



Fletcher

TECHNICAL COMMUNITY

C O L L E G E

Student Handbook
for
Online Learning

Effective Fall 2011

Welcome

Fletcher Technical Community College offers several online courses designed to conveniently assist students in earning credits or completing degrees. The Student Handbook for Online Courses has been created to provide students of online courses — new and experienced — with a ready-reference manual to policies and procedures regarding online instruction. This handbook does not replace the *Catalog and Handbook* which is intended for all students; rather, it provides information specific to or especially important to online instruction.

We offer a variety of online general education courses which are designed to transfer to four-year universities. Our current online course listing is available in the Registration Bulletin.

Students enrolled in online courses are entitled to all of the support services available to traditional students. Many of these services are provided online.

WHAT IS DISTANCE LEARNING?

Distance learning courses are designed for students who desire flexibility and convenience in their studies. Courses offered online are equivalent to courses offered in a traditional classroom setting. Fletcher's online courses are not self-paced courses.

Fletcher uses Canvas (Moodle) as its primary online course management system to offer courses via distance learning. To login, follow the instructions on the home page, <http://fletcher.instructure.com>.

If you experience difficulty with logging into the course management system, you should contact michelle.votaw@fletcher.edu. If you are able to log into the course management system but are experiencing other problems, you should contact your instructor first.

Fletcher offers three types of online courses:

- ✦ **Web Hybrid.** Hybrid courses are taught partially in the classroom and partially online. Students complete a portion of the course online using the course management system and then meet on campus on designated days. These days are designated in the Registration Bulletin.
- ✦ **Online.** Online course are taught completely online. However, some courses may require the student to attend campus in order to take a proctored examination.

IS DISTANCE LEARNING FOR YOU?

Distance learning offers unique challenges and is not for everyone. There are several things to consider before enrolling in an online course.

1. *Are you able to achieve success in a non-structured learning environment? Are you capable of reading for comprehension?*

Because not all online classrooms are presented in the same manner, instructors may or may not have lectures available. Many online courses require extensive reading and the ability to comprehend the material. Of course, your instructor is always available to answer questions you may have regarding the material.

Consider your learning style. If you learn best by listening to lectures and class discussions, online courses may present a challenge for you.

2. *Are you self-motivated and capable of self-discipline?*

Online courses require a considerable amount of time. When evaluating your online course options, consider how much time you have to dedicate to coursework every week during the semester and then estimate the time commitment the course will require.

3. *Do you have access to a computer with an Internet connection? Do you have the computer skills necessary in order to comfortably navigate through an online classroom?*

In order to be successful in an online course, you must be computer literate and have experience in computer communication. This means more than simply navigating the Internet – you should have good word processing skills, be able to upload, download, and save files, and send and receive email.

In addition to the computer skills necessary for online courses, there are minimum technology (hardware and software) requirements as well.

Minimum Requirements

Hardware

- ✦ IBM compatible PC with Pentium II 500 MHz and above, with operating system higher than Windows 98 **or** MAC Power PC, G3 233 MHz machines or better, with OS 9 or higher
- ✦ Sound card with speakers or headphones

Internet and Browsers

- ✦ dependable high-speed connection (cable or DSL)
- ✦ Firefox 3 or later or Microsoft Internet Explorer 7 or later.

Note: JavaScript and Cookies must be enabled on your browser. Pop-ups must be allowed for the following sites:

- ✦ fletcher.edu
- ✦ fletcher.instructure.com

Software Requirements

- ✦ Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or another word processing program capable of saving files in RTF (Rich Text Format). Check with your instructor on course software requirements before downloading any programs.
- ✦ Your course may require special (free) plug-ins to access streaming media, PDF files, or other web components. If this is the case, you will learn more about these special requirements from the instructor.

- ✦ Students may also have to purchase a lab code for some courses to access additional course material (i.e. SNAP, My Math Lab, etc.)
- ✦ Antivirus software is highly recommended.

APPLYING FOR ONLINE COURSES

Admissions information is provided on the Fletcher website at www.fletcher.edu. For your convenience, your application can be submitted online. The application fee and all required documentation can be mailed to the attention of Admissions, 1407 Hwy 311, Schriever, LA 70395. For a complete list of required documentation, please visit www.fletcher.edu/admissions.

ORIENTATION

Orientation is mandatory for all students. If you are unable to attend orientation, please contact the admissions office at (985) 448-7907.

PLACEMENT

Applicants can be admitted with transcripts from a regionally accredited institution or placement test scores. If a student is transferring from a regionally accrediting institution, official college transcripts must be sent directly from the institution.

Applicants who have no prior college experience can be placed in the appropriate classes based on Compass or ACT test scores. Distance education students who are unable to test at Fletcher can test at any ACT or Compass testing center or contact Fletcher's testing coordinator to register to take the Compass test at a remote testing site.

ADVISING & REGISTRATION

Distance education students residing 50+ miles or with physical disabilities that makes them unable to attend face-to-face registration can contact the Office of Counseling and Advising at (985) 448-7912 or angie.pellegrin@fletcher. An advisor will contact the applicant to complete the registration process for online courses.

TUITION AND FEES FOR ONLINE COURSES

Tuition for online courses can be found on Fletcher's website in the current semester bulletin. Most online courses are three credit hours. Tuition for online courses is not capped at 12-credit hours. Web hybrid courses have the same tuition and fee schedule as face-to-face courses. Any changes in the fee schedules posted in the bulletin are documented online using the [Schedule of Tuition and Fees link](#) on Fletcher's website and are available in the Business Office and Student Services.

FINANCIAL AID

The Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) is available online. Any required documentation can be submitted personally or by mail, fax, or email to the Office of Financial Aid. Financial aid is awarded to eligible applicants after documentation has been

received and processed. Financial aid for all students attending Fletcher is managed online using Fletcher's Student Information System (SIS).

Fletcher's school code, 013580, must be entered on the FAFSA in order for Fletcher to process the financial aid. Once the FAFSA has been received and processed by the Department of Education, Fletcher will receive the FAFSA and will communicate via email with the applicant.

Fletcher partnered with Higher One, a financial services company, to provide an electronic method of refund disbursement. Students have the option of having financial aid disbursements and/or refunds issued on the LCTCS Debit Card or electronic transfer (ACH) to an existing bank account.

PAYMENT

Students are able to make payments online through eCashier. Students can choose to pay a balance in full or enroll on the online payment plan for a nominal fee.

EMAIL

Electronic mail (email) is an official method of communication between the College and students. Email accounts are issued after initial registration. Students should check email daily. The student email account can be accessed from the Fletcher website.

Login information can be found on Fletcher's website.

If you experience difficulty with accessing your student email account, you should contact it@fletcher.edu.

UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

Students should register with Fletcher's Emergency Notification system, SmartNotice, (<http://www.fletcher.edu/smartnotice-instructions/>) to be notified of any unforeseen circumstances due to weather, emergency situations, etc.

ACADEMIC & COUNSELING SERVICES

Career counseling services are available to all Fletcher students. Appointments are conducted via telephone by qualified faculty or staff.

Personal counseling is available to all students by a licensed counselor. Appointments are confidential and can be conducted via telephone.

The Director of Counseling and Advising can be contacted at (985) 448-7943.

TUTORING

Fletcher offers tutoring services at the main campus free-of-charge to assist students in achieving their academic goals. Adobe Connect® and Fletcher's course management

system are used to conduct live online class sessions for our online courses. For those students who are unable to attend the main campus, Fletcher provides a list of alternative learning resource sites. Fletcher does not represent, recommend, sponsor, endorse or have any interest, financial or non-financial, in or is otherwise associated with any of the alternative sites listed. The list of the sites is provided strictly as a courtesy to the student as an alternative to Fletcher's academic resources. Use of any of the sites is completely voluntary and up to the student's discretion.

Tutoring Provider*	Website
tutor.com	www.tutor.com
Smarthinking	www.smarthinking.com
TutorVista	http://www.tutorvista.com/
EduWizards	www.eduwizards.com
classof1	www.classof1.com
eduFire	http://edufire.com

LIBRARY SERVICES

Information on library services and password accounts is disseminated to all students via the Fletcher student email system at the beginning of each semester. The brochures include password and URL details. Librarians will create EBSCOhost e-book accounts via phone or email request for students or faculty.

Students can create a password account through the library databases which allows the students to subscribe to journals free of charge via their email. Students can also create WebPages of search results, set up RSS feeds and save articles to folders for a year with their password accounts.

Distance Learning students can also access the Coastal Commerce Bank Library electronic resources through smart phones and personal mobile devices. An information brochure on mobile access is sent each semester to all faculty, staff, and students through the email accounts. The Coastal Commerce Bank Library website has a link to mobile access information.

The Coastal Commerce Bank Library subscribes to individual databases in addition to the LOUIS databases. Passwords for remote access to these databases are set by the database vendor. Information on remote access is available on the library website. Students may call or email the library for additional information.

The library provides access to electronic books, videos, and tutorials. It provides access to over 40,000 online books through EBSCOhost e-books. The books are linked on the library website. The books are available 24/7 with a password account. The password must be created on a campus computer within the Fletcher IP range.

Distance Learning students can view the availability of books and other materials at Fletcher through the online card catalog, e-library, which is linked through the library

website as materials become available. Distance Learning students may borrow print materials from the library through interlibrary loan at their local public library.

If students require articles that the Coastal Commerce Bank Library does not own, they may request them through interlibrary loan. The request may be made through email or phone. When the material requested is received at the library, it will be mailed to the student if he/she lives outside the service area. Materials must be returned in mailer envelopes.

The library participates in the State Library program for recorded books. A Coastal Commerce Bank Library representative can register a DE student with this program and the student can then receive recorded books.

Contact information for the Coastal Commerce Bank Library is available through the Fletcher website and the Coastal Commerce Bank Library website; it is included on the library information brochures. The library maintains a Facebook and Twitter account to provide further information and communication with students, faculty and staff.

ACCESSIBILITY

Fletcher is committed to providing all students equal access to our courses and programs. In accordance with the American Disabilities Act, distance education courses, materials, and resources must be accessible to students with disabilities. Contact Angie Pellegrin at (985) 448-7943 or angela.pellegrin@fletcher.edu for more information.

PROCTORED EXAMINATIONS

If an instructor requires an in-person exam, a student who resides 50+ miles from the main campus can opt to have an exam proctored. The student must secure a suitable proctor and incur any fees associated with the use of a proctor.

In order for a student to have an examination proctored by an individual other than an employee of Fletcher, an approved proctor must be secured. To be considered for approval, the Proctor Information Form must be completed and submitted for approval at the start of the semester. Examples of acceptable proctors are individuals employed at the nearest regionally accredited college or university, education office, or military base (military personnel).

At least two days prior to the exam, the student must schedule an exam appointment with the proctor. The instructor should verify the appointment time and date with the proctor. At the time of the appointment, the student will be required to present a state-issued ID or driver's license. At the scheduled time, the exam should be made available to the student via the course's learning management system. If the exam is a print exam, the arrangements should be made with the proctor to administer and return the exam.

Frequently Asked Questions

Continuing Students: Your Support Team

You should contact your instructor when

- ✎ You have questions or need clarification regarding your assignments and/or course content.
- ✎ You have questions regarding your grades or plagiarism.
- ✎ You would like to verify your instructor's policy for submitting an assignment after the assigned date.

You should contact your academic advisor when

- ✎ You have questions regarding your schedule or your degree progress.
- ✎ You would like to make changes to your course schedule.
- ✎ You would like to make any changes to your current major.

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If you experience difficulty with accessing your student email account, you should contact it@fletcher.edu.