



Blended Learning Bureau Student Handbook

2017-2018 Edition

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Blended Learning Bureau
Student Handbook



Welcome!

Dear Students,

The Blended Learning Bureau supplemental online course program welcomes you to the 2017-2018 academic year. This year, like any other year, will be full of challenges, and we are excited to partner with your school to help you achieve your academic goals.

As New Mexico students, you are eligible to enroll in a Blended Learning Bureau course through your school. Our courses are designed to empower you during your academic journey by expanding access to rigorous coursework that ensures you graduate high school prepared for college and career. Not only will you have the support of the Blended Learning Bureau team, but staff at your school is here to provide the necessary support as well. Whether it is your instructor, program manager, learning coach, and/or advisor, know that we're all committed to working together to propel you forward.

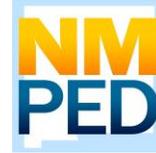
Remember, try your best in courses, and if you need help, ask. We look forward to collaborating with your school in order to ensure you succeed.

Sincerely,

The Blended Learning Bureau Team

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Who are we?

The Blended Learning Bureau offers a statewide supplemental online course program in partnership with New Mexico schools to expand educational options and prepare students with the necessary 21st century skills.

Why do students choose online learning?

Students take courses online through the Blended Learning Bureau supplemental online course program for a variety of reasons, including:

- ✓ Credit acceleration
- ✓ Advanced Placement
- ✓ Fulfillment of the distance learning graduation requirement
- ✓ Flexibility in scheduling

How do we do this?

As a New Mexico student, you can enroll in a Blended Learning Bureau online course through your school. Your school will provide the space, technology, and support necessary to complete your course and will award the course credit. The Blended Learning Bureau will provide the online content, eInstructor, and access to the learning management system (LMS) platform.

Our courses are designed for access from school or home. Students are supervised by a school program manager, advisor, and learning coach so that students can receive support directly from somebody at their local site.

Students with home computers and Internet connections can access coursework on a 24/7 basis. There is always coursework that can be done “offline” so students can complete their online work at school and offline work at home. Resources, materials, and assignments may be printed out and taken home, but all assignments must be submitted through the LMS and cannot be e-mailed or faxed. The best-prepared online students are comfortable with computers and navigating the Internet. This includes the ability to complete tasks such as creating, moving, and copying files; installing software; surfing the web with Internet Explorer or Firefox; sending and receiving email; and using various software programs. However, with appropriate assistance from on-site school personnel and the Student Success Orientation, students can learn to be successful in an online course.

Know how it works

The Blended Learning Bureau supplemental online course program provides online courses to supplement the curricula offered by local schools. Students accessing our courses typically are scheduled into the regular school day of their local schools; e.g., students go to a computer lab or other school location with a computer during a set period during the day to work on the online course.

The course is taught by an eInstructor who interacts personally with students via the numerous LMS tools, including the messaging system, e-mail, web conferencing, online chat tools, or by phone. The eInstructor may reside anywhere in the state and in some cases out of state.

The courses are asynchronous—accessible at any time during the day or night and you are not required to log on at a specific time. You must, however, log in as many times per week as a regularly scheduled course at your high school would require you to attend. Most of the time, you and your eInstructor may not be online at the same time. Your eInstructor will respond to any questions you

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



may have within 24 hours and will grade your assignments within 48 hours. The courses also allow self-pacing, so you can complete requirements as quickly as you would like. However, eInstructors may direct you to participate in group work with other students. Courses have a pacing guide to help you regulate your speed so you can reach your destination successfully. Students are given 18 weeks to complete a .5 credit course.

It costs money

The Blended Learning Bureau charges enrollment fees, which vary by course and the number of students your school chooses to enroll. Depending on your school's policy, your school may cover these fees or pass them on to you.

Set yourself up for success

Upon enrollment, **your first task is to complete the Student Success Orientation with a score of 70%.** You must complete the final quiz for the Student Success Orientation and also fill out the student contract and have all appropriate signatures before you can access your coursework. You must identify your program manager, learning coach and adviser in this contract. It will appear as a course on your course list when you log into the LMS. Experience has shown that students who complete this orientation are more successful than those who do not.

The student contract

The student contract is an agreement among the Blended Learning Bureau and staff at your school that we will collaborate to ensure your academic success. There are multiple people identified in the student contract, including the program manager, learning coach, advisor and parent/guardian.

Make sure you know who your program manager is and work closely with that person. The program manager is responsible for student support at the school level. Alongside the learning coach/advisor, the program manager plays a vital role in student success. The program manager is responsible for the following:

- ✓ Determine student readiness
- ✓ Enroll students in online courses
- ✓ Facilitate purchase orders for course fees
- ✓ Ensure technology requirements for participation are met
- ✓ Ensure each enrolled student receives necessary intervention advising services, if necessary
- ✓ Ensure each enrolled student receives necessary intervention academic support, if necessary

As a student in a Blended Learning Bureau course, you are required to identify an advisor as part of the student contract. The advisor is typically a counselor; however, it can be a member of the instructional staff as well.

The school is required to make available, and you to attend, a 20 minute bi-weekly check-in meeting with your advisor if you either fall below a 75% grade in the course or are two or more weeks behind. The school will continue to make available the bi-weekly check-ins until your grade gets above a 75% or are less than two weeks behind the pacing guide.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



If you drop below a 60% grade in the course or are more than three weeks behind, the school will make available a weekly check-in with your advisor. The school will continue to make available the weekly check-ins until your grade gets above a 60% or are less than three weeks behind the pacing guide.

The purpose of the check-ins are to provide you an opportunity to reflect on your success, identify barriers, and make adjustments as needed to ensure you are on pace and successfully master the content.

In addition to the advisor, you are required to identify an instructional staff member who can serve as a learning coach. The learning coach should, if possible, be an educator on campus with expertise in the content area of your online course (ex. math teacher for AP Calculus AB). The purpose of the learning coach is to provide you an on-site content expert who can provide real-time support, when needed, to mitigate frustration and ensure you stay on track to complete the course. The learning coach does not replace and/or assume any of the roles and responsibilities of your eInstructor.

Communicate with your eInstructor

Your eInstructor is there to help you with basic technical support as well as mastering skills and content in your course. If you have any questions, message your eInstructor using the mail function in the course. You can also call! All contact information is located in the course homepage. eInstructors have 24 hours to respond to your questions on Monday through Friday, excluding state and federal holidays.

Online courses count

They are as important as onsite courses and count towards GPA and graduation. They factor into weekly eligibility processes required for participation in extracurricular activities, such as sports.

Work every day

Online courses require more self-discipline than traditional courses because there is no teacher reminding you to pay attention. Successful students log into courses every day, follow instructions, and initiate communication with eInstructors. Remember that the technology records your daily “attendance” in the course—and what work you were doing. See appendix C for tips for successful eLearners.

Follow your school’s Internet Use Agreement

This is the document you sign that says you will use the Internet wisely, and that you will stay away from inappropriate sites. Netiquette (online etiquette) should be applied at all times. The Student Success Orientation explains netiquette more fully and offers a quiz to test your knowledge about appropriate online interaction.

Demonstrate proper conduct

Your district has a conduct and disciplinary code with associated rights and responsibilities. As with any classroom, eInstructors will attempt to address conduct and discipline problems directly with you prior to referring you to the next level. If your eInstructor is unable to resolve the problem or if the infraction requires administrative notification, your eInstructor will contact your school program manager, advisor and/or learning coach and the Blended Learning Bureau staff.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



The program manager will either address the problem directly or bring it to the attention of your school's administration. The program manager has the responsibility of sharing with the instructor any action taken in the situation. Local discipline codes and policies/ procedures for student rights and responsibilities will be used in handling the situation. If you are experiencing a problem with your instructor, you should talk with your program manager, who will address the issue with our staff if necessary.

Improper conduct is defined as interfering with the teaching and learning occurring on the website by posting profane, threatening, abusive, or inappropriate language—including demeaning written or oral comments of an ethnic, sexist, or racist nature and unwanted sexual advances or intimidations—to an instructor, staff member, or student via verbal, email, threaded discussion, chat room or other communication. Improper conduct also includes using the computer system to post inappropriate graphics or links to inappropriate web sites or “hacking” into another person’s computer files for any reason.

Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. Students who are suspected of cyber bullying will be immediately removed from an online course until the situation is investigated. Cyber bullying is defined as bullying that takes place using electronic devices and equipment, including cell phones, computers, and tablets.

Don't cheat

Academic dishonesty includes breaches of academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, and attempts by a student to show possession of knowledge and skills he/she does not possess. These breaches can include:

- The use of non-permissible materials in any form during a quiz or examination.
- Copying the answers of another student, whether on a test, quiz, or homework.
- Plagiarizing, or using someone else’s work which is evaluated as the student’s own work.
- Impersonating another student on any assessment.
- Helping someone else commit these infractions.

What is Plagiarism?

Using something that someone else has written and claiming it as your own is plagiarism. In effect, you are stealing someone else's words if you copy and paste from the internet. Even paraphrasing, or using some of the words, can be considered plagiarism. If you are reading something that has the answer to a question, you still must answer with your own words. The real skill of learning is developed when you interpret and analyze what you have read and put it in your own words.

Avoiding Plagiarism

You can copy and paste information from the internet that you find. However, it must be put in "quotation marks" and you must cite the webpage where you found it (i.e. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism>). Then, to make your answer valid, you should explain what it means to you and use examples where applicable.

Types of Plagiarism

Copying someone else's work, whether it be written words, music, images, video, or other media is a violation and may involve copyright laws.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Consequences for Cheating

If an instructor suspects a student of cheating, the instructor will contact the student's program manager and inform the Academic Services Coordinator of the circumstances. If cheating is confirmed, the student will receive a zero for that assignment. In addition, the student's school officials will be asked to advise the contract team regarding further consequences in accordance with local school policy.

Withdrawal permission is required

Students may drop only at the request of the program manager. Students who withdraw from an online course will receive a percentage grade based on work completed to that point. The student's school will determine whether the student will receive a grade, an indication of withdrawal, or any other annotation on the student transcript.

Contesting Grades

All questions about assessment and grades should be discussed between students and teachers as part of ongoing dialogue about progress in the course. This promotes student and instructor reflection and prompts course revisions to occur as needed.

In the event that a student should want to contest a final grade, the contest should be made within 30 days) and the following procedure should be followed.

- An email should be sent from student or parent to instructor and copy the contract team. The email should explain specific details regarding an inaccurate assessment of the student's learning or progress in the course.
- A response from the instructor will be sent to the student and parent and copy the contract team. The response should address the concerns of the student or parent and give a decision/recommendation or plan of action concerning the final grade in the course.
- If parent and student are not satisfied after receiving the instructor's response, they should contact the academic services coordinator. Further discussion and action will occur if necessary.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Appendix A: Misconceptions about Online Learning

While most students succeed in online courses, it is important to start your class with clear expectations about online courses. Here are some common myths and the truth behind each myth.

Myth #1: Online courses are easier than face-to-face classes.

Truth: Online courses follow state standards and benchmarks for student learning. There is no hiding in an online course. Every student has a front row seat. Every course has a pacing guide for assignment due dates and students are expected to work every day, Monday through Friday, for 45-60 minutes each day. Every course has work due each week and a final exam. Attempting the final exam is required in order to receiving a grade above 59%.

Myth #2: It's easy to cheat in an online course.

Truth: Teachers know each student's writing style and skills. Teachers e-mail, message, text, and call their students to check on their understanding of course material. Learning is often applied in projects requiring high levels of thinking skills. Teachers use technology to track plagiarism.

Myth #3: Online courses are self-paced (meaning you take time off whenever and take it easy).

Truth: Online courses are designed for 18 weeks. Most students are taking the course from a computer at school so they must work to finish the school in the semester they enrolled in it. Pace means progress, so to earn an extended completion date (more time to complete a course); students must have completed over 50% of the course and have extenuating circumstances.

Myth #4: Online courses are software programs you do on your own with no support.

Truth: Each student has a team of support behind them. Every student completes the Student Success Orientation to develop online learning skills. Each course has an instructor and small class sizes of thirty students or less per section. Instructors provide their phone number and e-mail to each student. Classes open to an announcement page with important current information.

Myth #5: You are on your own with online courses and never get to interact with other students.

Truth: Courses include student-to-student discussions, group projects and web 2.0 tools such as wikis and blogs. Chat and online webinars are also possible for synchronous meetings. Courses may include group projects, evaluating each other's work through self and peer assessment, group simulations and other collaborative assignments.

Myth #6: Online courses only offer basic courses I could take at my school.

Truth: The Blended Learning Bureau offers a supplemental online course program to students where courses are not available for them through their school. We offer a catalog of courses from core courses with general education, AP and honors sections, electives and hard to find courses that may not fit into your schedule. See the latest offerings on our website.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Appendix B: Federal Disclaimers

Anti-Discrimination/Harassment: We are committed to safeguarding the right of all participants to work and learn in an environment that is free of discrimination or harassment.

Discrimination/harassment on the basis of race, color, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or disability in any form will not be tolerated. All schools in the Blended Learning Bureau network should have an anti-discrimination policy and procedures for addressing discrimination/harassment complaints. Compliance with will be the responsibility of each participating school. Complaints should be filed with the complainant's school and the Blended Learning Bureau's Director, and should follow procedures of the policy for that school. Situations involving two or more schools will require the collaboration of administrators in each of those schools

Equity: We are committed to an equal education for disadvantaged and underserved students, and will recommend policies and procedures to ensure that all students can take advantage of the opportunities created by the supplemental online course program. Schools should set a priority on recruiting disadvantaged and underserved students. Instructors will make every effort to ensure that the content, approach, and goals of the online education courses meet students' needs.

FERPA: We adhere to the requirements of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and actively pursue policies and procedures that protect the privacy of student records.

Title VI/IX and Other Equity Legislation: All schools must be in compliance with all Federal Civil Rights legislation. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 insures that no person shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any federally-assisted program. In addition, state civil rights legislation will apply to our courses. Compliance with all civil rights legislation will be the responsibility of each school and complaints should be filed with the complainant's school and should follow the school's grievance procedure.

ADA COMPLIANCE/INFORMATION: If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to self-identify. You can do so by providing documentation to your school. If you are not sure how to do this, contact your program manager or your building principal so they can help you. Appropriate accommodations can then be provided for you.

If you have general questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), go to this link and help site: <http://www.ada.gov/>

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Appendix C: Supported End-User Technologies

Canvas Technical Requirements

Basic Specifications <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10721>

Operating Systems

- Windows 7 and newer (users on Windows 10 need to download the Windows 10 Anniversary Update to submit Canvas assignments)
- Mac OSX 10.6 and newer
- Linux - chromeOS

Mobile Operating System Native App Support

- iOS 7 and newer (versions vary by device)
- Android 4.2 and newer

Computer Speed and Processor

- Use a computer 5 years old or newer when possible
- 1GB of RAM
- 2GHz processor

Internet Speed

- Along with compatibility and web standards, Canvas has been carefully crafted to accommodate low bandwidth environments.
- Minimum of 512kbps

Screen Size

- Canvas is best viewed at a minimum of 800x600, which is the average size of a notebook computer. If you want to view Canvas on a device with a smaller screen, we recommend using the Canvas mobile app.

Screen Readers

- Macintosh: VoiceOver (latest version for Safari)
- PC: JAWS (latest version for Internet Explorer)
- PC: NVDA (latest version for Firefox)
- There is no screen reader support for Canvas in Chrome

Supported Browsers <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10720-67952720329>

Canvas supports the current and first previous major releases of the following browsers:

- Internet Explorer 11 and Edge 39 and 40 (Windows only—please make sure your operating system is also current as noted in the computer specifications lesson; you may need to download the Windows 10 Anniversary Update to submit Canvas assignments)
- Safari 9 and 10 (Macintosh only)
- Chrome 59 and 60
- Firefox 53 and 54 (Extended Releases are not supported)

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



- Flash 25 and 26 (used for recording or viewing audio/video and uploading files)
- Respondus Lockdown Browser (supporting the latest system requirements)

<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10720-67952720329>

We highly recommend updating to the most current version of your preferred browser. Your browser will notify you if there is a new version available. Some supported browsers may still produce a banner stating your browser does not meet the minimum requirements for Canvas. If you have upgraded your browser but you are still seeing the warning banner, try logging out of Canvas and deleting your browser cookies.

Browser Updates

If your browser does not update automatically, you can download your preferred browser in the browser's download page as listed and linked below:

- Internet Explorer and Microsoft Edge
- Safari
- Chrome
- Firefox
- Respondus Lockdown Browser

Required Components

Flash is required for recording audio and video in the Canvas Rich Content Editor. Other than these features, Flash is not required to use most areas of Canvas. Please note that some browsers may no longer support Flash.

The Java plug-in is required for screen sharing in Conferences. Please note that some browsers do not support Java. Otherwise, there are no other browser plug-ins used by Canvas. JavaScript must be enabled to run Canvas.

Canvas on Mobile Devices

The Canvas interface was optimized for desktop displays, so using small form factors such as phones may not be a pleasant experience in using Canvas. Canvas is not officially supported on mobile browsers. We recommend using Canvas mobile applications for an improved user experience.

Apple Store iOS Canvas App: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/canvas-by-instructure/id480883488?mt=8>

Google Play Android Canvas App:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.instructure.candroid&hl=en>

Not all Canvas features may be supported on mobile devices, especially on iOS.

Mobile Browsers

Visit the Apple store or the Play store to download mobile browsers. The following major browsers are compatible with mobile devices but Canvas features may not be supported:

Blended Learning Bureau
Student Handbook



iOS

- Safari (default browser that opens from Canvas)
- Chrome
- Photon Flash Player (supports Flash)
- Android
- Internet
- Firefox
- Chrome

Note: Android default browser varies per mobile device.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Appendix D: Graduated Driver License – Student Eligibility

Senate Bill 9, amends Sections 66-5-8 and 66-5-9 NMSA 1978 to provide that:

- The six-month minimum period for which an individual is required to hold an instruction permit before obtaining a provisional license is extended by 30 days for each traffic violation, committed during the time the individual was driving with the instruction permit, for which the individual was convicted or adjudicated delinquent.
- The 12-month minimum period for which an individual is required to hold a provisional license before obtaining a regular driver's license is also extended by 30 days for each traffic violation, committed during the time the individual was driving with the provisional license, for which the individual was convicted or adjudicated delinquent.

New Drivers – Under Age 18

If you are applying for your first New Mexico driver license and are under age 18, you must go through the New Mexico Graduated Licensing System to get your license.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) – 3 Stages

Stage 1: Instructional Permit – To get an instructional permit, a teen must be at least 15 years old, and go into a MVD Field Office with the following documents:

- Proof of having completed or of being enrolled in a state-approved driver education program;
- Proof of identity, identification number and New Mexico residency, to include:
 - One (1) proof of identification number, and
 - One (1) proof of identity, and
 - Two (2) proofs of New Mexico residency.

At least one of the 'proof of identity' or 'proof of identification number' documents must also show the teen's date of birth.

At the MVD Field Office the teen and the parent/ guardian will complete and sign an instructional permit application. Then, the teen must:

- Pass a vision test
- Pass the MVD Knowledge Exam.
- Provide a referral card
- Pay an instructional permit application fee
- Once the teen gets the instructional permit, the teen must:
 - Hold the instructional permit for at least six months;
 - Complete and pass a state-approved driver education program which includes a 3-hour DWI component
 - Complete and pass a state-approved driver education program;
 - Drive with an adult 21 or older who has been licensed for a minimum of 3 years;
 - Complete 50 hours of supervised driving practice, including 10 hours at night;
 - Maintain a clean driving record for the 90 days preceding application for Stage 2; and
 - Not drink and drive. Even a .02 percent concentration of alcohol – barely one drink – could result in a 6-month license revocation for drivers under age 21.

Stage 2: Provisional License – To get a provisional license, a teen must be at least 15 ½ years old and have successfully completed Stage 1. At the MVD Field Office the teen and the parent/ guardian will

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



complete and sign a provisional license application. In signing the provisional license application, the teen and the parent verify that the teen:

Has completed Stage 1 successfully;

- Has been driving only with an adult 21 years or older who has been licensed for at least 3 years;
- Has not been convicted of a traffic violation* in the 90 days preceding application for a provisional license; and
- Has not been drinking and driving.

Then, the teen must:

- Provide a TSB 'Certificate of Completion' that clearly shows the applicant achieved a passing score from a state-approved driver education program that includes a 3-hour DWI component
- Provide the GDL driving log (Graduated Driver's License log-any document that records the necessary information handwritten or typed) that shows the teen has completed the practice driving component of 50 hours behind the wheel training, 10 of which are at night. The driving log must be signed by the parent or guardian.
- Pass the MVD Road Skills Exam. **Our courses do not offer this exam. Students must take at MVD offices.**

Once the provisional license is issued, the following conditions apply:

- The teen driver must hold the provisional license for at least 12 months.
- Unless a licensed driver age 21 or older is in the vehicle, a provisional license-holder may not have more than one passenger in the vehicle under the age of 21 who is not an immediate family member.
- The teen driver may not operate a motor vehicle between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. unless accompanied by a licensed driver age 21 or older. Exceptions are permitted for school, employment, family and medical need, or religious functions (licensees must carry a statement from the appropriate school, or religious official, employer, doctor, or parent/ guardian).

Stage 3: Full License –To get a full-unrestricted license, the teen and the parent/ guardian must complete and sign a driver license application. In signing the driver license application, the teen and the parent verify that the teen:

- Has completed Stage 2 successfully;
- Has not been convicted of a traffic violation* 90 days preceding application for a full license;
- Does not have any traffic violations* pending at the time of application for a driver license; and
- Has not been found guilty or have an offense pending involving the use of alcohol or drugs during the provisional period.

If the teen is 18 years or older, only the teen needs to sign the application.

*The traffic violations include:

- Failure to Obey Traffic Control Device or Signal
- Failure to Obey Traffic Control Signal
- Speeding
- Homicide by Vehicle
- Injury to Pregnant Woman by Vehicle
- DWI or Drugs
- Refusal to Submit to a Chemical Test

Blended Learning Bureau
Student Handbook



- Reckless or Careless Driving
- Careless Driving
- Racing on Highways
- Failure to Yield

Fees for an Instructional Permit, Provisional License and Driver License

- Instructional Permit - \$10.00
- Provisional License - \$18.00
- Full-unrestricted License – 4-year is \$18.00; 8-year is \$34.00

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Appendix E: Frequently Asked Questions

Am I good fit for online learning?

We believe that all students are digital learners; however, basic computer skills, literacy skills and organizational skills play an important role in the successful completion of an online course. Online students must have self-motivation and apply time management skills. Because the material is completely online, reading and writing skills are also important. To find out more about the dispositions and skills for online learners visit the student resources on the student page of our website.

How do I access my course?

Canvas is the website and learning management system for all regular courses. Your login credentials and URLs to login in to your course are as follows:

Canvas by Instructure

URL: INSERT URL
Username: Nine-digit student ID number
Password: (Chosen by program manager)

Should I change my password?

Yes. Upon enrolling in your course, you will be given a username (your 9 digit student ID if you are a public or charter school student or firstname.lastname if you are a private or home school student). You will also be given a temporary password (changeme). Be sure to change your password after you log in the first time. To do this, log into Canvas and go to "Account"> "Settings"> "Edit Settings"> "Change Password." Enter the old password and then the new password. Confirm the new password and save. Note: DO NOT SHARE YOUR PASSWORD WITH ANYONE. Doing so could result in academic penalties and disciplinary action.

Where do I start?

Complete the Student Success Orientation first. When you log in the first time, you should see the course you enrolled in as the Student Success Orientation. Be sure to complete the Student Success Orientation before you begin your actual course.

What if I have technical difficulties?

Your program manager is your first point of contact for technical issues. Your instructor can also help. If all else fails, contact a staff member. Contact information can be found on our website. Technical Considerations are outlined in Appendix C.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



Can a school pass the cost of a Blended Learning Bureau course on to the student/parents?

In some cases, yes. During the summer and regular school year, schools may pass the cost of the online course to the student/parent in the following cases:

- Students enrolled in enrichment courses (i.e. advanced placement, honors, dual credit) unless student is taking the enrichment course to fulfill the graduation requirement of taking an online, dual credit, advanced placement, or honors course.
- Students enrolled in courses taken above and beyond a regular student schedule (i.e. taking extra courses to graduate on time).
- Students enrolled in preferred electives not offered at the school.
- Students enrolled in courses due to scheduling conflicts outside of school (i.e. employment or extracurricular).

During the summer and regular school year, schools may not pass the cost of the online course to the student/parent in the following cases:

- Students enrolled in online courses because the school does not offer the course for whatever reason.
- Students who are indigent.
- Students enrolled in online courses that are core requirements for graduation that are part of the students' regular schedules.

Do the courses have textbooks?

In some cases, yes. With the exception of some Advanced Placement and English Language Arts courses, our courses do not require textbooks. Read your course syllabus carefully to determine if there are required materials for your course.

Does the Blended Learning Bureau offer Advanced Placement courses?

Yes we offer College Board approved Advanced Placement courses. Visit the Blended Learning Bureau's website to view a list of courses or to download a printable course catalog.

What is the best way to contact my instructor?

The best way to communicate with your instructor is through the message system in your course. Instructors are expected to respond to messages from students within 24 hours Monday through Friday. In addition, your instructor's contact information is located in your course. If you have difficulty getting a response from your instructor, you may contact a Blended Learning Bureau staff for assistance.

How are the courses structured?

All our courses are asynchronous—students and teachers access the courses at different times. The courses are delivered via the learning management system (LMS) and are designed to be interactive and engaging.

How do students and teachers interact?

Through various communication tools within the learning management system (i.e., discussion board, messaging, and chat), students interact with each other and their teacher on an ongoing basis. Courses have web conferencing capability, which enables live interaction between teachers and students for individual and group instruction or for parent/student/teacher conferences.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



How long are the courses?

Each course includes a pacing guide that can be adjusted for different time frames for completion to accommodate traditional and block schedules and to allow you to determine your pace. However, all courses must be completed within an 18-week time period.

I want to play sports in college. Have the online courses been approved for NCAA eligibility?

After a review from NCAA, NCAA determined that our courses are not eligible for NCAA approval. The Blended Learning Bureau does not meet the Student-Teacher Interaction, according to their criteria. While our courses do not meet NCAA's criteria for student to teacher interaction, students interested in taking a Blended Learning Bureau course may still do so and be eligible to play college sports based on other courses taken through their local district. When considering which courses to take, talk to your counselor to be sure that the core courses for NCAA are addressed with courses you have taken at your local school site.

How is my progress monitored?

Your school program manager has access to the student information and learning management systems. Within these systems, they will use the tools that are available for tracking and monitoring your progress.

Can my parents monitor my progress?

Yes. When you are enrolled in a course, your parent will automatically receive log-in credentials in our student information system. In this system, your parent will be able to monitor your progress and check your grades. Your parent may also request that an account be sent up in the learning management system where you progress/grades may also be monitored.

How are my grades reported?

Your program manager or learning coach has access to your grades in the learning management and student information systems. They also have the ability to access and print out your transcripts. We provide a percentage grade and your school will translate the percentage grade into a letter grade and award credit on your transcript.

How do I drop a course?

Only your program manager may drop you from a course.

Can students with Individual Education Plan or 504 plans take Blended Learning Bureau courses?

Yes. Our instructors make the necessary accommodations in accordance with students' IEPs/504s and in collaboration with the onsite school staff. However, it is important to recognize that some accommodations may need to be provided at the school site through assistive technology or other support provided by the student's home school. Your program manager will need to provide an updated IEP/504 yearly.

What resources are available to me?

The first time you are enrolled in a course, you are automatically enrolled in the Student Success Orientation. You will see the link in your list of courses. This is a very important resource for you. You must complete the orientation prior to starting your first course.

Blended Learning Bureau

Student Handbook



We also have a student handbook. Be sure to read this in its entirety, before you begin your course and keep it as a resource to refer to during the school year. The student handbook is available in your online course and on the resources page on the student section of our website.

What support can I find online?

Math

- Math World <http://www.math.com>
- Khan Academy <https://www.khanacademy.org>

Writing

- Polish My Writing Checker <http://www.polishmywriting.com>
- Grammar and Writing Checker <http://granmark.org>

Plagiarism Checking Tools

- Small Tools <http://smallseotools.com/plagiarism-checker>
- Grammarly Spell Checker <https://www.grammarly.com/plagiarism-checker>

Students enrolled in a local school may also contact their local school office for additional support.