



Student Guide to Hybrid and Distance Learning

Overview of Hybrid and Distance Learning @ South College

South College serves its students and the community by offering professional and career-focused curricula that cultivate learners' ability to apply knowledge, think critically and communicate effectively. Consistent with the institution's mission of providing quality educational opportunities that prepare a diverse student body for continued personal growth and success in the workplace, South College offers a growing number of hybrid and distance learning programs and courses to students in Knoxville and the surrounding areas. South College is pleased to extend quality educational opportunities to students who are unable to attend on-campus classes, and to provide students and faculty the chance to interact in technology-driven and innovative learning environments.

Distance learning is generally described as an educational environment in which there is a physical separation between the student and the instructor. Computer-mediated communication, collaboration and assessment tools are used to disseminate course materials, promote interaction and evaluate students' learning. South College uses the Learning Management System, Moodle, to support the delivery of hybrid and distance learning programs and courses. Distance learning classes are driven by student learning outcomes and designed using sound pedagogical principles in online teaching, learning and assessment.

Hybrid and distance learning programs and courses strengthen and disseminate South College's core values of excellence, responsibility and integrity in the following ways:

- Continue to facilitate academic excellence among South College students, faculty and staff
- Extend quality educational opportunities to members of the community who are unable to attend traditional, on-campus courses
- Provide flexible learning environments for working professionals
- Integrate technology, time-management and life-long learning skills into the curriculum

Students enrolled in distance learning programs and courses are held to the same high academic standards and have similar educational experiences as students taking on-campus courses. Course lectures may appear in or written form or written form enhanced with multimedia (i.e., narrated presentations, audio clips, video components, including lectures and screen captures). In addition to lectures, course materials may include online discussion forums and chats; collaborative learning and group work; quizzes and assessments; student presentations; writing assignments; readings; web-based research and other activities as identified by the faculty member.

The purpose of this guide is to provide important information to students about participating in hybrid and distance learning courses, including answers to frequently asked questions, a list of minimum technical requirements, steps for viewing Moodle help resources, details on accessing distance learning courses, steps for uploading files into a Moodle site, and tips for being a successful learning student.

Important Definitions:

Distance Learning Course: A course in which the instructor and student are physically separated during the term and the majority of instruction (at least 90%) is delivered online using computer-mediated communication, collaboration, and assessment tools.

Hybrid Course: A course which combines on-campus instruction with online course delivery using computer-

mediated communication, collaboration, and assessment tools. In-class meetings may be enhanced with electronic supplemental content, electronic assignment submissions, course announcements, online discussions, assessments, and other multimedia-based learning activities.

Distance Learning Program: An educational program in which the majority (at least 90%) of courses are designated as distance learning courses.

Synchronous: Synchronous learning activities occur when the instructor and students are in different places participating at the **same** time. Examples: online chat and web-conferencing.

Asynchronous: Asynchronous learning activities occur when the instructors and students are in different places participating at **different** times. Examples: discussion forums, email, the journal tool in Moodle, blogs, and wikis.

Distance Learning Policy

Student Authentication

The South College Student Network is built on the Cisco Systems infrastructure providing firewall protection, VLAN technology, and secure wireless connections across the campus and remotely. All South College student resources require a secure login with the student's South College username and password managed by Microsoft Active Directory. To obtain the username and password, students must complete a session with IT staff during orientation (online or onground). A picture ID and CampusVue account with the student's complete information is required. The unique user name is assigned by the institution and a unique password is chosen by the student. The student must logon and be authenticated to gain access to the Student Portal, Library Resources, Printing, Moodle learning management sites, and South College student email. By logging into a Moodle course site and participating in any course related activities or assignments, students are attesting that they are person who is registered for the course

In addition to secure passwords, South College uses a third party identification verification system that randomly presents students in distance learning courses with a series of questions. The product validates student identity by matching a student's directory information to the third party database of publicly available and nonpublic proprietary records. These records are used to populate challenge questions, which the student must answer to validate his or her identity. South College does not provide any confidential information to the third party. The results of validation tests are sent to the Director of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning who monitors reports daily and notifies any course faculty member of students who do not pass. The faculty member then discusses the situation with the student and appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the South College Academic Honor Code.

This information will be used only to authenticate student's identity for class assignments. All of this information will be encrypted using secure connections. No student responses to authentication questions are ever be stored nor shared with any organization, firm, or institution, whether private or public.

Secure Testing

Some courses may require the use of LockDown Browser for online exams. When in use, students are unable to print, copy, go to another URL, or access other applications. When an assessment is started, students are locked into it until they submit it for grading.

Watch this [short video](#) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser.

[Click here to download and install LockDown Browser](#)

For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this [Student Quick Start Guide](#) (PDF).

Policies and Computing Code of Ethics

Students enrolled in distance learning courses are required to abide by the South College Honor Code, the Student Conduct Standards and Regulations, and the Copyright Compliance Policy.

[Universal Course Policies and Information](#) (UCPI)

[South College Computer Code of Ethics](#) (Acceptable Use Policy).

Frequently Asked Questions

How do distance learning classes work?

South College uses the Learning Management System, Moodle, to support the delivery of distance learning courses. **Course materials, including the syllabus, lecture notes, content resources, reading assignments, instructional media, discussion forums, assessments and quizzes are delivered online through the Moodle course site.**

To access Moodle, log into <http://moodle.southcollegetn.edu> using your network username and password (the one you use to access the Student Portal). You should see a list of your Moodle course sites. Click on a course title to access. It is recommended that at least three days prior to the start of the term you locate your course site, review the syllabus and read the information posted by your instructor, who will provide directions on what to do next.

Are distance learning classes easier than on-campus courses?

No. While a distance learning course provides flexibility in terms of how content materials are delivered, the quality and rigor of the course is the same as that of an on campus course. **You will be required to spend the same amount of time each week on assignments, activities and assessments as you would in a regular, on-campus course. In many ways, distance learning classes may be more challenging since you must remain on task and self-motivated throughout the term.**

Are distance learning classes self-paced?

Distance learning courses are not self-paced. While distance learning courses offer students the convenience of arranging their study times and locations around work and family needs, instructors provide specific dates for completing assignments and taking tests. In addition, some online instructors require students to participate in discussion boards at specific times. It is important to read your syllabus carefully and submit your work by the due date.

What do I need to know about Moodle?

You will use Moodle to complete asynchronous and synchronous learning activities as well as other web-based assignments and assessments. **The Student Portal contains videos that provide assistance on using Moodle. Access them in the portal underneath Student Tech Help > Moodle Info > Moodle How to Videos.**

What are the technology requirements for taking a distance learning course?

Review the Minimum System Requirements for Distance Learning Students for information about the types of technology/computer equipment you will need to have. You will need to be familiar with and able to use Microsoft Word or another word processing program that will let you save your files in a rich-text format (rtf).

Minimum Computer System Requirements for Distance Learning Students

Distance learning students will need a PC or Macintosh computer with high-speed Internet connection (cable modem / DSL) and a compatible browser. It is highly recommended that your computer is no more than three years old.

Component	Type
Processor:	1.8 GHz (or faster)
RAM:	2.0 GB (or larger)
Operating System:	Windows 7 (or higher) or Mac OSX 10.5 (or higher)
Hard Disk Space:	250 GB (or larger)
Flash Drive:	4GB USB 2.0 Flash Drive
Soundcard/Speakers:	Sound card with Internal or External Speakers or headset
Internet Connection:	High-Speed Internet Connection (Cable/DSL)
Warranty:	3 Year Limited Warranty with Next Business Day or On-Site service is suggested
Software Type	Name/Link
Production Software:	Microsoft Office 2007 (or newer) Student version includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint Note: Students have free access to MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint through Office 365 OneDrive (South College E-mail).
Antivirus:	Current Antivirus
Web Browser:	One of the following browsers are acceptable: Internet Explorer 9 or higher: download Mozilla Firefox (latest version): download Google Chrome (latest version): download Safari (latest version): download
Media:	Adobe Flash Player (latest version): download Quicktime 7.75 or higher: download
To View Panopto Files:	Silverlight 3.x or higher: download
Reader:	Acrobat Reader (free) version 7.0 or higher to read .pdf files: download
LockDown Browser:	Respondus LockDown Browser: download

Various Players and Plug-ins:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Download a free virus protection package: AVG-Download Spybot Search and Destroy. Detects and removes different kinds of spyware from your computer.-It is recommended that you have the latest version of Java installed on your computer.-Download Adobe Shockwave Player-Windows Media Player (series 9 or higher): download
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What are the attendance and participation requirements for a distance learning course?

If you are a distance learning student you should log into your course site or sites no later than the first day of the term for which you are enrolled. Review the syllabus and the weekly materials. Your instructor will post information about meeting the first week's attendance requirement as well as information regarding the course participation policy. You should be prepared to check the course site throughout the week for updates and new information.

How will I submit assignments?

Assignments can be submitted online through a variety of means, depending on your instructor's directions. You may upload Word documents or PowerPoint files into Moodle, participate in discussion forums, or submit assignments via email. Your course instructor will provide specific details on submitting assignments.

How will I interact and communicate with my professor?

Your instructor will be available through email, can be contacted through the online chat feature in your Moodle course site and may be available by phone. Check the syllabus and Moodle site for details regarding your instructor's availability and contact information. You are responsible for using your @my.southcollegetn.edu email when sending messages to your instructor. You are responsible for replying to emails from your instructor as this serves as the primary means of communication between the two of you.

How will be able to find out my grades?

Grades on assignments will be posted securely in your Moodle course site. Other students will not be able to see your grades.

How do students take tests in distance learning courses?

Quizzes and other assessments, including the final exam, are delivered through Moodle.

Students enrolled in distance learning courses are required to abide by the South College Honor Code, the Student Conduct Standards and Regulations, and the Copyright Compliance Policy.

[Universal Course Policies and Information](#) (UCPI)

[South College Computer Code of Ethics](#) (Acceptable Use Policy).

Your course may require the use of LockDown Browser for online exams. Watch this [short video](#) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser.

[Click here to download and install LockDown Browser](#)

To take an online test, start LockDown Browser and navigate to the exam. (You won't be able to access the exam with a standard web browser.) For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this [Student Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#).

Where can I get assistance if I have technical problems?

If you have issues with accessing Moodle, logging into your email account or problems with the Student Portal, please submit a ticket to the South College Help Desk at <http://helpdesk.southcollegetn.edu>.

24/7 Live Moodle support is available at: <http://southcollege.echelp.org/> or by calling 1-855-424-0274.

Logging into Moodle and Accessing a Distance Learning Course Site

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The Student Portal contains videos that provide assistance on using Moodle. Access them in the portal underneath Student Tech Help > Moodle Info > Moodle How to Videos.

If you have problems logging into the Student Portal, submit a ticket to the South College Help Desk: <http://helpdesk.southcollegetn.edu>.

Tips for Success in Hybrid and Distance Learning Courses @ South College

- **Review the syllabus, course calendar and Moodle site carefully.**
The course syllabus is an important document that provides structure and outlines course requirements. It should contain a course calendar with due dates of major assignments and exams. Read the syllabus carefully in order to understand what's expected of you throughout the term. Navigate through the Moodle course site, identifying important information and resources. Review the calendar, noting the due dates of major assignments and projects. Compare this with your own work and personal obligations during the same time period and plan accordingly.
- **Utilize the support resources and help files to learn more about Moodle.**
Moodle is the primary tool used to deliver distance learning course materials. The Student Portal contains videos that provide assistance on using Moodle. Access them in the portal underneath Student Tech Help > Moodle Info > Moodle How to Videos.
- **Use the South College Help Desk.**
If you have issues with Moodle, trouble accessing the Student Portal or problems with your South College email, submit a ticket to the Help Desk at <http://helpdesk.southcollegetn.edu>.
- **Contact your instructor as soon as possible if you have questions about the class.**
Even though you do not see your professor face to face each week, he or she is available for guidance and explanation regarding course content and activities. The major difference is you will be communicating with your distance learning instructor through email, in an online chat, or possibly, over the telephone. If you have questions concerning assignments or submission requirements, contact your instructor as soon as the issue arises.
- **Use your South College email account when sending messages.**
It's your responsibility to use your South College email address when contacting your instructor and classmates. Your instructor may not respond to emails that come from other accounts.
- **Manage your time wisely.**
It's essential that you stay on task throughout each week and **meet assigned course deadlines**. Although, the majority of learning activities will be delivered asynchronously, you should submit assignments by the due and keep up with the weekly readings. **Do not procrastinate**. Schedule time each week to study and work on course assignments; you **MUST** be willing to make the necessary time commitment each week if you want to be successful. If you fall behind in your coursework, it will be difficult to catch up, especially if you are enrolled in a Mid-quarter distance learning class.
- **Sharpen your study skills and information literacy skills.**
If you have had or are having difficulties staying on task, studying for exams, or completing web-based research or other activities, take advantage of the numerous resources available online. Google the terms study skills, time management, information literacy, or associated terms for more information.
- **Recognize the need for self-motivation and self-discipline.**
A component of being a successful online student is the need for self-motivation and self-discipline. You are largely responsible for your own schedule in terms of studying for exams, working on course assignments, and participating in discussion forums. Students who cannot stay motivated and on task will have difficulty in a distance learning course.
- **Participate in online office hours.**
The chat feature in Moodle allows you to have a real-time discussion with your instructor. He or she will be available at least one hour a week to chat online. Details about online office hours are posted in the course site. If you have questions regarding assignments or class requirements, online office hours provide a great opportunity for you to discuss the issues with your instructor and receive clarification. If you cannot meet during the posted hours, contact your instructor to schedule a chat session.