm@lamarpa.edu">offordrm@lamarpa.edu</a> 409-984-6443</p>
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## Overview

- A. The definition used for Distance Learning in this document is the one adopted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges:

For the purposes of the Commission on College's accreditation review, Distance Learning is defined as a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance learning course may use the internet: one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVD's, and CD-ROMs if used as part of the Distance Learning course or program.

- B. Lamar State College Port Arthur does not currently offer any courses via correspondence, video conference, pre-recorded video cassette, DVD, or CD-ROM. All LSCPA Distance Learning courses are offered through an Internet based online course management system.

Distance Learning focuses on utilizing technology and teaching methods to provide instruction to students outside the regular classroom and thereby should increase flexibility and scheduling options. Blended and Distance Learning courses require that students have a computer and Internet access that meet at least minimum technical requirements as defined by the College. Additionally, Distance Learning courses require computer literacy skills, as well as self-discipline and motivation. Students register for Distance Learning courses in the same way they register for traditional courses.

## Goals

1. To identify, provide, expand, and coordinate the development of quality courses and programs to meet the needs of students.
2. To support and encourage the internal development of the Distance Learning Program by promoting and providing guidelines for training and providing technical support.
3. To provide strategies for effective delivery of Distance Learning alternatives through the development of policies for consistency in Distance Learning.
4. To evaluate periodically and comprehensively every facet of the Distance Learning Program and to use these results to restructure and improve the program.

## Standards and Criteria

### **Institutional Issues (Authority-Texas Administrative Code 4.260)**

1. All Distance Learning courses that offer either semester credit hours or Continuing Education Units shall do so in accordance with the standards of the Southern

Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

2. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs serves as the central repository for Distance Learning program information and support structure. The Distance Learning Advisory Committee will serve in an advisory capacity to the VPAA on policy and operational issues related to Distance Learning. Committee membership is determined by the VPAA.
3. All instruction shall be administered by the same academic unit administering the corresponding on-campus instruction. The supervision, monitoring, and XII-41 evaluation process for Distance Learning instructors shall be comparable to those for on-campus instruction. All subject content decisions will be the responsibility of the instructor and will be coordinated through the appropriate Lamar State College Port Arthur academic structure no matter the delivery system.
4. All Lamar State College Port Arthur policies and procedures related to admission, withdrawals, and attendance will be the same no matter what delivery system is utilized. Admission to the college does not automatically admit students to a specific Distance Learning program or course. Texas Higher Education Assessment requirements must be met before a student is admitted to a course that might require proficiency in related study skills. In addition, there are individual course prerequisites that must be met.
5. Lamar State College Port Arthur shall submit or not submit Distance Learning courses for formula funding as required by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board formula funding general provisions (TAC Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4.264).

### **Distance Learning Programs and Courses (Authority-Texas Administrative Code 4.261, 4.262)**

1. **Each program that Lamar State College Port Arthur offers via Distance Learning shall be within the role and mission of the academic unit responsible for offering the instruction.** There shall be no distinction between programs offered through Distance Learning and those offered on campus. Unless otherwise provided, all policies, standards, and guidelines for on-campus instruction apply to programs delivered via Distance Learning.
2. **Each course that Lamar State College Port Arthur offers via Distance Learning shall be on the College's inventory of approved courses and each program Lamar State College Port Arthur offers via Distance Learning shall be on the offering academic unit's inventory of approved programs.** There shall be no distinction between courses offered through Distance Learning and those offered on campus. Courses offered via Distance Learning shall have the same rigor and expected outcomes of on-campus offerings.
3. **The quality of Distance Learning instruction must meet the same standards as on-campus instruction. All face-to-face, online, and hybrid classes must be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs before development as outlined in the Faculty Handbook.** For online courses, the Principles of Good Practice for Electronically Delivered Courses and Programs self-study must be completed and

submitted to the Director of Distance Learning for each first time course offering. Verification is then forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for approval to offer the course.

4. **An academic unit offering a degree or certificate program shall comply with the standards and criteria of any specialized accrediting agency or professional certification board.**
5. **Each degree program offered via Distance Learning shall be approved by the Texas State University Board of Regents.** If the program is approved through all college levels, it will be transmitted by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges for final review.
6. Students who enroll in Distance Learning courses must satisfy the same requirements for admission to Lamar State College Port Arthur, to the program of which the course is a part, and to the class or section itself as are required of on-campus students.
7. **The instructor of record shall bear responsibility for the delivery of instruction and for evaluation of student progress.**

#### **XII-42 C. Faculty (Authority-Texas Administrative Code 4.263)**

1. Faculty shall be selected and evaluated by the same standards, review, and approval procedures used by the institution to select and evaluate faculty responsible for on-campus instruction. Faculty selection follows the same procedure at Lamar State College Port Arthur no matter what delivery system for the course is used.
2. The Director of Distance Learning and the Information Technology Services Department shall provide training and support to enhance the added skills required of faculty teaching classes at a distance via electronic delivery.
3. The load value for a Distance Learning course shall be the same as its equivalent on-campus course. The total number of students allowed to enroll in any Distance Learning course shall be set by the appropriate division director in consultation with the dean and the instructor.
4. Lamar State College Port Arthur encourages faculty members to develop courses to be delivered through Distance Learning technology.
5. Faculty compensation for developing and teaching Distance Learning courses is outlined in the Faculty Handbook, Section IV, AC.3.
6. Lamar State College Port Arthur, through the Director of Online Learning, shall provide information regarding the most current copyright laws to all faculty members, and faculty members shall adhere to those guidelines.

#### **Student Support Services (Authority-Texas Administrative Code 4.264)**

1. **All advertising, recruiting, and scheduling information provided in campus publications or online regarding any Distance Learning class or program shall include the prerequisite level of knowledge and skill necessary to complete the**

- course successfully and clear and specific information on the technology needed to participate in the course.** Where necessary, these publications shall include information on resources available to assist the student in using the required technology.
2. **Students shall be provided academic and student support services**—including academic advising, counseling, library and other learning resources, tutoring services, and financial aid—comparable to those available for on-campus students. Distance Learning students are provided academic support services by a variety of delivery methods, including, but not limited to, orientations, on-site conferences, links on web pages within Internet-based courses, the Lamar State College Port Arthur website, the [MyLamarPA](#) web portal, e-mail, fax, and telephone.
  3. **Lamar State College Port Arthur shall provide access to Gates Memorial Library services and resources through the campus library web page.** Services include self-paced online tutorials and electronic reference assistance. Resources include extensive electronic holdings including e-books, e-journals, magazines, newspapers, data sets, graphics and audiovisual collections.

## **Distance Learning Facilities and Support (Authority-Texas Administrative Code 4.274)**

Distance learning facilities (other than homes as Distance Learning reception sites) shall be comparable in quality to those for on-campus instruction. Distance Learning students will have access to the same learning management systems as on-campus students.

The College shall support student and faculty access to on-line courses and online support services through the campus Internet connection or through access provided in computer labs on campus. A help desk shall be provided by the Information Technology Services Department.

The purpose of Distance Learning (Blackboard) courses is to provide quality educational coursework through non- traditional means, allowing students to acquire knowledge in academic, professional and technical education, and skills for lifelong learning. Distance Learning students are entitled to all of the support services available to traditional students.

For more information contact our **Distance Learning office at 409-984-6443** or send **email to [offordrm@lamarpa](mailto:offordrm@lamarpa)**. The Distance Learning Office is located in the Madison Monroe Education Building, Room 113.

## **Distance Learning Platforms**

### **Course Delivery System**

Blackboard is the learning management system utilized by Lamar State College Port Arthur. The following policies and procedures pertain to the use and administration of these systems.

The Lamar State College Port Arthur Usage Policy subsumes these policies.



The Information Technologies (IT) department maintains and supports the technology platforms that are used to deliver online course materials.

## Learning Management System (LMS)

Blackboard is the learning management system used by Lamar State College Port Arthur. Blackboard is a Web-based platform that provides faculty and students with features including:



- **Content:** This feature allows instructors to post articles, assignments, learning modules, videos etc.
- **Calendar:** Faculty can use this function to post due dates for assignments and tests.
- **Assessments:** This tab allows instructors to post quizzes and exams and allows students to access them anywhere there is a sufficient Internet connection.
- **Assignments:** This feature allows for assignments to be posted and for students to be able to submit assignments online.
- **My Grades:** Teachers must post grades on Blackboard for students to view. This feature allows students to view their grades in each class.

## Software Requirements

Students should have the following software installed on their computer:

1. Word
2. Access
3. Excel
4. Publisher
5. PowerPoint
6. Outlook



Students registered at LSCPA may have Microsoft Office installed on their computer free of charge. Go to <https://www.lamarpa.edu/Departments/Information-Technology-Services/Microsoft-Office-Pro-Plus-for-Students> for instructions to download the software.

## Upgrades and Maintenance

Blackboard upgrades that require significant downtime are conducted between academic terms with a minimum of one week's notice. Large upgrades include:

- Blackboard service pack installations (if applicable)
- Blackboard version upgrades
- Distance Learning hardware upgrades

The LSCPA IT Department has scheduled maintenance every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month.

All systems will be down beginning at 8:00 am and ending at approximately 6:00 pm.

## **Emergencies**

For emergency shutdowns, the Information Technology staff makes their best effort to provide at least a two-hour notice to all Blackboard users that the system will be taken offline. The notice is sent out via campus email and in an announcement that is visible within Blackboard.

# Student Information

Lamar State College Port Arthur offers online courses (via the computer). The **Distance Learning Handbook** is designed to acquaint you with our online program and provide you with the information you will need to be successful in your courses.

## **Distance Learning Course Information**

Although many Distance Learning courses will not require a meeting on campus, some of the Distance Learning courses will have a required first class meeting on campus. Details about the first meetings can be found in the syllabus of each class.

Some courses are offered entirely online and do not have meetings on campus. You must follow the instructions found within the syllabus of each course and any instructions given within the course in Blackboard.

## ***Student FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)***

### ***What is Distance Learning? Can anyone take these classes?***

Distance Learning courses are designed for students who desire flexibility and convenience in their studies. Our courses are considered equivalent to on-campus courses. Anyone who is eligible to take regular courses on campus may enroll in Distance Learning courses.

### ***Will I be required to attend class meetings on campus?***

This is determined by the instructor. Many instructors offer on-campus orientations at the beginning of each semester. Instructors teaching Distance Learning courses will provide you with a syllabus online (within Blackboard). The syllabus will include the course requirements and information about any on-campus sessions you will be expected to attend.

### ***How do students register for Distance Learning classes?***

Students register for Distance Learning classes (blended or online) in the same way that they register for any other class. That is, students apply to the College, take any required placement tests, meet with an advisor as necessary, and register for classes using the Lamar State College Port Arthur website.

### ***How much do Distance Learning classes cost?***

Distance Learning courses, both blended and online, cost the same as any other Lamar State College Port Arthur course. However, additional lab and proctoring fees may apply. If additional fees apply, you will be notified in writing at the time of enrollment.

### ***Can I take both Distance Learning classes and regular traditional classes?***

Students may take a combination of online and traditional classes.

### ***I think I have the technical skills I need, but I've never taken a course like this. How do I know if this is right for me?***

In order to succeed in a Distance Learning course, you must be self-motivated and be able to work well independently with minimum supervision. Distance Learning courses are every bit as challenging as on-campus courses. In fact, surveys conducted reveal that some students find Distance Learning courses more difficult. You do not meet regularly with your instructor in the classroom, so you must be able to manage your time effectively and stay on track with your coursework. It's also important that you have strong reading, writing skills, and technical skills.

### ***Will I have to be online at a particular time?***

Some instructors require students to be online at a particular time to take quizzes or exams, or to participate in web-conferencing or chat sessions. You may contact your instructor for details.

### ***Will I have to buy books for the course?***

You will likely need to purchase or rent books for your classes. Your instructor will give you information (in the syllabus) about the text materials you'll need for your course.

### ***What if I find I can't continue in my course? Can I withdraw from it?***

Yes, but in order to receive a "W" (Withdrawal), you must withdraw before the deadline. The deadline for withdrawal can be found on our website or in the academic calendar. Please note that dropping a course is your responsibility. Your instructor is not responsible for dropping you from your course.

### ***What if I have trouble with the course?***

If you have academic trouble with a course, please contact your instructor either through email or by telephone. If you have trouble navigating a course, first review the orientation your instructor provides on the course home page. If you experience technical trouble, please contact Lamar State College Port Arthur help desk 409-984-6150. Online support is also available at [offordrm@lamarpa.edu](mailto:offordrm@lamarpa.edu)

### ***What about protecting my privacy as a student taking Distance Learning course?***

The Procedures for Protecting the Privacy of Students Enrolled in Distance Learning Courses can be found in the Student Privacy section of the *Student Online Learning Handbook*.

# Student Resources

## Academic Advising for Online Students

The Academic Advising Office is located on the 3rd floor of the Student Center. Students must make an appointment with an Academic Advisor or a Faculty Advisor using **Appointment Plus** to review their degree plan, change their major, and register for classes. Academic Advisors see New, Re-admit, and Transfer Students. Faculty Advisors see continuing students, and their offices are located in various buildings. Academic and Faculty Advisors provide Texas Success Initiative (TSI) compliance information for students who have not met state regulations in reading, writing, and math. TSI restricted students must be registered for at least one developmental course until compliancy is met. Students who are TSI complete are eligible to register on their own through their **MyLamarPA** account. Students who are not TSI complete must meet with an Advisor to register for classes. Online students can reach the Academic Advising Office via email at [advising@lamarpa.edu](mailto:advising@lamarpa.edu).



## Disability Support Services

Lamar State College Port Arthur is committed to providing all students equal access to our programs. In accordance with the American Disabilities Act, Distance Learning courses, materials, and resources must be accessible to students with disabilities. Examples of Accommodations include extended time for tests, proctored exams, and electronic text books (when available). Students who would like to request Accommodations should contact Laurie Marcantel, Disability Services Coordinator located in the Madison Monroe Building.

The Office for Disability Services provides the following:

- access for students with disabilities
- assistance to individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children;
- support to individuals preparing for non-traditional careers which are defined as “occupations or fields of work, including careers in computer science, technology and other current and emerging high skill occupations, for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25% of the individuals employed in each such occupation or field of work”;
- single parents and displaced homemakers; and
- assistance to individuals with other barriers to their educational achievement, including individuals with limited English proficiency.

**Office for Disability Services**  
Laurie Marcantel, Coordinator  
Madison Monroe Building, Rm  
231B  
(409) 984-6056  
[marcantella@lamarpa.edu](mailto:marcantella@lamarpa.edu)

Students with disabilities are given reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations

to provide equal access to an education after they self-identify and register with the Office for Disability Services, so they may freely and actively participate in all areas of college life. Services are provided to maximize students' educational potential and develop their independence to the fullest extent possible.

**To obtain accommodations for a disability, a student must:**

- apply and be accepted for admission to Lamar Sate College Port Arthur through the regular admissions process;
- complete an application for accommodations and meet with the Office for Disability Services Coordinator;
- provide comprehensive documentation, from an appropriate professional for the disability requiring accommodation;
- obtain an accommodation letter from the Office for Disability Services office each semester; and,
- Provide a copy of the accommodation letter to each instructor, each semester the student is registered. Students are encouraged to provide the accommodation letter to the instructors in each instructor's office, during the instructor's established office hours to maintain confidentiality.

When students require third-party assistance (i.e., ASL interpreter, personal assistant) instructors will be notified by the student when the student presents an accommodation letter. Such assistance will be available to the student during all instructional sessions and laboratory-scheduled sessions. It might also be made available during examinations under certain situations. Third-party assistance may also be required during appointments when students request conferences and/or advisement from instructional faculty. If there are questions regarding third-party assistance, please contact the Office for Disability Services.

Students are encouraged to contact Workforce Solutions Southeast Texas and the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) for assistance that those agencies might be able to offer. The Office for Disability Services works with various community agencies and will provide assistance to help students locate an agency that will provide services for their needs.

Counseling referrals are made available for students who need those services.

## **Testing Center**

The Testing Center can be used if an instructor requests that a student take an online test in a proctored environment, or if a student would like to come to campus to take an online test. Arrangements should be made with the Testing Center by calling 409-984-6244 or by emailing the Testing Director.

The **Testing Center** is located in the Student Success Building.  
409-984-6244  
Testing@lamarpa.edu

## **Student Success Center (SSC)**

The SSC assists students to successfully complete courses and programs of study, to prepare for and pass a range of standardized exams, and to develop and improve academic skills essential for success in a baccalaureate program. It is also home to the college's testing services.

### **Tutoring**

Tutoring for Math and English is provided by peer and Teacher Certified Tutors and is free of charge to all students.

### **Computer Lab**

A Computer lab located in the SSC contains computers and printers for student use. The system provides word processing capabilities and tutorial programs.

### **Test Administration**

The Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA), the General Education Development (GED) Test, Development Education tests, proctored and makeup exams are administered in the SSC.

### **Hours of Operation**

Monday – Thursday (Fall & Spring Semesters)	8:00AM – 8:00PM
Monday – Thursday (Summer Semesters)	8:00AM – 5:00PM
Friday	8:00AM – 5:00PM

### **Library**

It is the policy of the Lamar State College Port Arthur Library to provide equal library services to all patrons, whether on the main college campus or online. The library adheres to the policies and guidelines of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) concerning Distance Learning students.

Students, as well as online and dual enrollment students at area high schools, have access to all electronic books and online databases through the Internet with their Student Identification Number required. Interactive forms are also available on the Library's Website, which allow Distance Learning students to request all additional services of the Gates Memorial Library, including print materials to be delivered to or held at the Library for pickup, interlibrary loans, and items for purchase.

The Gates Memorial Library is located at 317 Stillwell Boulevard bordering the historic Stillwell Plaza.

The fully accessible Wi-Fi facility includes a student computer lab, a quiet study carrel area, group study areas, a periodical reading room, stack areas, audiovisual services and a reference desk.

# Tips for being a Successful Online Learner

## Learner Responsibilities

The faculty, staff, and administration of Lamar State College Port Arthur strive to provide a positive, enriching academic environment for each student. It is the student's responsibility to:

- To login to their online course a minimum of three times per week.
- Read the course syllabus and any other documents related to the course to be sure that they are aware of any and all instructor policies.
- Use the communication procedures established by the instructor for submission of assignments and for completing course requirements.
- Notify the course instructor, **in advance**, if you are unable to meet any course deadlines.
- Ask questions. If you don't understand the instructions, assignments or learning materials, it is your responsibility to ask for help. Students who ask content related questions tend to retain the knowledge they have learned in the online classroom.
- Cite sources carefully. This is one of the simplest ways to prevent plagiarism.



## Academic Dishonesty

Students of Lamar State College Port Arthur are expected to behave as responsible members of the college community and to be honest and ethical in their academic work. Lamar State College Port Arthur strives to provide students with the knowledge, skills, judgment, and wisdom they need to function in society as educated adults. To falsify or fabricate the results of one's research; to present the words, ideas, data, or work of another as one's own; or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process of higher education and is a disservice to the student and to Lamar State College Port Arthur. All members of the Lamar State College Port Arthur community, students, faculty, and staff, share the responsibility and authority to challenge and make known acts of academic dishonesty. Further, students, faculty and staff should ensure that policies regarding academic integrity are clearly outlined in course materials, including course syllabi.

## Honor Code for Online Courses

By enrolling in this online course, you must agree to the following;

- a. **Users may not communicate any information concerning any password, identifying code, or other confidential information to unauthorized users.** Additionally users must also make a conscious effort to protect passwords and secure accounts against unauthorized use or access.

b. **Users may not transmit unsolicited content, including advertising third party materials or services to other students by email or in course discussions.**

c. **Users must not transmit content that solicits obscenity, harassment, or threats.** Users must be consistent with guiding ethical statements and accepted netiquette standards.

d. **Users will refrain from cheating.** This includes:

**Plagiarism:** the act of taking or closely imitating another individual's thoughts or words and using them as one's own.

**Unauthorized Assistance or Collaboration:** students working together on any tests, quizzes, assignments, or exams without the instructor's permission.

**Use of Unauthorized Materials:** using textbooks, cell phones, laptops, calculators, or other electronic devices for tests, quizzes, or assignments without instructor's permission.

**Unauthorized Dual Submission of Previous Academic Work:** using any work from a previous course or another course for an assignment unless a student has received prior permission from an instructor.

**Other Academic Misconduct:** including, but not limited to, stealing quizzes or exams, altering academic records including grades, sabotaging the work of another student, or unauthorized use of another student's electronic devices; intentionally reporting a false violation of academic integrity or offering a bribe to any College member in exchange for special consideration or favors

e. **Users will not distribute course materials to unauthorized users or online.**

Lamar State College Port Arthur may take any action regarding your access to the course, or the learning management system as it deems appropriate in connection with a violation of this honor code, including removal from course without refund.

**All violations should be reported to the instructor and will be reviewed in a timely matter.**

**Student name:**

**I.D Number:**

**Student signature:**



# Steps to Success

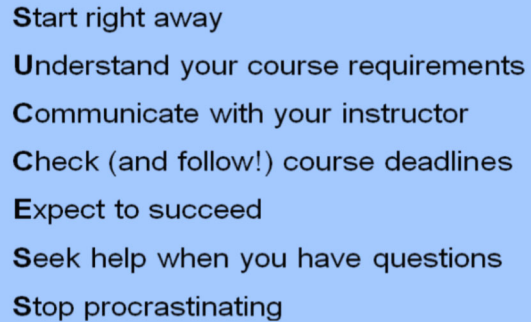
Success in a Distance Learning course depends on several important factors. When asked what it takes to be successful, students taking Distance Learning courses have identified the following steps:

## Communicate

It is very important that you communicate with your instructor and with your classmates. Log on to your course site regularly, read the postings, and contribute your own ideas and opinions.

## Don't Fall Behind

Since you do not see your instructor as often as you would in a traditional on-campus class, it can be very tempting to procrastinate. Don't fall prey to this! Log on regularly and complete your readings and assignments in a timely manner.



- Start right away
- Understand your course requirements
- Communicate with your instructor
- Check (and follow!) course deadlines
- Expect to succeed
- Seek help when you have questions
- Stop procrastinating

## Speak up if you are having problems

If you are having technical difficulties or problems understanding something in the course, you need to let your instructor know. And, if you feel comfortable doing so, post your question/concern for others to see. That way, if your classmates are having the same trouble they will benefit too.

## Be Courteous

Be polite to your classmates and respectful of their opinions. Keep in mind that meanings can be misinterpreted in an online environment, so word your postings carefully.

# Group Projects

Group projects are usually meant to be worked on over a period of time, not a matter of hours. Group work left for the "last-minute" is generally completed by one person, not the group. Here are some guidelines to prevent the unbalanced load in a group project:

- Develop a communication plan with your group as soon as possible.
- Coordinate time. Don't be unrealistic with other member's time. They may be taking an online class because the course did not fit into their on-campus schedule. This may mean they have a job or family obligations.
- Clearly define tasks each person is responsible for. Put it in writing and make sure each person in the group knows what the other person is responsible for and when the task is due.

- Encourage your fellow group members. This keeps the project collaborative rather than competitive and keeps friction out of the group.

## Discussion Board ‘Netiquette’

- Make sure to read any assigned content on the topic before you post a discussion.
- Do not use emoticons (keyboard combinations that look like faces) or acronyms unless everyone knows what they mean.
- Do not use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. This is considered yelling and is rude.
- Respect other’s opinions. If you do not agree with their post, express your opinion in a respectful manner. Use researched references to the topic if at all possible.
- Be careful when interjecting humor and never insert sarcasm. Because there is no body language involved, and the other students or instructor may not know your personality, it is easy for them to take your remarks out of context. Any comments that can be viewed as offensive, sexist, or racially motivated will not be tolerated.
- Keep the discussion postings within the scope of the course material.
- College level communication is reflected in correct spelling and grammar. If you intend to post a long comment in a discussion, you may want to prepare it in a word processing program, review it for spelling and grammar and then copy and paste it into the conversation. You can use **Ctrl + C** to copy and **Ctrl + V** to paste the message.
- Break long messages into paragraphs for easier reading.
- Remember all postings may remain on the discussions boards until the professor removes them; so take seriously what you post.

## Skills Needed for Distance Learning

Here’s a list of computer and Internet skills you should have before you enroll in an online course.

### Computer Skills

- Cut/copy and paste within and between documents.
- Use spell check.
- Attach a document to an email message.
- Paste text from your word processor into an email message.
- Print documents.
- Run two or more programs at once and move between them.
- Open and close document and directory windows.
- Find files that you create on your hard drive.

- Send and receive email.

### **Internet Skills**

- Open an attachment to a message.
- Find a web page using its address or URL.
- Follow links from one web page to another.
- Use the forward and backward buttons on the browser.
- Print a web page.
- Bookmark pages to access them later.
- Use a search engine on the Internet (e.g. Google, Bing, etc.).
- Download documents or software from the Internet.

If you feel you need to improve your skills, consider taking a course in computer and Internet skills before you enroll in an online course.

## **Accessing Blackboard**

### **Login Credentials**

The Blackboard system is for use by the students, staff, faculty, and affiliates of Lamar State College Port Arthur.

### **Blackboard Login Instructions**

1. Click on the MyLamarpa link on the Lamar State College Port Arthur website <https://www.lamarpa.eduHelp>
2. Login on to your MyLamapa with your username and password.
3. Click on “Courses”.
4. Once in the correct course, follow the given directions. Be sure to frequently (recommended daily) check your email for each course.

Call the **Helpdesk** to retrieve username and password. (409) 984-6150 or email [lisbykl@lamarpa.edu](mailto:lisbykl@lamarpa.edu) or [helpdesk@lamarpa.edu](mailto:helpdesk@lamarpa.edu)

If you need help retrieving your username and password, contact the helpdesk by calling (409) 984-6150 or emailing [lisbykl@lamarpa.edu](mailto:lisbykl@lamarpa.edu).

### **Blackboard Login Tips**

Reasons why you may not be able to log on:

- You have requested to add a class, but you are not officially enrolled in the Student Services office. You will be able to log into the Blackboard system no later than the morning after you are officially enrolled and entered into the system.
- You are entering invalid login information.
- You forgot your password or have the CAPS lock key on.

- If your class is over and your instructor has disabled the site, you will no longer see a link to the course.
- If you have been dropped from the course, you'll no longer have a link to the class
- Pop up blockers are enabled, preventing course content from being accessed.

## Minimum Technical Requirements

### Connection Speed

Online courses may require you to download/upload large files and may also include streaming audio and video both of which require faster connection speeds. To function properly, Blackboard requires a high-speed Internet connection (DSL, cable, etc.) If you use a dial-up connection, you may encounter difficulties when loading pages, especially during peak usage times. You will also find that both audio and video playback can be very choppy. Additionally, downloading or uploading assignments may take a long time.



### Internet Connection Issues

In most online classes, students are required to be online to begin and to submit a Blackboard assessment (test, quiz or survey). If the student loses an Internet connection while taking a Blackboard assessment, this can prevent the successful submission of the assessment. It is **HIGHLY** advisable to never take an assessment while using a WI-FI, wireless, etc. connection to the Internet.

### Browser Plug-ins

You will need at least three browser plug-ins to use Blackboard: Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash Player, and the Java Runtime Environment plug-in. (You may need additional plug-ins if the course you are taking includes multimedia elements.)

To download and install the current versions of Adobe Reader and Adobe Flash Player:

1. Go to <http://www.adobe.com/>.
2. Click the “Get Adobe Reader” button & install.
3. Return to <http://www.adobe.com/>.
4. Click the “Get Adobe Flash Player” button & install.
5. Go to Do I have Java to check what Java version you have installed. Click the “Verify Java version” button & install if necessary.



## Student Privacy

Lamar State College Port Arthur authenticates identity of each student who partakes in online coursework by using a secure login and pass code. All students, including Online Learning students, will be issued a unique, nine-digit student identification number during

the acceptance process at Lamar State College Port Arthur. The student ID number will become the unique identifier for all individuals throughout their academic career Lamar State College Port Arthur and will be meaningless outside of Lamar State College Port Arthur systems. The student must login to [Mylamarpa](#) with the ID number assigned to the student upon admission and a pin number issued specifically to the student through the Information Technology Department. The student must change their temporary password to a privately selected one for all future logins into the course. Students must follow the Lamar State College Port Arthur IT Policy requirements for password length, complexity, and change frequency. Students must accept responsibility for the security of their personal passwords.

The student is allowed access to the coursework only after the registration process is complete. Each time the student enters the course the ID and password must be verified. The college is continuing to seek additional and improved methods to help ensure that students participating in online courses, and taking online exams, are the same individuals enrolled in the classes as the online learning program develops. The two-tier approach ensures the confidentiality of the student and his/her coursework.

**The privacy of all students, including Online Learning students, will be protected within the Learning Management System by:**

1. Controlled registration of students and assignment of faculty to online courses.
2. Lamar State College Port Arthur issued username and password login required for course access.
3. Student information is separated from others within the Learning Management System and protected from outside intruders.
4. Faculty information is protected from student views within the Learning Management System and from outside entities.

Online Learning faculty will keep the concern for student privacy in the forefront of all activities related to Online Learning courses. Periodically Lamar State College Port Arthur will collect assessment data for research and reporting purposes, including statistical data and sometimes copies of student work. Students can be assured that all material the college uses for assessment purposes will be kept confidential. To ensure anonymity, the name will be removed from any material Lamar State College Port Arthur uses for assessment purposes, including video-recorded performances, speeches, and projects. Online Learning faculty will inform students of anticipated ways their information or work may be used by the college in their course syllabi.

**Students are notified in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected student charges associated with verification of student identity.**

## FERPA

The privacy of all students, including Online Learning students, will be protected through strict adherence to the rules of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

LSCPA complies with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA prohibits the release of educational records without student permission. As are all students at LSCPA, students taking online courses are informed of their FERPA rights when they are provided access to the College catalog via the College website.

## Release of Student Information

Federal privacy laws apply to college students. This means that college employees, including instructors, cannot divulge information to third parties, including parents and legal guardians of students. Even if the students are minors, information about their college work cannot be shared with anyone except in very limited circumstances.

Anyone requesting information about a student should be referred to the Registrar. Instructors will be notified in writing by that Office about what information may be released and to whom.

Please remember that releasing private information about a student, however innocuous it may seem, can be a violation of federal law, with very serious consequences. Circumstances under which information may be released:

An adult student may submit, to the Registrar, a handwritten, signed note granting permission for release of information. The note must specify what information may be divulged, and it must specify the name of the person to whom the information may be given.

A parent or guardian may be given access to information about a student by providing a copy of a filed tax return that shows that the student was listed as a dependent of that parent or guardian. The tax return must be for last complete tax year. Again, this documentation must be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

A parent or guardian may be given access to information about a student if the student logs on to [MyLamarpa](http://MyLamarpa) and sends an email to the Registrar granting permission. The email must specify what information may be given and the name of the person to whom it may be given.