

# Distance Learning

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## Taking classes with Valencia Online

Valencia provides students the opportunity to take college-credit courses through several methods of instructional delivery including: online, hybrid and Web-enhanced learning. Such courses are equivalent to on-campus sections of the same course in terms of objectives, competencies, content, credit and transferability.

Students participating in course work through Valencia Online may use all on-campus services as well as the Web-based services through the Valencia Web site and Atlas, including the LifeMap Tools for career and education planning. Through Atlas, Valencia provides each enrolled student with an official e-mail account, which should be checked every day. For more information, visit [atlas.valenciacollege.edu](http://atlas.valenciacollege.edu).

Students enrolled in online courses should carefully read instructions from faculty and in course syllabi for additional instructions on communicating throughout the course. Students enrolled in online courses will have a separate class e-mail in Blackboard. This email should be checked frequently to stay on top of course communications and assignments.

Online, hybrid/blended, and some Web-enhanced/facilitated courses are delivered in a primarily text-based environment; therefore, reasonably good reading and writing skills are critical to adequate course participation. Additionally, research has shown that students who are highly self-directed and manage their time well are more likely to succeed using these delivery methods. Online courses can be time intensive. Varying keyboard skill rates can impact the amount of time students spend completing course work online. It is recommended that students carefully evaluate their readiness and abilities in these areas before selecting distance learning courses. Resources to assist students in determining readiness for online courses may be found at [valenciacollege.edu/oit/learning-technology-services/student-resources](http://valenciacollege.edu/oit/learning-technology-services/student-resources).

Due to state and federal regulations, Valencia requires all students registered in an online course to provide an active and valid mailing address in the State of Florida. If you do not have an active and valid physical mailing address in Florida (not a post office box), you will be dropped from the online course in which you are enrolled. You do not need to be a Florida resident for tuition purposes to register for online courses, but the active mailing address in your Valencia student record must be in the State of Florida.

## Alternative Delivery Learning Modes

Valencia is a leader in the use of alternative delivery in instruction. Students should be advised that any course may require use of a computer, computer labs, email, the World Wide Web, or other digital resources and support software, and these requirements are not necessarily in the course schedule.

## Principal delivery modes of distance learning courses at Valencia

Type of Course	Description
Web-Enhanced/Facilitated*	Course which may use Web-based technology to enhance a face-to-face course. Uses a course management system (CMS) or Webpages to post the syllabus and assignments. (All meetings are face-to-face.)
Hybrid/Blended	Course that blends online and face-to-face delivery. A certain percentage of course instruction is delivered via electronic means and a certain percentage of instruction is conducted face-to-face. (Some hours are spent in the classroom with the rest being completed online.)

Online

A course where all of the content is delivered online using the college-approved course management System. (All class meetings and coursework occur online\*\*)

\* Students should be advised that any course may require use of a computer, computer labs, e-mail, the World Wide Web, or other digital resources and support software, and these requirements are not necessarily in the course schedule.

\*\* Proctored testing may be required.

Below are the principal delivery modes of alternative learning courses at Valencia and their respective class schedule descriptions.

## Technology Requirements

Valencia uses Blackboard Learn as our Classroom Management Systems (CMS). Online courses will be offered via Blackboard Learn systems. Students are responsible for providing their own hardware, software, and Internet service providers or for accessing the Internet using technology available in any Valencia open computer lab. Technology requirements and browser requirements can be found at [valenciacollege.edu/oit/learning-technology-services/student-resources](http://valenciacollege.edu/oit/learning-technology-services/student-resources).

The Atlas and Blackboard Help Desks will provide assistance over the phone or via live chat to troubleshoot technical problems. You can reach the Atlas Help Desk at 407-299-5000, x5444 between 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday (9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Friday during the summer). You can reach the Blackboard Help Desk at 407-299-5000, x5600 24 hours a day.

## Accessibility

Valencia strives to provide online courses that are fully accessible to students with disabilities by employing the principles of Universal Design for Learning. These principles are achieved by promoting the idea that students with disabilities fall along a continuum of learner differences rather than constituting a separate category of learners. Instructional designers work with faculty to assist in making their online courses accessible to all students, regardless of disability.

## Resources for Online Courses

### Bookstore

Valencia will provide students access to textbook information in accordance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act. Textbooks for courses may be purchased from a Valencia bookstore on the campus from which the course is offered. Information about online bookstore services can be found at [valenciacollege.edu/bookstore](http://valenciacollege.edu/bookstore) or by calling 407-299-5000, x1471.

### Library Services

The Valencia College Library provides a variety of learning-centered resources, services, and facilities to support a diverse community; to encourage academic achievement, student success, and lifelong learning; and to enhance teaching excellence. Campus librarians work with faculty who are teaching online courses to ensure appropriate resources and services are available to distance learners.

The following outlines a few of the services available to alternative delivery students. A complete list of Library Services can be found at [valenciacollege.edu/library/](http://valenciacollege.edu/library/).

- Remotely accessible Web-based resources for student research including articles, eBooks and streaming video
- Research guides and tutorials specific to Valencia collections
- Reference instruction via email and chat
- Librarian selected websites that support the college curriculum

### Student Services

Student Affairs offers a wide range of services for online students. Applications for Admission must be submitted online. Bachelor's degree students who have not previously completed a Valencia New Student Orientation must complete the online Bachelor Degree Orientation prior to registering for classes.

Financial aid processes can be completed online. Financial aid processes that can be completed online include FAFSA completion; accepting, declining or modifying financial aid awards; verification worksheets; and tracking satisfaction of financial aid requirements. If a student is selected for verification, the student's and parent's taxes can be provided electronically.

Once students have registered for classes, they can pay for their classes online in Atlas using a credit card or ACH transfer (electronic check).

Through the My LifeMap tab in Atlas, students can access career development services and inventories; educational planning assistance including term-by-term course planning for degree completion; job prospect information including salary and company information; financial planning assistance; and an online portfolio to showcase their work to professors and employers.

Students can access Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, and an Academic Advisor via Atlas email. If you are in an A.S., certificate or bachelor's program, you should contact your Career Program Advisor directly. Students in an A.A. program can contact an advisor by e-mailing [advising@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:advising@valenciacollege.edu) through your Atlas e-mail account. Confidential information about the student's record can be researched and discussed via Atlas email within FERPA regulations because of the secure Atlas sign in. Via Atlas email, the student can ask questions about the full range of student services including admissions, financial aid, registration, course selection and graduation.

Many college clubs and organizations offer group home pages, services and information via Atlas groups.

## **Test Proctoring**

Students registered for online courses may be required to take proctored exams. For students living in the Valencia College service area, these exams may be administered by the professor on campus and/or made available at Valencia testing centers. Faculty should make exams available in any campus testing center if requested by students. In the event that a student lives outside the Valencia service area, the student may choose to test at an alternative testing location. It is the student's responsibility to locate a testing facility at a nearby college or university.

The student is also responsible for paying the proctoring institution any testing proctoring fees including costs for returning completed exams to the professor. The student must make testing arrangements early in the term or by the date determined by the professor.