



# Online Course Manual for Students

# *Are You Ready for Online Courses?*

East Central Technical College offers online courses so that you can include classes into your busy lifestyle. Although some courses may require on-campus class attendance, most do not. Internet classes allow you to arrange your class attendance around your own schedule. Except for turning in assignments when they are due, your schedule is totally up to you. You can review lectures, ask questions, and participate in discussion groups at any time and from any place that's convenient to you. Prior to registering for an online course, you should make sure that online learning is for you.

## **Distance Learner Self-Assessment**

Distance learning courses are not for everyone. Some people learn best by interacting face to face with the instructor and other students. To be successful in an online course, you should be self-motivated and be able to work well independently.

Test your online learning skills by completing the READI Distance Learning Readiness Assessment. It will take 25 minutes to complete. The scores from your assessment will not prevent you from applying for online programs. READI includes five major assessment components that measure the following:

- Reading comprehension
- Technical competency
- Individual attributes
- Preferred learning styles
- Typing speed and accuracy

[Begin your READI assessment by clicking here](#) . The link is also found on the ECTC Online page [www.eastcentraltech.edu/online](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online).

## **Student Technology Skills**

The following computer skills are needed prior to taking online courses through ECTC. Students are responsible for assessing their own skill levels. If you do not possess these skills, you may want to consider taking on-campus classes. Your instructor will not be teaching these skills.

### **Basic Skills**

- Be familiar with the operating system of the computer being used for class
- Understand terms such as mouse, drag, open, launch, select, file, choose, double-click, download, upload, send, and so on
- Save, copy, and find files/folders on external storage and hard drives
- Download/upload files

### **Email Skills**

- Send, open, reply to, and forward a message
- Enter a message subject
- Send an attachment
- Open and/or save an attachment

### Web Browser Skills

- Go to a specific URL
- Print a page
- Follow a hypertext link
- Conduct a basic search using a search engine

### Word Processor Skills

- Open a new or existing file
- Save a file
- Rename a file (Save As)
- Print a document

## *Is Your Computer Ready for Online Courses?*

### General/Minimum Requirements

You must be certain that you have all the technical requirements, and ensure your computer meets the minimum hardware and software requirements to be in compliance with the online platform, ANGEL.

- Have access to a computer with one of the following operation systems: Microsoft Windows OS (XP, Vista); Apple Mac OS X (10.0) or above; or Unix/Linux.
- Have Internet access. An Internet Service Provider (ISP) is a company that can provide you with the software necessary for accessing the Internet. Contact your local ISP to set up a personal account. Without an ISP, it is impossible to take ECTC online courses. DSL or cable connection is recommended; however, a minimum 56K dial-up connection or better is required.
- Have an active e-mail account. Since it is our primary form of communication, you must have an email address prior to applying or registering. Generally, your ISP will give you an email account. Please contact your ISP if you are unsure of your email address. Free email accounts are also available on the Internet. **Please note that on the first day of class you will be required to use the ECTC email address assigned to you at the time of registration as your primary email address for your online classes. Your ECTC email account should be used for all incoming and outgoing correspondence.**
- Use Internet Explorer 7 or higher (compatibility mode for IE8) OR Mozilla Firefox 3.0 or higher (many prefer Mozilla Firefox), a Java Compliant web browser 1.4 or higher; JavaScript must be enabled; Cookies must be enabled; Pop-up blockers must be disabled.
- Install Recommend Software – Adobe Acrobat Reader; Macromedia Flash 7.0+; Macromediat; Shockwave; QuickTime; Windows Media. All of these downloads can be downloaded from the ANGEL homepage (<http://gvtc.angellearning.org>)  
**Note:** Different media may be needed for different classes. If the media cannot be downloaded from the link above, contact your instructor.

- Disable Pop-Up Blockers. On your computer, go to Start, Control Panel, Internet Options, Security, Use Pop Up Blocker, Disable.
- Ensure all ANGEL and ECTC sites are in your trusted sites. On your computer, go to Start, Control Panel, Internet Options, Security, Trusted Sites, type <http://gvtc.angelearning.com>, Uncheck the require server verification (https:) for all sites in this zone option. Also, add the ECTC work ethics site by typing <http://www.workethics.org> Again, be sure to Uncheck the require server verification (https:) for all sites in this zone option.

**Some classes require specific software/computer requirements**, so be sure that you verify course requirements before registering. NOTE: Microsoft Works is not the same as Microsoft Office. **You may check course offerings and the DETAILS of online courses at GVTC ([www.gvtc.org](http://www.gvtc.org))**. Click Courses under Programs/Course, select the term and college. You may also select by subject or click the view all courses for selected term which will show all courses for all colleges. The Details button beside each specific class gives information such as if a class requires on-campus visits/proctored tests, special hardware/software, credit/lab hours, application deadline, etc.

## *Online is for you . . . how do you enroll?*

Current students should contact program advisor; new students should:

### **Start Admissions Process**

- Visit [ECTC Online Learning Admissions](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online/online_admissions.htm) for more information, forms, links, and details.  
[http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online/online\\_admissions.htm](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online/online_admissions.htm)
- Determine your program of study, complete an ECTC application and the Online Student Information sheet. You may complete the application online or on campus.
- Pay \$15 application fee (one-time only, non-refundable).
- Submit official, sealed high school/GED transcripts and official, sealed college transcripts.
- Submit ASSET, COMPASS, SAT, CPE, or ACT scores (cannot be more than five years old) or make arrangements to test. Contact admissions for testing times, testing requirements, and placement exemption.

### **Start Financial Aid Process**

- Visit [ECTC Financial Aid](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online/online_admissions.htm) for more information, forms, links, and details.  
[http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online/online\\_admissions.htm](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online/online_admissions.htm)
- Complete ECTC Financial Aid Institutional Application and the Georgia Student Financial Aid Application.
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Documents needed:
  - Signed copies of the past year's income tax return (if the student is under the age of 24, a non-veteran, unmarried, and without dependents, then income information of the students' parents will also be required)
  - Social security awards, TANF information, child support payments
  - Workers' compensation payments, veterans benefits, etc.
  - Balance of cash, savings, checking; current value of stocks, bonds, and investments

## Finalize Processes/Prepare for Class

- **Ensure the admissions process is complete**, and program specific papers have been completed. Some programs require forms such as Notice of Records Check Requirement, health forms, etc.
- **Ensure the financial aid process is complete.** Check with a financial aid specialist to verify your financial aid file is complete or bring any needed documentation.
- **Register for classes.** Your advisor will help you determine the classes needed and help you complete this process. If you are a new student, admissions personnel will assist you. ECTC online courses (and online courses for other Georgia technical colleges) are available at [GVTC](http://www.gvtc.org) ([www.gvtc.org](http://www.gvtc.org)). Click Courses under Programs/Course, select the term and college. You may also select by subject or click the view all courses for selected term which will show all courses for all colleges. Also be sure to review the details for each class for specific hardware/software, requirements for on-campus visit/proctored exams, etc.
- **Become familiar with the [ECTC Online Learning page](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online)** ([www.eastcentraltech.edu/online](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online)). This page will provide many resources to help the online student. **All the links below (and more) are found on the online page.**
- **Complete New Student Orientation** by clicking [New Student Orientation](#). After completing the training, click Get Forms at the end of the presentation. Complete the forms and send them to Melisa Edge at 706 W. Baker Hwy., Douglas, GA 31533. You may also fax them to Ms. Edge at 912-389-4308.
- **Login to your ECTC Email** to ensure there are no problems. This account will be set up the day after you register (allow 24 hours). To login to your ECTC account, go to the college's home page at <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu> and click the Students Quick link below the President's Welcome on the right side of the screen; choose Student Email. Your username is your first initial of your first name, last name, last four digits of your student ID. An example for John Smith with a student ID of 900079821 would be jsmith9821. Your password is your birthday in six digit format followed by @ectc. An example for March 7, 1980 is: 030780@ectc. For additional information about how to access your ECTC email, please visit: [http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/media/student\\_email\\_login/student\\_email\\_login.html](http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/media/student_email_login/student_email_login.html)  
*If you have any problems logging into your ECTC email, please call the ECTC helpdesk at 229-468-2063. **Note:** For security purposes, you may have to come on campus to login the first time if you are taking an on campus class or have taken classes on campus in the past.*
- **Explore ANGEL.** ANGEL is the online platform used to “take classes”. All online classes use ANGEL EXCEPT math classes. All math classes use Course Compass. Review the [Online ANGEL Orientation](#). Also, visit and save the ANGEL homepage <http://gvtc.angellearning.com> to your favorites on your web browser. Read the Welcome to ANGEL Student Essentials Guide and the computer needs/technology requirement sections. You will not be able to login to ANGEL until the first day of class. On the first day of class, your instructor will send you username and password information. **Do NOT try to log on to ANGEL until the first day of class.**
- **Explore Course Compass (MAT classes only).** All math classes are taken through [Course Compass/My Math Lab](#). Go to the course compass home page ([www.coursecompass.com](http://www.coursecompass.com)) for information on registering on the site, getting started, and support. You must have an access code to set up an account. If you order a new text from ECTC, the access code is included. However, you may purchase an access code from the course compass home page if you opt to borrow a book or use the online book.

## Buy Your Textbook

- You are **required** to have your class textbook by the first day of the quarter.
- You need to purchase your textbook(s) prior to the first day of class. Please go to the Online Textbook link on the ECTC online page to view the textbook(s) needed for your course(s) and necessary contact, ordering, and shipping information. You must view the textbook information at this site to ensure you are purchasing the correct textbook(s) especially if you are purchasing from another source.
- Contact your advisor or instructor if you have any questions about the required textbook or software. Advisor and instructor information is on the ECTC Online page.
- If more than one book or software is required for a class, many times the bookstore will “bundle” these items together. The bundle price is cheaper than purchasing the items separately and the bundled items have a unique ISBN. If you want an ISBN for an individual item, contact the bookstore, your instructor, or your advisor.
- You can order your textbooks with a credit card or cash payment before the quarter starts to ensure you will have the book on the first day of the quarter. If you are using financial aid toward the purchase of your book, you must wait until financial aid can be used, which is three days before the quarter begins. Even if your HOPE Award completely covers your book, tax and shipping, you must still contact the bookstore by phone or email to initiate your book request.
- Online textbooks can also be commercially shipped to you. Shipping and handling charges do apply. You may have the book shipped to you or you may opt to pick up the purchase from the Fitzgerald or Douglas campus bookstore. **No class due dates will be extended because a textbook has not been purchased.**

## Begin Your Class and Check Your ECTC Email Daily

- On the first day of the quarter, your instructor will email you the online class website and your username and password for the course. **This email will be sent to ONLY your ECTC email account. You must reply to this email within three days or you will be dropped from the course.**
- If you have not heard from your instructor by 7 p.m. of the first day of the quarter you need to email or call the instructor and notify the Dean of Distance Education, Sabrina Cox, at [scox@eastcentraltech.edu](mailto:scox@eastcentraltech.edu) or 229-468-2022.
- Your instructor will have the course syllabus, course calendar, and other information ready for you to view once you login to the course. Instructor information is found on the ECTC Online page.
- Your instructor and other college staff will be in contact with you throughout the quarter through you ECTC email account. You will need to check your ECTC email as often as possible. **You must make contact with your instructor at least once a week by logging in and participating in the class or email. If you have to be “offline” more than seven consecutive days, let your instructor know.**
- If this is your last quarter, contact your advisor to complete the application for graduation and information sheet for job placement. This paperwork is due at the beginning of the quarter in which you will graduate.

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **How do I get started?**

Check your ECTC email account. Your instructor will email you information (username and password) to login to your online class; you will not have access to your online class until the first day of the quarter. When you get your instructor's email, you need to ensure you can login to all your courses. Reply to each instructor's email to let him/her know that you are planning to take the course, you have successfully logged into the course, and the status of your books (you should have all required books/materials by the first day of the class). If you do not respond to your instructor within the first three days, you will automatically be dropped from the class. Once inside your course, you will have instructions on how to begin. Also, see the next question.

### **How do the courses work?**

You will not have access to your online class until the first day of the quarter. Once the quarter begins, your instructor will email you (to your ECTC email account) information to login to your online class. All online classes use ANGEL except MAT classes which are taken through CourseCompass/MyMathLab. If you have not done so already, review the [ANGEL Orientation](#) found on the ECTC online page. After logging into ANGEL, read the Public Announcements and scroll down to the Courses nugget. Click on the course link to enter a course. Once inside the course, carefully read the course announcements. You will see tabs across the top that will allow you to navigate around your course. The calendar tab (if used by the instructor) will give you due dates. Click on the assignment for more information. Most of your academics (assignments and tests) will be found under the Lessons tab. Explore and carefully read all the information in the folders and links under the Lessons tab. You will also receive and submit assignments under this tab. You may be required to visit other web sites and even participate in online labs! You will be able to communicate with your instructor through e-mail and post questions and comments to your course's threaded discussion forum using the Communicate tab. Discussion forum allows you to hold virtual conversations with other classmates and your instructor without having to be online at the same time. For most classes, your first task is to complete the "Little About Me" introduction discussion forum. The report tab will allow you to run a report and view your grades.

### **How much work is there in a typical course?**

A typical course will involve 8-10 hours of work per week. You will need to expect to spend the same amount time online as you would in the face-to-face classroom.

### **How long do courses last?**

ECTC courses are usually ten weeks long. The course structure will require that you keep to these schedules in order to successfully complete the course. Some instructors/courses allow you to work ahead and others require you to stay on a week-by-week basis.

### **Do I have to be online at a specific time?**

No, you will not have to be online at a specific time. Access your class when it's convenient and from a place that's convenient! Learn what you want, when you want, from a location that's convenient to you. You choose the hour of the day (or night) to attend classes. Except for turning in assignments when they are due, your schedule is totally up to you. You must meet due dates! You can review lectures, ask questions, and participate in discussion groups at a time and from a place that's convenient to you.

**How do I take tests?**

Most tests are taken online. Once you are in your course, you will be able to look at the syllabus to find the method of testing used for your particular course. The tests can be multiple choice, true/false, short essay, or long essay in format. Tests may also be timed and graded automatically. Each course will be different in the type of tests required. Once completed, your instructor may provide feedback on your test through the course's grade book. Many classes do require you to take the final on campus or at an approved proctored site. Check your syllabus at the beginning of the course to determine if on campus visits are required.

**If I have problems in my class, what do I do?**

Your instructor is your first contact. The course syllabus will state the best way to contact your instructor. If you have problems with your instructor that you cannot work out with your instructor, you may contact the Dean of Academic Affairs for your program or the Dean of Distance Education.

**Can I take courses on-campus and online at the same time?**

Yes, you can take on-campus and online courses at the same time. However, please remember that online courses are as rigorous as on-campus courses, and you should expect the same level of work or more.

**Can I take more than one course at a time?**

You can take up to the maximum number of courses recommended by your advisor but not to exceed 18-credit hours. However, these courses are as rigorous as on-campus courses, and you should expect the same level of work or more.

More Frequently Asked Questions (found under Student Online Resource Page)

[General Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[ANGEL General Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[ANGEL Troubleshooting Technical Frequently Asked Questions](#)

## *Resources . . .*

Georgia Virtual Technical College (GVTC) – <http://www.gvtc.org>

A New Global Environment for Learning (ANGEL) – <http://gvtc.angellearning.com>

East Central Technical College (ECTC) – <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu>

ECTC Programs of Study - <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/Instruction/index.htm>

ECTC Online – <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/online>

ECTC Admissions - <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/admissions.htm>

ECTC Financial Aid - <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/finaid.htm>

ECTC Future Students - <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/prospects.htm>

ECTC Current Students - <http://www.eastcentraltech.edu/students.htm>