

Support for Online Learners

BTC contracts with Presidium to provide 24/7 helpdesk services to our Blackboard users for any technical issues with the online learning system. This helpdesk is not affiliated with the IT department at BTC, nor does the IT department service Blackboard issues.

Contact the Blackboard helpdesk by phone (toll free): 866-588-8279 or visit the helpdesk website at: <http://d2.parature.com/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=8073>

If your question is related to your course or assignments, please contact your instructor directly.

Orientation Sessions

All first time, fully online students are enrolled in a Student Online Orientation course in Blackboard upon receipt of the welcome letter sent by the Manager of Online Learning. This course is a tutorial to help students become familiar with the Blackboard environment and review expectations and guidelines for online learning success.

In addition, BTC hosts on-campus orientation sessions for online students. Check the BTC website frequently for a listing of dates and times.

The Online Learning Department is also available at New Student Orientation.

Next Steps

If you have already registered for an online course, you will be receiving a welcome letter in the mail. Please wait for this letter and then review the information provided in it. Log into Blackboard as directed by the letter and be sure you can access the Student Online Orientation course. You will not see any courses that you have enrolled in until the course start date.

In addition, be sure to visit the Blackboard for Students webpage at: <http://www.blackhawk.edu/blackboard/index.html>

If you have difficulty logging in, or have further questions, contact the Manager of Online Learning at 608-743-4450 or call 608-758-6900 for more information.

Blackhawk Technical College

6004 S. County Road G
Janesville, WI 53547

Phone: 608-743-4450

Phone: 608-757-7632

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Blackhawk Technical College

Online Courses Information Guide



Online Learning FAQs

What is an online course?

An online course is one delivered through the Internet and web-based software. Students interact with the instructor and other students via email or Blackboard messaging. This class format is very flexible for busy schedules due to the fact that you can log on to the course at any time of the day (or night). Through Wisconsin's technical colleges, students can access online courses at home, work, or school via the Internet. Most online courses are offered 100% online in an asynchronous mode, anytime from anywhere with no on-campus requirement. Some online courses may be hybrid and require some on-campus sessions. A hybrid online course will have a note on the course schedule informing the student of the required on-campus sessions.

After I register for an online course, what do I do next?

You should go through either an on-campus or on-line Student Orientation to review procedures and tools used while taking an online course. Visit the following website for dates and times for on-campus sessions: http://www.blackhawk.edu/news/blackboard_orientation.html

Do classes have specific start and end dates?

All BTC courses have start and end dates. They are listed on the course registration/information page. Some classes are open in that they may not follow a traditional semester and may allow for more completion time. If you are unsure of the start and end dates, ask your instructor.

What time are online classes held?

You can access your class and participate via the Internet, any time, day or night, as long as you have an Internet connection. Students usually need to log in 2-5 times each week, unless otherwise noted by your instructor in the course syllabus. You can expect to spend 10-15 hours each week per course.

How do I "attend" an online course?

You will receive a welcome letter on or before the first day of class describing how to access your course web site.

Attendance in an Internet course is not based on "seat time" as it is in regular classroom-based courses. You will be involved in a variety of learning activities both on and off the Internet.

How do I interact with my instructor and classmates?

Online students are able to interact with their instructor and classmates in several ways:

- By Blackboard's internal messaging system: You are encouraged to use the "Messages" feature to communicate with your instructor and classmates.
- By email: Students and instructors exchange email addresses at the beginning of each course, which enables ongoing discussion outside of the online classroom.
- Using online discussion threads: Track topical discussions or respond to questions posed by your instructor.

Do online courses have tests?

Some courses have tests. Most exams are taken online; but your course syllabus will inform you if you need to take the exam on campus. Most online courses evaluate you on the quality of your assignments, projects and quizzes. The quizzes are graded automatically. The evaluation process of the course will be noted in the course syllabus.

How will I get my textbooks and other resources?

Your instructor will post textbook information in your course syllabus, which you can access on the course start date. Some instructors will send a letter or email to let you know what textbooks and other resources are needed for your class. You can also contact our Bookstore on campus at (608) 757-7672. Be sure to have the course number for the class when you call.

How much time will I spend on this course each week?

This depends on each individual and their learning style plus other factors. As a very general estimate, plan on spending a minimum of 3-4 hours per week, per credit, over 16 weeks working on your course. For example, if

you are taking a 4-credit course over 16 weeks, you will need to plan on spending 4 credits multiplied by 3-4 hours per week or 12-16 hours per week on this course. Please remember that you will not have commuting time or in-class "seat time" with an Internet class.

How will I be evaluated?

This depends on the class. In some classes, you complete projects to demonstrate your learning. In other classes, you may take tests over the Internet or on campus. In still other classes, there may be a combination of both projects and tests used to evaluate your learning.

Is there a standard format to use for writing papers and assignments?

Just as in on-campus classes, the instructor will determine the format based on the learning activities required in the course. Assignments will require that you use a word processor and attach this document to an e-mail or Blackboard message. ***ALL COURSES AT BTC REQUIRE THE USE OF A COMPUTER FOR THE COMPLETION OF COURSEWORK.***

Am I READI?

BTC has a readiness tool available to all students considering enrolling in online courses. It is highly recommended that you take this survey tool to determine your level of readiness and explore the potential barriers to your success in an online course.

To take the READI survey, go to:

<http://blackhawk.readi.info/>

Username = btcstudent

Password = learner

Your profile will be emailed to you. Be sure to provide a valid email address.