

STUDENT GUIDE TO VIRTUAL LEARNING



When Lewis and Clark Community College experiences unexpected challenges that require face-to-face classes to be held remotely, your instructors and L&C staff will be working diligently to ensure your transition to alternate modes of instruction is as smooth as possible.

This page is a quick reference guide to help you get started in your virtual courses, which will likely take place in Blackboard (Bb), the college's Learning Management System (LMS), or an alternate LMS. Your instructors will also likely contact you via your L&C email and may use Blackboard, Google apps, video conferencing via Zoom or Collaborate, and other tools to help you stay connected while you learn.

Visit [L&C's Coronavirus Response](#) for regular updates related to Covid-19.

HOW DO I COMMUNICATE WITH MY INSTRUCTOR?

The primary way to communicate with your instructor is through email. Using your L&C email to communicate directly with your instructors and peers is recommended, and this email should be checked on a daily basis for any important information or updates.

- **L&C email:** L&C email is the place to go for information from your instructors, and for important campus updates.
- **Bb email:** The email tool within Blackboard can be used to communicate with your instructors and peers. Email sent through Blackboard goes directly to the recipient's L&C email address.
- **Bb messages:** If your Blackboard course uses the Messages tool, use this method to contact your instructor. The messages tool in Blackboard is course-contained, meaning the messages and responses are found in your course in Blackboard.
- **Personal email:** The use of personal emails is discouraged. Some LMS allow students to designate a personal email address for communication. If your course uses such a system, you should use your L&C email address and remember to check it daily.

HOW DO I ACCESS MY COURSE?

For courses using Blackboard, you can access your course by going to blackboard.lc.edu. Once there, log in with your Blazernet username and password. Discussions, quizzes, and assignment submission may be added by your instructor for courses being presented virtually. Make sure to check your courses, your email and announcements daily for updates. For courses using another LMS, follow the directions provided by your instructor to access your course.

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

There are several places you can go to receive help with using Blackboard and/or other technologies.

- **Bb student help:** This is a page created by Blackboard specifically for students who use the software.



- **L&C Bb Student Help Tab:** This is a page that can be accessed by clicking on the Help > Student Help that is at the top right corner of the Bb log-in page.
- **Bb Office Hours:** If you want synchronous live help, click on this link to work with a Blackboard support team member.
- **Student Resources for Online Learning:** All students have access to the Blackboard Student Resources Organization found in the My Organizations module in Blackboard. This contains many “how-to” documents, help files, and common student links.
- **Bb Support: Email or call the Blackboard Support team:** bb-support@lc.edu or (618) 468-2610.
- **LC Helpdesk:** Contact the L&C helpdesk through email or by phone – helpdesk@lc.edu or (618) 468-4357.



WILL I HAVE CLASS AT MY SCHEDULED TIME?

Virtual classes will require live, synchronous classes at your scheduled class time. If you are asked to meet via video conferencing, Zoom, Collaborate or Google Meet may be used. If you don't have a desktop or laptop computer, you can also use the browser or the corresponding app on a mobile device to join virtual class meetings.

- **Zoom Meetings:** Your instructor may host virtual classes using Zoom, an external video conferencing tool. To use Zoom, you must [download the client](#) to your computer or install the app on your mobile device.
- **Collaborate Meetings:** Your instructor may host virtual classes using Collaborate, a video conferencing tool within Blackboard. If you use a mobile device, be sure to access the Collaborate session through the browser on your device, not the Bb app.
- **Google Meet:** Your instructor may host virtual classes using Google Meet, an external video conferencing tool, possibly in conjunction with Google Classroom

Your instructor may also post videos, slides, texts, and other content for you to engage with independently in the selected LMS. Check your course outline or course calendar and LMS for due dates.

- **LMS content:** Use the course LMS Course Menu to access course materials, complete required activities, and monitor your completion progress.
- **External Content:** Your instructors may upload recorded lectures for you to watch at home, as well as other resources to help with the learning process. You can typically access these through your instructors' course shells, or through a link they share with you. Storage sites such as Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive and YouTube may be used for these files.

HOW DO I TURN IN HOMEWORK?

Your instructor has likely created a way for you to submit homework electronically, either through the course Learning Management System or your L&C email. Check your syllabus, and ask questions of your instructor and peers to get clarification if you're unsure when something is due or how to submit it.

WHAT IF I NEED TO CREATE A VIDEO?

Students can create videos using their mobile device and store files in a freely available storage app such as Dropbox or Google Drive. For recording computer screens, a number of free programs are available such as OBS (Open Broadcaster Software) that will allow students to record their screen and save files locally or in the cloud. Links can then be provided to the instructor.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER OR INTERNET ACCESS?

If you don't have a desktop or laptop computer, you can also use the browser or the corresponding app on a mobile device to access your classes.

- **Library Computer Labs:** The computer labs will be open and available for attending virtual lectures and accessing coursework if you don't have a computer or mobile device available. However, space will be limited.
- **Computer Loans:** If you need to borrow a computer or webcam for course purposes, contact Student Development and Counseling at (618) 468-4120 or jlorbach@lc.edu.
- **L&C hotspots:** The college has WiFi hotspots available on the Godfrey and N.O. Nelson (Edwardsville) campuses. Reid Memorial Library, located on the Godfrey Campus, also has a computer lab with WiFi access during regular hours.

WHAT STRATEGIES SHOULD I USE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN MY ONLINE OR VIRTUAL COURSES?

If you have never taken a course online or virtually before, you will likely need to give yourself time to explore all of the components of your virtual classrooms. Following these tips will help you along the way:

- **Time:** Give yourself more time than you think you need to complete assignments. Online and virtual classes can require more time than face-to-face, so do not be surprised if you find yourself taking extra time to finish your work. This is in addition to any scheduled meeting times for virtual classes.
- **Space:** Create a personal space at home where you can 'attend' class every week. Select a place where you feel comfortable and focused. Perhaps you need music in the background when you study, or maybe you need complete silence. Consider what setting works best for you so you can be fully engaged in your coursework.
- **Calendar:** Keep a calendar where you keep track of all the assignments for your courses and stick to it. Organization is critical to being a successful online or virtual student. Be sure to set aside sufficient time each week to allow for the successful completion of your assignments. Avoid filling your calendar with other obligations and then 'fitting in' homework where you can.
- **Questions:** Ask questions a lot. In face-to-face classes, the ability to ask questions in the moment and get immediate feedback from instructors and peers is an important part of the learning process. However, in an online or virtual course, you should expect some lag time, so set aside time to look through each week's assignments and ask your instructor questions via email or in a Bb Q&A discussion board if they have set one up. Communication is key! Seeking help when needed is just as important to your success as being organized – if not more so.
- **Interaction:** Many virtual courses will require you to interact with your peers and instructors through video, discussions, or collaborative documents. Treat your classmates with the same courtesy and respect that you would like yourself. Try to find creative ways to help support and encourage each other.
- **Help:** Do not wait until the last minute to reach out for help if you feel stuck or frustrated. The longer you wait to ask for help, the more time is wasted on confusion and frustration. If you have made a concerted effort and are still confused, reach out to your instructor, or even email a classmate for help. If you are still confused, try contacting one of these campus resources for support:
 - [Student Success Center](#) for help with math, sciences, world languages, study skills and other subjects.
 - [Writing Desk](#) for support with your writing assignments.
 - [Disability Services](#) for help getting accommodations for a disability.
 - [Veteran Services](#) for those who have previously served in the military.
 - [8 Ways to Be Organized as an Online Student](#)
 - [Stay Healthy and Happy as an Online Student](#)
 - [The SQ3R Method of Study](#)