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## INTRODUCTION

Online classes are designed to be convenient, flexible and as intellectually challenging and academically rigorous as traditional on-campus classes. Online classes allow you to achieve your academic goals by participating in a class virtually “anywhere, any time, and any place.”

If you have never taken an online class before, you should know that learning online can be challenging. It requires specific skills and presents a unique set of challenges to both students and teachers. You will want to review this entire document and check out the [CR-Online](#) website before you start your online adventure.

Here are some issues that you should be aware of before attempting an online class.

- You will typically do more reading and writing than you would in a traditional class room. Strong reading and writing skills are required for most Internet classes.
- Patience, determination, hard work and staying current on your assignments will get you through the class.
- You must access your class on a regular schedule. This is not a self-paced program, due dates and deadlines must be met.
- Another very important thing to understand is you won't get immediate responses to your questions. Instructors will get back to you as soon as they can, but other students in the class may answer your question faster. Get to know other students in the class and plan for technological delays in an online course.
- Courtesy is very important! Instructors have the right to remove you from a chat room or discussion board and contact your school administration if you are discourteous, use inappropriate language or are disruptive in the class.
- The more you understand how the class works the easier it will be for you to maneuver through the class. Get to know Canvas and your instructor's site. Read through the teacher syllabus, the schedule, messages, and the [Online Class Orientation Letter](#). Read and read thoroughly.

If you have experience with online classes you can skip ahead to the [Online Class Checklist](#)

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

### Successful online students are:

- Self- motivated and work well independently
- Seldom procrastinate and are able to stay on task
- Follow the instructor's written directions well
- Have strong reading and writing skills
- Are good communicators and will contact the instructor when questions or confusion arise

### Student Commitment:

Your commitment will require at least as much time as you dedicate to a traditional class. A typical three credit hour class will require about nine hours per week of your time. You will need to carefully read online lectures and textbook chapters, participate in online activities and watch online videos, participate in online discussions, and complete weekly quizzes. Conscientiousness, attention to details, and skills in reading and writing are critical for success.

### Computer Requirements:

Most computers and internet providers are adequate. You should have high-speed internet service (such as broadband) from cable, DSL, or satellite providers as there are required multimedia assignments. You need to have reliable access to the Internet at least 3-4 times a week for 16 weeks. Anticipate problems, do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments. It is your responsibility to meet the class deadlines. **Portable Devices vs. Computers:** Although you can use



late-model portable devices (such as Android or iOS phones and tablets) for some things, you should plan on doing the majority of your work (especially exams and assignments) from a reasonably late-model notebook or desktop computer (Mac or PC). Do NOT plan to participate in online classes solely from a portable device. Use the free Canvas app (called “Canvas by Instructure”) available in iTunes (for iOS) and the Google Play Store (for Android) for the best experience.

## Computer Skills:

Online classes require adequate computer skills. You should be able to navigate the class websites, open and download files, use a word processor with either Microsoft Word (.docx) or be able to convert files to rich text format (.rtf) or portable document format (.pdf), and submit files to the class website. It is your responsibility to meet the technological demands of the class.

## GETTING STARTED - SEMESTER CHECKLIST

Each semester you are responsible for completing the items below to ensure your success in an online class. If this is your first time taking an online class, please read the rest of this document before getting started.

- ✓ **Read the Online Class Orientation Letter**
  - Access the [CR-Online](#) website and select Class Orientation.
- ✓ **Login to WebAdvisor and Check Your Registration**
  - Don't know your WebAdvisor ID? [Check here](#)
  - You can [search for classes](#) without a login.
- ✓ **Login to Your Academic Email Account**
  - Check here for information about your [Academic Email Account](#).
  - It is important to check your email regularly. All Canvas, CR Admissions and Financial Aid notifications will be coming to your academic email account.
- ✓ **Login to Canvas**
  - Login information for Canvas can be found on the [CR Canvas Help Site](#).
  - You should get to know Canvas well if you intend to take an online class.
- ✓ **Purchase Textbooks**
  - Online Classes use books just like regular classes. Access your class and look at the syllabus to check for required texts and materials then visit the [bookstore](#).
- ✓ **Access Your Class and Establish Your Attendance**
  - Immediately after the start of the semester, be sure to confirm your presence in the online classroom by following the instructions provided by your instructor.
  - You can and will be dropped as a “no show” from the class if you do not log in and follow the instructions for confirming your presence in the class. See your [Online Class Orientation Letter](#) for details.
- ✓ **Canvas Orientation**
  - Even before your class starts you can find out how Canvas works. Look over the Canvas Student Orientation located on the [CR Canvas help site](#).
  - Once you've logged in to Canvas, click on your class, read through the syllabus, the schedule, the messages, the teacher introduction and other informational requirements that may be listed.
  - If you want more assistance with Canvas, CR offers online training classes. See [CR-Online](#) for more details.



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ONLINE STUDENT

You can expect to spend 5-10 hours a week on one online class. Think that sounds like a lot? Remember, you don't actually have to sit through a class lecture, you simply log in and go right to work.

As an online student, you must take time to work on your classes daily, keep in touch with the instructor, and let them know if you are struggling to complete your work. Do not fall behind! Follow the "To Do" list and reminders in Canvas and check the grade book often! It is your responsibility to meet the deadlines.

### **These are some things you should do every day:**

- Log in to the Canvas website.
- Check for new announcements.
- Access your class and check the "To-Do" lists.
- Check your email messages.
- Spend time working through your assignments.
- Read all instructions and ask questions of your instructor.

### **Once a week, you should do the following:**

- Look at your schedule for the upcoming week.
- Check the online grade book. Does your grade look right?
- Make sure you've submitted all your work for that week.
- Do you have projects or exams coming up?
- Save all of your homework in a recognizable file for backup.

## HOW TO BE A SUCCESSFUL ONLINE LEARNER

As an online student, you will interact with people using chat, video conferencing, email, social media and more. Online classes are not easier, nor do they take less time, than traditional classes. Being a successful online student requires independence, discipline, self-motivation and a few basic technical skills. Ensure you're prepared with these tips:

- Have access to a computer with a fast, reliable internet connection. Expect glitches and plan for delays by starting assignments early.
- Know how to perform basic computer functions (saving and attaching files, creating folders) and navigate the Internet (using search engines, entering passwords).
- Be able to communicate effectively and clearly using email or online discussion boards. Nearly all communication is written, so it is critical you are comfortable expressing yourself in writing.
- Have a study area that is free from distractions.
- Be comfortable being online several times a week to participate in your class.
- Carefully read all written material on your Canvas site: syllabus, assignment due dates, instructions, discussion and contact information.
- Be proactive in asking appropriate questions when assignments, concepts or homework solutions are unclear.



## TIME MANAGEMENT, PLANNING AND GOOD STUDY HABITS

Time management may be one of the most important skills for online students to master. Commit to an online study schedule as if you are attending an on-campus class. Plan to study at least two hours a week per credit and commit to those hours at the same time each week.

Be disciplined in setting and maintaining a schedule to complete your work and provide timely responses to the instructor and other students. Choose a time when you can avoid distractions (checking personal email, perusing social media, television, family, social activities). Video: [Organizing for Online Success](#) (about 12 min.)

- Set aside specific times each day for studying.
- Communicate with your classmates and instructor regularly.
- Make note of due dates for assignments and exams in your Canvas calendar.
- Check the Canvas "To Do" list of items you will have to complete each week.
- Create a study environment that helps you excel. A quiet workplace without interruption from roommates or family is necessary for success in an online class.
- Check the grade book regularly. If an assignment has not been graded, check with your instructor; make sure the assignment was received. Look for feedback on graded work.

## BASIC TECHNICAL SKILLS

You don't have to be a computer wizard to succeed in online classes, but we do recommend keeping a few technical issues in mind: Video: [Getting Tech Ready](#) (about 12 min.)

You may need to brush up on some basic technical skills before taking an online class. If you do not have a lot of experience using computers for academic work, such as creating documents and presentations, email communication and uploading attachments, it is recommended that you take a computer course before attempting an online course. You should have access to a computer with a fast, reliable Internet connection and adequate up-to-date software (Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat, Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer). Some classes have special requirements, so be sure to read about your specific class here: [Online Class Orientation Letter](#)

Create a folder on your computer or flash drive to save copies of all your work. Having a backup of your work may save you from a disaster.

Our preferred browsers are [Firefox](#) and [Chrome](#). Please view [Canvas Technical Requirements](#) for more information.

## PERSISTENCE AND MOTIVATION

Persistence and motivation are critical to meeting both the academic and technical challenges of being an online student. When you run into a challenge, don't give up, ask for help. Remember what your goal is and stay focused. Effective time management will help you avoid stressful challenges. Video: [Personal Support](#)

Communicate and collaborate with your family and employer. Completing a degree online is a significant time commitment, and you will need their support and understanding. See: [First-Time Online Adult Students](#).

## NETIQUETTE (ONLINE COMMUNICATION SKILLS)

Communicating online is different than communicating face-to-face because many of the social cues are absent. Communicate with your classmates, as this will help you feel connected to the class, even in an online setting. Online interaction will help increase your motivation and retention and your classmates can offer additional perspectives and suggestions that you may have not otherwise considered. Video (12 min.): [Communication Skills for Online Learning](#)  
Use extra caution in the way you word things online and be polite and respectful to your classmates and instructor. This is important for avoiding misunderstandings and creating a positive and supportive learning environment.



## GETTING HELP

Acknowledging when you need help is important for success. Don't hesitate to contact your instructor if assignments seem unclear or you are having difficulty understanding something. Ask questions, don't be shy, get to know your classmates, they can be one of your best resources for help.

Contact your counselor to discuss any challenges that are having a negative impact on your work. Look into the campus resources and assistance programs that are available. Reach out when you need someone to talk to, feel frustrated, or need help understanding class concepts. If you need help with Enrollment Services call (707) 476-4200.

Contact [Technical Support Services](#) if you are having trouble logging in or accessing Canvas, Email or WebAdvisor.

## CR-ONLINE SYSTEMS AND TOOLS

### Online services available to CR students

There are three main systems used here at College of the Redwoods:

- Web-Advisor is the online registration system used for registration and class schedules.
- Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) used here at CR. Instructors can use Canvas to provide syllabus, calendar, grade and assignment information online.
- Your student email account is provided by Google Services. All CR communications, including academic deadlines, financial aid information, application status, Canvas notifications, and password reset responses will be sent to your student email.

### How to access CR online services

The best way to access CR systems is to open the main CR Web page at: <http://www.redwoods.edu>, look in the upper left hand corner and select the system you want to access. Note that there is help information available for each system on the [CR-Online Technical Support](#) page.

### Log in, user name and password

You have a separate user name for each of the three main online services here at CR.

Your Web-Advisor user name is in the following format - first initial of your first name + your last name + last three digits of you Student ID number. For example, Bugs Bunny with a Student ID number of 0123456 will have a User ID of bbunny456. Click here for [Web-Advisor Login Help!](#) If you can't find your Student ID number, contact Enrollment Services at (707) 476-4200.

- Your Canvas user name is the same as your Web-Advisor user name; however, it has a separate password (6-digit birthdate). Click Here for [Canvas Login Help!](#)
- When logging into your student email account, enter your entire student email address as your username. Your email address is your Web-Advisor user ID + "@mycr.redwoods.edu". Click here for [Student Email Help!](#)

The default passwords for your accounts are:

- The default password for Web-Advisor is your 6-digit birthdate, in "mmddy" format.
- The default password for Canvas is your 6-digit birthdate, in "mmddy" format.
- The default password for your student email is your 8- digit birthdate (mmddYYYY).

After you log in, you can change the default password, but you will need to do that for each system separately. Using the same password for all three accounts can help you remember it.



## ONLINE LEARNING WITH CANVAS

Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) used here at CR to help instructors deliver learning materials to both online and face-to-face classes. It has a calendar, schedule, gradebook, discussions and other tools to help you stay organized and keep up with your classes. If you are new to Canvas, please take the time to watch this five minute video [Introducing Canvas](#). For more information about Canvas, see below or visit the [Student Canvas Resources](#) page.

### Canvas Class Startup Checklist

- ✓ Review the Introduction video and guides
- ✓ Login to Canvas
- ✓ Check for announcements in the dashboard
- ✓ Check the calendar
- ✓ Set up your profile
- ✓ Access your courses
- ✓ View the syllabus for each class
- ✓ Confirm your presence in the class by following the instructions provided by your instructor.

Here are some links to help you with Canvas:

### Get Started with Canvas

- [How do I log in to Canvas?](#)
- [What is the User Dashboard?](#)
- [How do I view my courses?](#)
- [How do I use the Course Dashboard as a student?](#)
- [What are Course Navigation indicators?](#)
- [Why can't I access my Course?](#)
- [Will Canvas work on my mobile device?](#)
- [How do I get help with Canvas?](#)

### Customize Canvas

- [What are my Profile and User Settings?](#)
- [How do I set my Notification Preferences?](#)
- [How do I connect to web services outside of Canvas?](#)
- [How do I customize my Courses menu?](#)

### Participate in a Course

- [How do I submit an online assignment?](#)
- [How do I submit a Turnitin assignment?](#)
- [How do I view my Grades?](#)
- [How do I view the Calendar?](#)
- [What is Conversations?](#)
- [How do I reply to a Discussion?](#)

You can also find these lessons and more by [searching the Canvas Guides](#). There are a lot of Canvas resources available on the internet, just search for "Instructure Canvas" and you will find that instructors and students all over the world are using Canvas and talking about how it works. For more information about online classes, see: [CR-Online](#)



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Why is my Canvas login not working?**

There are a number of things that can prevent you from logging into Canvas. Before contacting Technical Support, please check the following:

- Has it been at least 24 hours since your registration was processed? There will be a delay between when you register at CR and when you will have access to Canvas and Canvas classes.
- Are you logging into the correct Canvas site? <https://redwoods.instructure.com> .
- Are you correctly typing in your Web-Advisor ID as the Canvas user name?
- Are you using your 6-digit birthdate (mmddyy) as your password? (This is separate from your Web-Advisor password.) See [Canvas Login help!](#) for details.

If you are still unable to log in, contact Technical Support at [its@redwoods.edu](mailto:its@redwoods.edu) or by calling either (707) 476-4160 or (800) 641-0400, Ext. 4160, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### **How do I get help with my Canvas class?**

You should contact your instructor to get help with questions about your Canvas class. Log in to Canvas and click the help button in the upper right corner and you will be prompted to ask your instructor a question.

### **Where can I find more information about Canvas?**

Here is a [Canvas Resources Page!](#) that does not require a Canvas login and contains videos and links to the main Canvas site, documentation and tutorials. You can search the Internet to find thousands of web pages and videos about how to use Canvas.

### **How do I get technical support?**

Please be aware that any questions about class materials, such as understanding assignments and tests, are not technical difficulties and should be addressed by your instructor. Use Canvas to send a question to your instructor by clicking the Help button in the upper right corner of the Canvas dashboard.

CR technical support can help you with issues regarding your password for Canvas, Web-Advisor and your *mycr.redwoods.edu* email. They can be reached at [its@redwoods.edu](mailto:its@redwoods.edu) or by calling either (707)476-4160 or 800-641-0400, Ext. 4160, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. You may send emails to them any time and they will respond within one business day.

### **What will happen when my class is over?**

After finals week, your classes' online site will conclude and you will no longer be able to participate in any graded assignments or activities. You will, however, be able to view class materials that your instructor has made available after the class ends. In addition, your class will move from the active course list on the main page to the past enrolments list. To view your past enrolments see: [Past Enrollments](#)

### **Do online classes follow the same curriculum as traditional, on-campus classes?**

Yes. CR's online classes have similar course content to traditional classes. They are written and taught by CR faculty members. The main difference between an online and on-campus class is that in most cases you do not have a set day or time to attend an online class. You will complete your work on your own time, but you will submit assignments and complete exams on time as requested by your instructor.



## **If I take an online class, do I need to come to the CR campus?**

No. Unless specified, you are not required to come to the CR campus at any time. Note: Some classes may require a proctored exam or other course specific requirements. Please check the [Online Class Orientation Letter](#) or course syllabus for your specific class.

## **Do I need to be online at a specific day or time?**

You may access your online class materials 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Your instructors will set the deadlines for assignments and exams to be completed, just like they would for on-campus classes.

For most classes, you will not be required to attend class at a set time. Some instructors may have set times for "live" Web discussions. This means that you may need to log in to your online class at a specific time.

## **How do I interact with my instructor and other students in an online class?**

CR instructors use many different methods to create an exciting, interactive online learning environment. Live chat sessions, Wikis, blogs, interactive activities, and discussion forums are just a few of the techniques used to enhance online learning. Email is also a common mode of communication between instructors and students.

## **Do I need to be admitted to CR to register for online classes?**

Yes. In order to take semester-based, online college classes, you must be admitted to the College of the Redwoods. See [How to Apply to CR](#)

## **Will the credits earned at CR transfer to another school?**

The transfer of credits is always at the discretion of the institution to which the credits are being transferred. To help ensure transfer success, the [CR Transfer Center](#) provides services and resources which facilitate transfers to other colleges and universities. The earlier you begin the process, the better.

## **Canvas System-Browser Requirements**

Canvas is a web-based service that requires a web browser, a stable internet connection and possibly some browser plug-ins. Canvas also has apps for your mobile devices, just search apps for "Canvas by Instructure" (iOS and Android). See [Canvas Guides](#) for more information.

Canvas supports the last two browser versions for the following browsers (if your browser is not up to date you will see a warning notification from Canvas see. See [Canvas Browser Support](#)):

- Chrome
- Safari
- Firefox
- Internet Explorer



## MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR A PROCTORED EXAM

Some classes require one or more proctored exams during the term. Taking a proctored exam means formally identifying yourself and taking an exam under the supervision of a proctor, either at an authorized testing center or online. Check your class syllabus for exam requirements and proctoring forms.

### Student Responsibilities - Proctored Exams

There are two ways to arrange for your proctored exams. You can make an appointment at a [CR Testing center](#) near you or you can arrange for your own local authorized proctor to administer the exam. It is very important to reserve a testing time well in advance of the actual date you need to take the exam.

If you are not using a CR Testing Center, find a proctor well in advance of the actual date you need to take the exam. Your instructor will need time to approve the proctor and forward testing information to them. Check your class syllabus and Canvas site for specific class proctoring information. Here are examples: [Proctoring Form A](#) and [Proctoring Form B](#)

If using an off-campus proctor, you are responsible for paying any fees associated with having your exam proctored. When making your appointment, check to find out what type of identification you will be required to bring.

Unless otherwise instructed, you will access your proctored exam the same way you would normally access an exam. In most cases, this means logging into your Canvas class site and opening the exam link. The only difference is that the proctor will have to enter a password for you.

Be sure to find out what resources (such as calculators, scratch paper, notebooks, etc.) you are allowed to use during the exam. The proctor will not allow you to use any resource unless it has been cleared by the instructor.

See [Proctoring FAQ](#) for more information

## CR COURSE POLICIES AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

We want your online experience to be a rewarding learning experience. Instructors post course policies and procedures. Read them carefully. Below are the policies that are universal for all CR Courses.

- Do not use inappropriate language at any time while corresponding with the instructor or class mates. Be careful when using sarcasm and humor, in writing it may not be taken the way a person would in face-to-face communication.
- Cheating will not be tolerated. Students are expected to perform their own academic work. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are considered extremely serious offenses. You may lose online privileges or be removed from the class.
- If you are using an article, read the article and then translate it into your own words, do not copy and paste an article. In most cases copy and pasting is not appropriate for academic writing.
- Students are personally responsible for understanding the various forms of academic dishonesty as they are explained in the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Ignorance of any requirement for academic honesty will not constitute an excuse from disciplinary proceedings.