

Welcome to Continuing Education and to new explorations in learning. For some of you, this will be your first experience learning online and using Blackboard. We want that experience to be positive and meaningful. For those of you who were with us in previous years, thank you for being online pioneers and for growing along with us in this new way of learning.

We think you'll find that there are many benefits to learning online: flexibility, convenience, and the freedom to manage your time according to your schedule—a definite asset to busy lives. Online courses also tend to be very student-focused and encourage self-direction and responsibility. Continuing Education online programs have been expanding with new courses being added each semester. It is now possible to earn several Continuing Education certificates completely online. (Full listings available at conted.ucalgary.ca/elearn). We plan to continue to expand the number of courses offered online, so that you will have more choice as you plan your program of studies.

We are also proud to say that we have students from every province in Canada as well as other parts of the world.

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Preparing for Online Learning

The Successful Online Student

Online classes are often very different than traditional face-to-face classes in terms of how the material is presented, the nature of the interaction among class members, and the overall learning experience. However, online courses have many things in common with traditional classes—there are still instructors, class members, course materials, assignments, and due dates.

The online environment offers much more flexibility. It requires more self direction and self discipline from students taking advantage of its offerings. Another significant difference between the online classroom and the traditional classroom environment is that in the online classroom most communication takes place through writing and audio presentations.

To ensure that all of our online students get the most from the online learning experience, we expect everyone to complete the orientation course, Learning Online, which is a required prerequisite to all of our online certificate courses. This course is intended to introduce you to strategies and skills for learning online and help you work out all the technical details. Since there is no learning curve built into any of our other online courses, it is important that you complete this course.

Study Requirements and Course Load

Study requirements will vary from course to course and on your personal skills. For maximum benefit from the courses you take, you should be prepared to spend approximately six to eight hours per week, per course, on coursework. You'll probably want to login to your course(s) at least once a day.

Because of the work required, we recommend that students not enroll in more than two courses in the same semester.

10 Tips for e-Learning

1. Make time for online learning. Set aside specific times to work on your course and stick to that schedule.
2. Pace yourself. Choosing your own study times is great, but make sure you don't fall behind in the course.
3. Prepare for the course. Review the introductory material to become familiar with the course structure, navigation, tools, and learning resources.
4. Be a strategic learner. Scan the learning outcomes and deliverables beforehand and keep them in mind as you go through the course.
5. Don't feel you have to read everything. The supplementary materials are for learners who want clarification or a more detailed explanation of a concept.
6. Maintain a positive attitude. Acquiring new skills can be challenging, but the knowledge gained is well worth the pain.
7. Remember to use the Help screens. Often, the answers to your questions can be found through the Help function in Blackboard, so try it as a first resort.
8. Ask for help. Use e-mail and the discussion to take advantage of the expertise your instructor and fellow students have to offer.
9. Take the initiative. Get started and don't be afraid of making a mistake. Learning is a process. We don't expect you to be certain about every answer you send in.
10. Collaborate. Ask questions and answer them via e-mail and in the discussion board.
11. Share your experiences. Ask yourself how the course material relates to your experiences and share those thoughts with other students.

The Technology

Online courses are highly interactive and often include various kinds of content and interactive media. In order for these resources to function properly, you will need to make sure that your computer is configured optimally to help you access the course itself as well as different kinds of files provided by your instructor.

To be successful as an online learning student, it is important to have a computer system that can adequately support you in the tasks you need to accomplish. You'll need to have access to a computer system that meets the minimum technical requirements.

Computer Readiness

Technical Skills:

Prior to taking any online course, you should have regular access to a computer and:

- Be comfortable working on computers
- Have reasonably good keyboarding skills
- Run the applications you need to use on a computer
- Create, save and manage files on your computer
- Use an Internet browser to:
 - Move among multiple browser windows
 - Search the internet for information using various search engines
 - Navigate through online content
- Use a word processor (such as Word) and presentation software (such as PowerPoint) to:
 - Generate documents
 - Edit documents
 - Save documents in rich text format
 - Print documents
 - Paste text from a document into an e-mail message
- Use an e-mail software package to:
 - Send messages and attachments
 - Receive incoming messages and attachments

Computer Technical Requirements

Hardware Requirements:

Typically, Continuing Education online courses require only the very basic computer systems to participate. If you have a fairly recent computer, you should experience no difficulties accessing your online course. Keep in mind these figures are only a guideline.

Key features:

- Intel Core 2 Duo processor or AMD Athlon 64 X2
- 1GB of memory
- 40GB hard drive
- CD rom or DVD rom
- Computer speakers
- Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7 or Apple OS X Leopard
- Microsoft Office 2003 or 2007 (or the freeware OpenOffice.org software)

Other Hardware:

Many courses today use multimedia resources to provide information and content to students. A sound card and speakers are required for quite a few courses.

Software Requirements

- Internet browser: recent versions of Firefox, Internet Explorer, Google Chrome. Recent versions of Firefox seem to work the best with Blackboard and Elluminate.
www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/upgrade.html
- Word processing and presentation software: recommend Microsoft Office XP for Windows and Microsoft Office 2001 for Macs (which includes Word and PowerPoint), or the free openoffice.org
- Adobe Acrobat Reader: free download from Adobe at: www.adobe.com
- Viewers, Players and Plug-ins: Macromedia Flash Player and Shockwave Player are free downloads at: www.adobe.com, Java Plug In is a free download available at <http://java.sun.com/products/plugin>

Settings and Preferences

For best viewing, we recommend the following settings:

Internet Explorer 6 and above:

Java Enabled

- Under the Tools menu, select Internet Options
- Click the Advanced tab
- Under Microsoft VM select both Java logging enabled and IT compiler for virtual machine enabled

Font Settings

- Under the View menu, select Text Size
- Choose from the five sizes of text to meet your needs

Virus Checker

It is essential to have up-to-date anti-virus software on your computer. If your employer provides a program for your workplace computer, you may also be able to access that virus checker for your home or laptop computer.

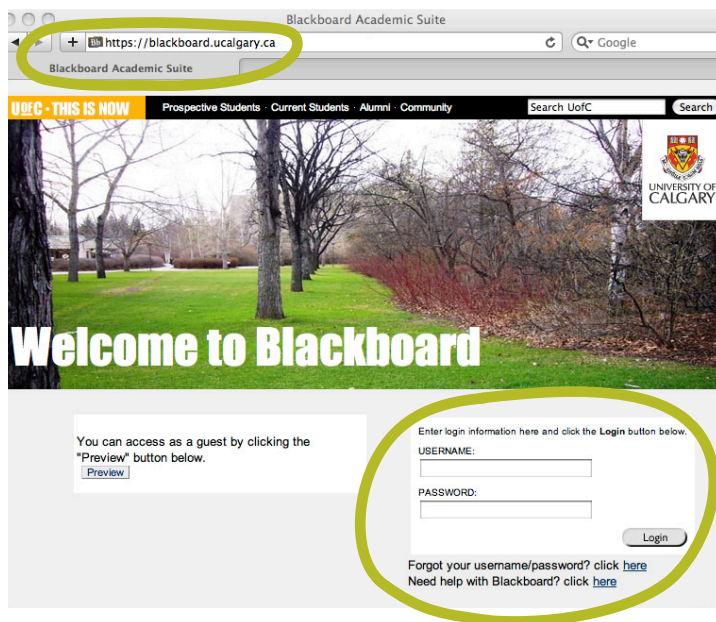
Logging On

You will need a UCID to login to Blackboard. If you do not know your UCID, contact the Continuing Education office at 403-220-2866 (toll-free: 1-866-220-4992).

Course Web Site: <https://blackboard.ucalgary.ca>

1. Type <https://blackboard.ucalgary.ca> in your web browser's address bar. This takes you to the Blackboard Welcome page.
2. Enter your UCID in the Username field and the password you set in the Password field (Note: passwords are only eight characters)
3. Click on Login.
4. Under the My Courses tab, click on the name of the course in which you are enrolled. You will be taken directly into the main page of the course.

Note: Your course will not appear under My Courses until a few days before the start date.



The UCID and password you use to login to Blackboard will be the same UCID and password you use to login to the MyContEd registration portal, from the Continuing Education website.

If you change your password in MyContEd, it will be changed in Blackboard automatically. When you login to MyContEd, you can change the password by clicking on My Profile.

If you receive a message from Blackboard that you must use your eID to login, you cannot use your UCID to login. An eID is a university IT electronic ID, which you would have signed up for in the past to access the AirUofC Wireless network, the MyUofC portal, or many other campus IT services. It usually looks like 'jon.smith', and if you cannot remember the password, you will have to contact the UCIT Support Centre at 403-220-5555, or you can try using the eID password recovery tool on the Blackboard login page. Continuing Education staff members do not have the ability to reset eID passwords.

Illuminate Live! Chat Conferencing

Your online instructor may make use of the Illuminate Live! audio conferencing system. Usually you would converse with your instructor and fellow classmates using a microphone or headset, but consult with your instructor before purchasing any new hardware. Some instructors don't mind if you use the text chat tool during their online class sessions. When connecting to Illuminate Live!, it is always better to be on a wired internet connection. If you use WIFI or wireless, some features of Illuminate Live! may slow down or malfunction. For more information, please visit: <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/illuminate>.

Textbooks and Course Materials

Textbooks and course materials are available through the University Bookstore. Hours of operation for the Bookstore are Monday to Friday 9 am – 5 pm (MST/MDT), Saturday 10 am – 5 pm (MST/MDT). Extended hours may be scheduled at the beginning of the semester.

Purchase texts online using VISA or MasterCard at calgarybookstore.ca and select Textbooks. This will open an ordering page where you can search for texts by course number. Orders using VISA or MasterCard may also be placed by telephone 403-220-5936, toll-free: 1-877-220-5937; by Fax 403-284-4454, or e-mail bkstore@ucalgary.ca.

When ordering your textbook, you will need the course name, course number, instructor name and textbook title. Please allow one week for delivery.

Reappraisals and Appeals

Requests for reappraisals of grades and appeals are rare in Continuing Education. Nevertheless, there are procedures in place.

General guiding principles are as follows:

1. In all cases you should discuss, and attempt to resolve any difficulties with your course instructor first.
2. Time is of the essence. It is your responsibility to initiate a request for reconsideration within 15 days of the return of course work or within 30 days of the date on which the final grade was mailed to you.

Refund, Withdrawal, and Transfer Policy

Refund, Withdrawal, and Transfer Policy

Note: 'course' denotes any Cont Ed offering (course, seminar, workshop, etc.)

Refund and Withdrawal Policy: Unless otherwise stated in the Receipt Notes section on your Confirmation of Registration, the following refund policy and deadlines apply.

- If notice of a student's withdrawal from a course is received ten calendar days or more prior to the start date of the course, the student may withdraw and receive a full refund.
- If notice of a student's withdrawal from a course is received less than ten calendar days prior to the start date of the course, a refund will not be issued.

Failure to return course materials included in the fees—in mint condition—at the time of withdrawal will result in the cost of the materials being deducted from the refund.

Exceptions to this policy include: full-time, fast-track, professional designations, Academic Upgrading, Travel Study programs, and others as stated on the confirmation of registration.

Refunds will be made via the original payment method. A refund by cheque may take two weeks or more to process.

Transfer Between Courses: Unless otherwise stated on the Confirmation of Registration, the following transfer policy, deadlines and fees apply.

When transferring to a course where the fee is less than the course in which the student originally registered, the student will be reimbursed the difference (minus a transfer fee when applicable). Refunds will be made via the original payment method. A refund by cheque may take two weeks or more to process. Alternatively, a student will be responsible to pay the difference in fees when transferring to a course where the fee is greater than the course in which the student originally registered (plus a transfer fee when applicable).

For courses equal to or greater than 30 hours in length:

- Requests to transfer out of a course will be allowed prior to the start of the second class session (or, in the case of online courses, prior to seven days following the commencement of the class).
- If the request to transfer out of a course is received at least 10 days prior to the start date, a transfer fee will not be applied.
- If the request to transfer out of a course is received less than 10 days before the start date, a \$25 transfer fee will be applied.

For courses less than 30 hours in length:

- Requests to transfer out of a course will be allowed only if received at least 10 days prior to the start date. No transfer fee will be applied.

Failure to return course materials included in the fees—in mint condition—at the time of transfer will result in the cost of the materials being added to the transfer fee.

In some cases the transfer fee may be adjusted to include non-refundable costs incurred by Continuing Education on behalf of the student.

Exceptions to this policy include: full-time, fast-track, professional designation, and Travel Study programs, and others as stated on the confirmation of registration.

Participant Substitution: Some Continuing Education programs may accommodate requests to substitute an eligible participant in place of the initial registrant. Please call 403-220-2866 for details.

U of C Micro Store

Continuing Education has made arrangements to enable students currently enrolled in certificate programs to purchase microcomputers and software from the University Micro Store at educational rates. For information on products, contact the Micro Store at: Phone: 403-220-5076, Fax: 403-284-4550, e-mail: mstore@ucalgary.ca or visit the website at www.micro.ucalgary.ca.

Awards and Scholarships

Continuing Education has a number of Awards and Scholarships available to deserving students not only for their academic achievement, but also for community involvement. For a complete listing of our awards and application details, please visit conted.ucalgary.ca/funding

Accessing Your Final Marks

Final marks are not posted in Blackboard courses. However, you can get them online after the instructor has submitted them. Please allow at least two weeks from the end of your course to enquire about final grades.

To access your final grades for all your completed courses in Continuing Education, login to the My ContEd student portal at <https://conted.ucalgary.ca/portal/logon.do?method=load>

Staff in Continuing Education cannot give out final marks over the phone or by e-mail. However, you can request a paper copy of your transcript for a fee of \$10.50 (GST included) per transcript by calling 403-220-4720.

Need Assistance?

For assistance with your username and password, connecting to or working in Blackboard, call the UCIT Helpdesk at 403-220-5555, Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, (you can leave a message after hours) or e-mail itsupport@ucalgary.ca. Extended hours are scheduled for the first month of each semester. There is a great deal of Blackboard/Elluminate help available at elearn.ucalgary.ca.

If your question relates to the course content or assignments, contact your instructor directly. Contact information for instructors is located under Instructors in your Blackboard course.

Program and registration information is available from the following program areas:

Business and Professional Programs, including Business Management, Computing, and I.T. Certificates

403-220-2988

Toll-free: 1-866-220-4992

Fax: 403-284-5702

business.conted@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 4 pm MST/MDT

Adult Learning and Languages

403-220-2952

Toll-free: 1-866-220-4992

Fax: 403-284-9242

adedlife@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm MST/MDT