

Central Arizona College

Online Learning



Student Handbook

Spring, 2008



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Welcome!!

Welcome to Online Learning at Central Arizona College! We are happy to be a part of your online experience. The CAC staff is available to help and support you in any way that we can as you embark on this new adventure.

Online learning offers students more flexibility than traditional on-campus classes. You can access your course work and submit assignments on your time schedule - early in the morning or late at night.

The biggest challenge for many online students is organizing and managing their time so that they can complete work by the specified due dates. It is **highly recommended** that you use a calendar and mark all of your assignment due dates. You may want to color code them by class so as not to get confused if you are taking several classes.

Your instructor will be available to help you if you have difficulties. Keep the instructor's email address and phone number handy and let him or her know if you need help with technology, clarification on an assignment, understanding a concept, or anything else.

This manual has been designed to support you in getting started as a successful online learner. If you have any questions about anything in this manual, contact your instructor or CAC Customer Service and Technical Support at 520-494-5111.

"I have been taking online classes for two years. I had not attended college for over 12 years and the thought of going back terrified me. I work, am a mother of two very active children and am a wife. I was mostly uncertain if I could actually do the work.

I did complete the classes and did a great job. I think what helped me the most was that the instructors were wonderful. Any question I had was answered, any concern was taken care of, and most of all I could tell that the instructors wanted me to succeed."

~Mary P.

"I like the flexibility an online class gives. Being a wife and mother of 2 children I can work around their schedule. I like the fact that you still have the interaction with other classmates via the discussion board and the teachers."

~Liz T.

Here's what other students have to say about their Online Learning experience:

"I like the freedom of doing my classes when it is convenient for me and my busy schedule. You can go to class in your pajamas and no make up!!!

~Chrissie J.

"When I took my first online class I was very nervous. I thought I was never going to be able to follow the directions and send my work correctly. Now I can do it easily..."

~Ana Z.

About getting started...

"Take one class or two first...and then take more classes if you want. Each class is different and so is every teacher."

~Heike M.

All in all it was a good way to take the class. It may seem a little different but once the semester got going I was able to understand it better.

~ Robert C.

I am the type of person that learns best by writing down what I read. I now have a computer file full of assignments that I can pull information from for future use."

~Chrissie J.

"...make sure you are organized.
...know your way around the
computer. ...realize there are
lots of people to help you out."
~**Martha D.**

"My advice for future students would be:
1. Take a good basic writing skills
class.
2. Stay on task with assignments,
don't fall behind.
3. Ask many questions to clarify if
not sure. Don't be shy."
~ **Sharron F.**

"Schedule enough time
each week to complete
assignments by the due
date. Allow for ups and
downs of personal life.
Staying on task and
organizing other activities
and responsibilities are
crucial to the success of
online courses."
~**Chrissie J.**

Advice from other students...

"The challenges are computer
glitches and making an extra
effort to e-mail instructors
about questions on
assignment... Even if you read
the assignment don't wait until
the last minute to begin typing
your assignment. "
~**Lucy D.**

"My piece of advice to future
students is not to give up. If
you are having problems contact
your instructor, go to the
tutor...or anyone else who can
help. It is worth it and you will
feel wonderful when you have
completed that first class."
~**Mary P.**

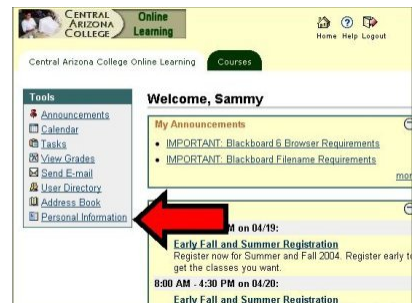
"First you need to have a back up plan, some
place to do your assignments if your computer
fails. Second...you need to have time set aside
for your work. Third...the interaction with the
instructors through e-mails is the same as
asking questions in a classroom. And finally it
helps if you get to know your online class
mates; e-mail them often and you can get a lot
of help from them.
~ **Robert C.**

- ♦ If you have a double first name there is no space or hyphen in your username. **Example: Mary Jane Doe's username is maryjane_doe**
- ☒ If you're new to **Blackboard**, your default password is your birthdate in MMDDYYYY format. Eight numbers are required. **Example: A person with the birthdate of March 16, 1981 would have 03161981 as their password.**

You should change your Blackboard password as soon as you log in for the first time. Here are instructions for changing your Blackboard password.

Step 1

Log in to Blackboard. In the "Tools" menu on the left side of the screen click "Personal Information".



Step 2

In the "Personal Information" menu, click "Change Password".



Step 3

Enter your new password in the "Password" and "Verify Password" boxes.



Step 4

Click "Submit"

4. Log in to your CAC e-mail account

a From the any location on the CAC website, click on the **Webmail** link at the top of the page

b Click on the **Student E-mail** heading, which will take you to the login page

- ☒ **Your e-mail address** is your Blackboard username followed by @stu.centralaz.edu. **Example: john_doe@stu.centralaz.edu**
- ☒ **Your default e-mail password** is your birthdate in MMDDYYYY format. (This is the same as the default Blackboard password.) Eight numbers are required. **Example: A person with the birthdate of September 10, 1987 would have 09101987 as their password.**

You should change your e-mail password when you log in the first time. For information on changing your password visit the Online Learning Pages on the CAC Website in the Tutorials Index. Scroll down to the Email section.

Complete information on accessing and using your CAC Blackboard and e-mail accounts can be found on the CAC website. Choose Online Learning, and then choose the Tutorials Index link on the right side of the page.

If you forget your Blackboard or e-mail password, contact the Customer Service and Technical Support at centralhelpdesk@centralaz.edu

Phone: (520) 494-5111
or 1- (800) 237-9814, ext. 5111

5. Go to S.C.H.O.O.L.

This is an orientation/training module within Blackboard that will help you to learn how to get around in online or hybrid classes, and what the expectations are for students. **This is a very important element in your preparation for online learning!** This will take you 2-3 hours to complete, but at the end you should be able to attend classes without a problem. Some instructors will require you to submit evidence that you have finished this training module. This is explained in the orientation module.

a Access Blackboard, and choose **SCHOOL: Student Centered Hands-on Orientation for Online Learners** from the **My Courses** list on the right side of the page.

b Read the introduction, and follow instructions carefully.

6. Contact your instructor

a It is **VERY** important that you contact your instructor from your CAC email account **before** the end of the first week of class. ***If you do not contact your instructor you may be dropped from the course. Read the syllabus & other postings for specific expectations.***


b Let your instructor know that you are registered for the class and that you have been able to log in to Blackboard.

c Many instructors will ask that you send your contact information - your telephone number and/or address.

d Sometimes an instructor will make class information available before the semester starts. You can begin checking for postings a week prior to the start date.

e The e-mail addresses for instructors who use Blackboard are located in the Online Learning Pages in the Schedule Listings.

The CAC e-mail account is the only account officially recognized by CAC. If problems occur with other email accounts, CAC cannot offer support.



Getting Help

If you need any help with your Blackboard account please contact the CAC Customer Service and Technical Support:

E-mail: centralhelpdesk@centralaz.edu

Phone: (520) 494-5111
or 1- (800) 237-9814
and ask for extension 5111



Important Contact Information

Central Arizona College Home Page: <http://www.centralaz.edu>

CAC Customer Service and Technical Support: centralhelpdesk@centralaz.edu
(520) 494-5111 or (800) 237-9814 ext. 5111

CAC Online Learning Web Pages: Go to the Central Arizona College website, and click on **Online Learning**. These pages have the information you need to get started with your class and to help you if you are having problems.

CAC Online Classes (Using Blackboard): Simply log in from the Online Learning pages on the CAC Website, or go to <http://blackboard.centralaz.edu>

My Blackboard user name: _____

CAC Student E-mail: Choose the Webmail link on the CAC Website and log in; or go directly to the login page at <http://cactus.centralaz.edu>

My CAC email address: _____

My Operating System: _____

My Internet Browser: _____

*To get information about your Operating System and/or Internet Browser, go to the **Online Learning** page on the CAC website. Click on **Online Learning Student Guide**, and then choose **Hardware and Software Requirements**. Scroll down to **Recommended Computer Configurations for Blackboard**.

My instructors' phone numbers and email addresses:

Name	Phone	Email
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



Important Contact Information, continued

Central Arizona College Campus and Center Information:

Signal Peak Campus in Coolidge:
8470 N. Overfield Road
Coolidge AZ 85228

Main Lines: 520-494-5444 or
800-237-9814
Bookstore: 520-494-5440
Registration: 520-494-5260
Financial Aid: 520-494-5425
Learning Center: 520-494-5570
Academic Advising: 520-494-5410
Library: 520-494-5286

Aravaipa Campus in Winkelman:
80440 East Aravaipa Road
Winkelman, AZ 85292

Main Line: 520-357-2000
Bookstore: 520-357-2816
Registration: 520-357-2816
Financial Aid: 520-357-2810
Learning Center: 520-357-2821
Academic Advising: 520-357-2810
Library: 520-357-2821

San Tan/Johnson Ranch Center:
29895 N. Desert Willow Blvd.
Queen Creek, AZ 85243

480-677-8668 (For all Services)

**Superstition Mountain Campus
in Apache Junction:**
273 Old West Highway
Apache Junction, AZ 85219

Main Line: 480-677-7700
Bookstore: 480-677-7709
Registration: 480-677-7705
Financial Aid: 480-677-7734
Learning Center: 480-677-7728
Academic Advising: 480-777-7731
Library: 480-677-7731

Florence Center:
800 E. Butte, Bldg. 100
Florence, AZ 85232

520-494-6810 (For all Services)

Casa Grande Center in Casa Grande:
1015 E. Florence Blvd.
Casa Grande, AZ 85222

520-494-5980 (For all Services)

Maricopa Center in Maricopa:
20800 N. John Wayne Pkwy, Ste 104
Maricopa, AZ 85239

520-494-6400 (For all Services)

Central Arizona College Online Support Services:

Resources: Online access to the college catalog, class schedules, registration, grades, transcripts and other resources: <http://www.centralaz.edu>

CAC Library Services: <http://www.centralaz.edu/library>
Email: CAL@centralaz.edu

Online tutoring:

Subject	Email	Phone	Blackboard Course
Math	cac.mathtutor@centralaz.edu	480-677-7745	CAC Online Math Tutoring and Resources
ELL	cac.elltutor@centralaz.edu	520-494-5003	CAC Online ELL Tutoring and Resources
Writing	cac.writingtutor@centralaz.edu	520-494-5570	CAC Online Writing Tutoring and Resources



Learning Center Services

The Learning Center on each campus provides integrated services to students and faculty in a comfortable, friendly atmosphere in order to enhance successful learning. They offer free tutoring in several areas of study, peer study groups, study skills handouts, and career and job search assistance. They also have a network of computers for students' use with software for word processing.

Services available at campuses:

ESL support

Study skills assistance

Test review

Writing Center

Reading labs

Tutoring Workshops

Proctoring Services

Study groups

Videotapes

Instructional software

Internet use

Free computer use

Word processing

Study areas



Online Tutoring:

Online tutoring is available in math, reading/ESL, and writing. These services are available for students who, for whatever reason, cannot get to a campus learning center.

Additional Information: _____



Central Arizona College Libraries Online Resources

The CAC Library System provides both on-campus and online resources. If you're at one of the CAC campuses, the library has computer workstations with Internet access, online database access and Microsoft Office tools. Some locations have wireless access, studying areas and meeting rooms. Please call the campus for details. If you aren't at a campus, you can still perform research and access needed resources and assistance.

Online Library Catalog

The online library catalog includes all the material at the CAC libraries, including books, DVDs, journals, and links to full-text, online resources. Visit the library web site at <http://www.centralaz.edu/library> to access the library catalog.

Full-Text Online Databases and ebooks

Most of the journals and magazine articles that you will need for class research and papers are in online databases that are available through the CAC library. You can access these from the CAC libraries' home page, <http://www.centralaz.edu/library>, by clicking on the **Journal and Magazine Articles** link. To access our online eBooks, just click on the **Infotrac: eBooks** link on the same page.

These databases and eBooks are available from any of the CAC campus libraries or on-campus locations, and off-campus access is available to registered CAC students, faculty, and staff with a password. Please contact your instructor or the library for passwords.



Online and In-Library Research Assistance

CAC's librarians and staff are here to help you succeed! They can help you with the online databases and catalog, bibliographies, and computer use. If you just need to find a book, you can get help with that, too. Visit a library, give a call, or go online:

- **Chat:** Research help is available from the library's web pages at the CAC web site: <http://www.centralaz.edu/library>. Just click on **Get Help Now**
- **Email:** From your CAC email account, write to CAL@centralaz.edu
- **Call:** You can reach the CAC campus library branches using these numbers:
 - **Signal Peak:** 520-494-5286
 - **Superstition Mountain:** 480-677-7731
 - **Aravaipa:** 520-357-2821



Important Information for Online Learning

Communicating with your Instructor:

One of the most important factors for success in online learning is staying in touch with your instructor. If you are having problems or do not understand the requirements of an assignments, you need to let your instructor know immediately. If you will not be able to submit an assignment on time, let your instructor know. *When emailing your instructor, always use your CAC email. Include your name and the class you are taking, along with the days and times of the class or the CRN. For example: Joe Smith, ECE120, MW 11am, or Joe Smith, ECE120, OL, CRN 30548.* Your instructor may have many students and may be teaching more than one section of the class you're taking, so it is necessary to provide this information in every email.

The Online Learning Page:

You can avoid many problems by thoroughly reading the Online Learning pages. There are frequently asked questions (FAQs), tutorials, and information on systems requirements. These pages can be found at <http://www.centralaz.edu>. Click on the option for **Online Learning**.

Assignments:

Instructors have different requirements on how to submit assignments. Find out from your instructor what his/her preference is. Different methods include email attachments; through the Digital Drop Box; the Assignments feature; SafeAssign, an anti-plagiarism utility; or the Blackboard grade book. Your instructor will explain this in the syllabus or in a classroom announcement or posting.

Quizzes and Exams:

Some instructors require various assessments be completed within Blackboard. In some cases you will be given immediate feedback on quizzes and/or exams, which will help you to focus your study and gauge your comprehension of the content.

Computer Difficulties:

It's essential to have a backup plan. Think about other computers you can use—friends, family, neighbors, or your nearest CAC campus computer lab. Be sure to find out the hours and rules of your local campus and library.

If you have computer difficulties and are not able to submit work, you must contact your instructor right away. Your instructor will tell you about alternative ways to submit your work, if permitted. Contact your instructor by phone, but make certain he/she gets your message right away.

The college also, at times, has computer difficulties. **Don't panic!** Usually you can try again at a later time and the problem will be resolved. Email or call your instructor if you are not able to get into Blackboard in a reasonable amount of time.

Student Responsibilities:

Students are responsible for knowing and understanding the instructor's expectations that are communicated in the online classroom and the syllabus. This responsibility includes communicating to the instructor and others when there are questions. Success in the online environment requires you to recognize and act on your responsibilities.

- √ **Keep up with assignment due dates.** Most instructors will deduct points for late assignments. You should start the semester by marking each due date in a monthly calendar.
- √ **Make sure that your written assignments are received.** Once you submit an assignment through the Assignment section, go to **Tools** and **My Grade**. There should be an exclamation point (!) in that assignment box. Click on the exclamation point to ensure that the assignment is there, **in its entirety!** Discussion Board assignments will show points in the gradebook **ONLY** after the instructor has graded, not upon the completion or your posting.
- √ **Check your assignments after they have been graded.** It is important to read the instructor's feedback so that you know if you need to make changes in future assignments.
- √ **Know how to access your CAC email account and check it regularly.** The instructor uses your CAC email account to communicate with you, so if you are not checking your email, you may miss important information from the instructor. Send emails to your instructor through your CAC email account only. Most instructors won't accept emails from personal accounts.
- √ **Keep up with the announcements that are posted.** Check **ANNOUNCEMENTS** every two to three days to see if there is any current information. You can click on **VIEW LAST 7 DAYS** or **VIEW ALL** to see if you have missed anything.
- √ **Ask questions if you don't understand something.** Your instructor will do his/her best to provide clear expectations of the assignment and course requirements, and will keep you up to date with changes and information by posting current announcements and/or sending emails. However, there are times when you might not fully understand your instructor's expectations or messages. If this happens, it's important that you let your instructor know right away so that the information can be clarified.
- √ **Follow up if you aren't getting feedback.** Your instructor should be giving clear and timely feedback when challenges arise in order to maximize your success. You also should receive graded assignments and responses to phone calls and emails in a timely manner. If this isn't happening, be sure to contact an advisor or CAC Customer Service and Technical Support.

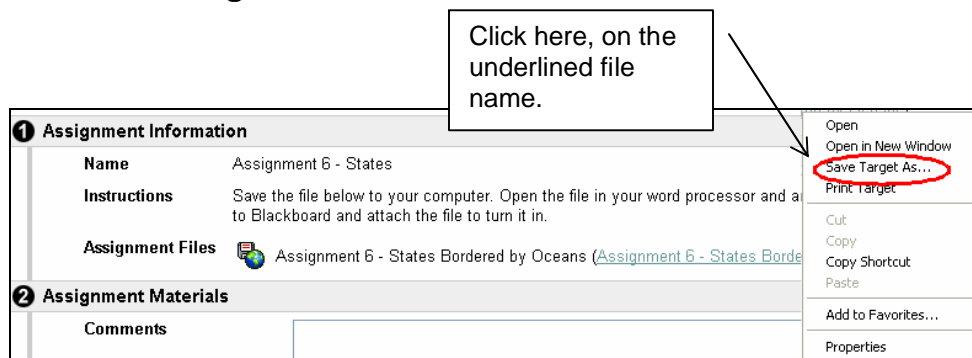
Retrieving, Saving and Submitting Assignments to the Blackboard Gradebook

The way you submit your assignments is determined by your instructor. This is **one** of the ways to submit an assignment in a Blackboard class. Check with your instructor or check your class syllabus to find out how your instructor wants assignments submitted. If your instructor wants you to use the digital drop box or send an email attachment, you will not need the following directions. You may want to print these instructions and keep them handy until you are comfortable with submitting assignments.

Downloading an Assignment File

Method 1

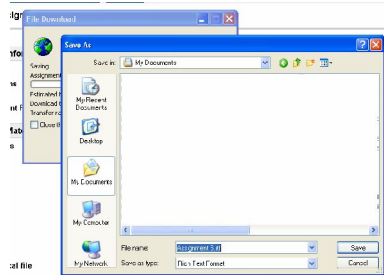
1. Log into Blackboard and enter the class by clicking on the class name under **My Courses**.
2. Click on the **Assignment** button or navigate to the content area which contains the assignment, per your instructor's directions.
3. Find the assignment you are going to work on.
4. At the bottom of the assignment area, click on **View/Complete**.
5. You will now see a page that says **Assignment Information**. Under that it will say **Name, Instructions** and **Assignment files**. **Right click** on the assignment file that's shown in parentheses; i.e. (ECE 120D Assignment 1). This causes a menu to appear.
6. Click on **Save Target As...**



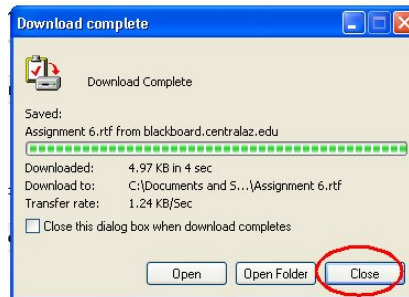
7. The **File Download** and **Save As** dialog boxes will open.
8. Pay attention to what is in the **Save In** box at the top of the window. It will probably say **My Documents**. It is important that you know where you are saving your document! You can change this and save your file on the **Desktop** or in a folder you have created specifically for homework. It doesn't matter where you save your file, as long as you remember where you put it.
9. The assignment's file name will be in the **File Name** box at the bottom of this window. You can change the file name here if you want to. Be sure to check the

syllabus or your instructor to see if he/she wants you to use a specific file naming system. For example, some instructors require the file name to contain your first initial, last name, course number, and assignment number.

10. To change the name, click inside this box. Delete the file name that is there and rename the file using the labeling guidelines in the syllabus.
11. Click on **Save**.



12. When the download has completed click on **Close** to close the **Download complete** box.



Method 2

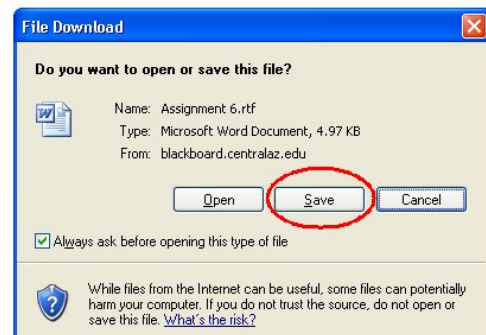
1. From the **Assignment** page, left-click on the link to the attached file.
- 2.

1 Assignment Information

Name	Assignment 6 - States
Instructions	Save the file below to your computer. Open the file in your word processor and answer the question. Return to Blackboard and attach the file to turn it in.
Assignment Files	Assignment 6 - States Bordered by Oceans (Assignment 6 - States Bordered by Oceans)

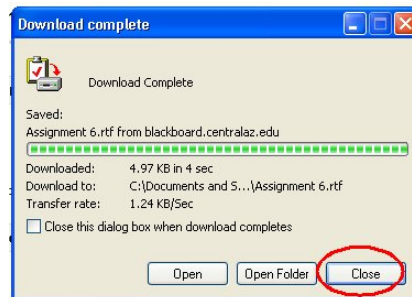
Left-click here, on the underlined file name.

- 3.
4. The **File Download** dialog box will open. Do not click on **Open** to open the assignment file. If you open the assignment file at this point you will not be able to save it after you work on it. You might spend hours doing work and be unable to save the finished assignment.



5. Always **Save** the assignment file to your computer before working on it.

6. Follow the previous instructions to choose a location and a name for your file.
7. Click on **Save**, and remember the filename.
8. When the download has completed click on **Close**.



Saving an Unfinished File to Blackboard

When you're not working on your file, you can save it on your local computer as described above, or to Blackboard. If you save it within Blackboard, you can access it from any computer that has Internet access. This is helpful if you work from multiple locations, because you will be able to access your file from any place without having to carry it around on portable media like a disc or a flash (thumb) drive.


To save your work within Blackboard:


1. Go to the assignment site within Blackboard and scroll down to **Your Files**.
2. Scroll down to **Attach Local File** and click on **Browse**.
3. Find your file, highlight it, and click on **Open** in the bottom right hand corner of the window. You will then see your file name in Blackboard.
4. Click on **Save** (not **Submit**) to send it to the gradebook. (Don't worry—you are not submitting your assignment yet.)
5. Click on **Tools** and **My Grade** to see if your assignment is there. A padlock will show up in that assignment box. At this point, the assignment can only be accessed by *you*. The instructor *cannot* open the file.
6. Once you save your assignment, you can go back to it at any time, from any computer to continue working on it. Just go to the gradebook and click on the padlock. Remember to save the file to your computer before working on it.
7. Remember, to save a file to your local computer click on the **File** menu, and then choose **Save As**. Or before you open the file, right click on **Save Target As** and place it on your local computer.
8. When you have completed the assignment and are ready to submit it, save the file on your computer, and then follow the directions to submit the assignment. At that time, an exclamation mark will show up in the gradebook.

Submitting an Assignment

Many instructors use the Blackboard Assignment Manager as the method of turning in assignments in their class. When using the Assignment Manager, assignments are turned in directly to the gradebook and students receive instant feedback that the assignment has been received.

1. Open the assignment file from within the appropriate program. Click on **File** and then **Open**. Browse to the location where you saved the assignment. Click on **Open**.
2. Complete your assignment. Click on **File** and then **Save** to save the assignment file. Close the program that you're working in.
It is very important that you close the document and the program before you turn the assignment in to Blackboard. You cannot attach an open file. The instructor will receive an empty document or a corrupted document.
3. Log in to Blackboard, enter your classroom and locate the assignment again.
4. Locate the assignment you wish to submit.

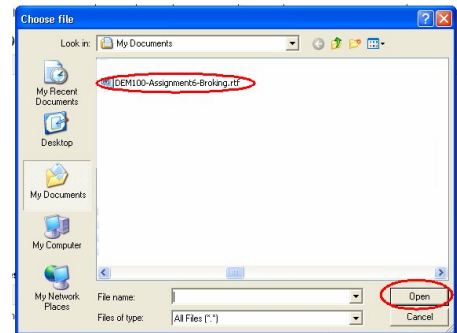
 **Assignments**

 **Assignment 6 - States**
Save the file below to your computer. Open the file in your word processor and answer the question. Return to Blackboard and attach the file to turn it in.
>> [View/Complete Assignment: Assignment 6 - States](#)


Click on **View/Complete Assignment** to open the assignment.

5. Scroll down to the **Assignment Materials** to turn in the assignment. Blackboard requires that something be typed in the **Comments** area. Check your syllabus to see if your instructor requires something specific be typed in **Comments**
6. Click on **Browse** next to **Attach local file**. The "Choose File" dialog box will open. Locate your document and click on **Open**. The assignment file will be added to your assignment.

If you need to attach another assignment file, click on **Add Another File** next to **Currently Attached Files**.



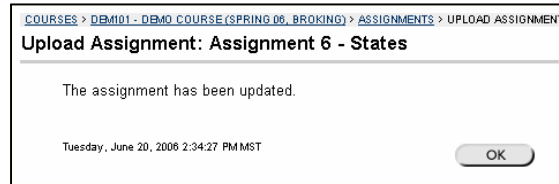
7. **Submit** is the final step in turning in an assignment using the Assignment Manager. If you have completed your assignment and are ready to turn it in, click on **Submit**. An assignment can only be submitted one time. Do not click on **Submit** until you are ready.

 **Submit**

Click **Save** to stop working and continue working later. Click **Submit** to finish. Click **Cancel** to quit without saving changes.

NOTE: If you need to save the assignment and come back to it at a later time, click on **Save**. If you leave the assignment screen without clicking on either **Save** or **Submit** you will have to re-attach any files you had attached to the assignment.

- If you make any changes to an assignment, either **Save** or **Submit** you will receive a receipt letting you know that the changes were made successfully. Click on **OK** of close this window.



- It is always a good idea to check the gradebook to make sure that you actually turned in the assignment file that you think you turned in. Open the gradebook in your class. It might be located on the course menu in the **My Grades** button or it might be located in the **Tools** button.

Item Name	Date	Grade
Creating a Test	6/19/06	-
Assignment 6 - States	6/20/06 1:46 PM	🔒
Class Participation	6/22/06	-
Total		0
Weighted Total		Not Applicable

Item Name	Date	Grade
Creating a Test	6/19/06	-
Assignment 6 - States	6/20/06 2:36 PM	!
Class Participation	6/22/06	-
Total		0
Weighted Total		Not Applicable

In the gradebook, a saved assignment appears as a padlock. An assignment which has been submitted and is waiting to be graded appears as a red exclamation point. Double-click on the ! to view the assignment you have submitted. If you discover that you have attached the wrong assignment file contact your instructor immediately.

It is your responsibility to check your work and to insure that what you think you submitted is actually what is in the grade book waiting to be graded. If you check the assignment and realize it is the wrong one, contact your instructor and asked that it be cleared from the gradebook. Once the instructor has done this, you can submit the correct file.

- When your instructor has graded your assignment you will see the points recorded in the gradebook. To view your graded assignment, click on the points. This brings you to a page where your assignment file is located. Click on the file name and the graded assignment will open, and you can view the feedback from your instructor.

Many software applications are not compatible with each other. For example, Word 2007 files can't be read by older versions of Word, and some people may use MS Works or WordPerfect rather than MS Office. For this reason it's important to save your work in a format that is portable to many formats. When possible, save your text work to RTF format. Check with your instructor for more details.



Discussion Board Guidelines

Read the instructor's expectations for the Discussion Board carefully. Some instructors require weekly posts, some require you to post and respond to your classmates, and some may require you to post only as a written assignment. **Not all classes have the same Discussion Board requirements!**

Online discussions are the like face-to-face classroom discussion. If you showed up for class two days late, none of your classmates would hear what you had to say! It is the same with the Discussion Board - if you post your comments after the discussion has ended, your work will not be read by your classmates.

You must provide meaningful comments that add value to the discussion. "Me, too." and "I agree" won't count. State why you believe something, and describe an experience that illustrates this point. Make sure that your posting says what you want it to say. Read it carefully before posting it.

If you use someone's words, ideas, or creation, cite your source! It's important to give credit to the originator of the concept, and using someone else's ideas, creations, and/or words as your own is plagiarism.

To use the Discussion Board, follow these directions:

1. Click on the **DISCUSSION BOARD** button on the left hand side of the screen.
2. Review the **Discussion Board Forums** on the right of the page. Click on the underlined link to enter the desired Forum.
3. On the far right you'll see the option to "expand" or "collapse" the "threads," which are the discussions. Click on each to see what happens.
4. Now click on the thread you intend to respond to. Read it and click on **REPLY**.
5. To read your classmates responses, click on the subject line of their postings.
6. If you want to respond, click on the **REPLY** button and then type your response.
7. If your instructor allows you to start new discussions, return to the listing of threads, and click on **Add a New Thread**.
8. After typing your message, click on **SUBMIT** in the lower right hand corner.

If your instructor has put you in a Discussion Group, follow these directions:

1. Click on the **DISCUSSION GROUP** button on the left hand side of the screen.
2. Find your name in one of the groups. Your group number will be underlined. Click on the **Group number** you belong to.
3. Click on **Group Discussion Board**.
4. Review the **Discussion Board Forums** on the right of the page. Click on the underlined link to enter the desired Forum.
5. Now click on the thread you intend to respond to. Read it and click on **REPLY**.
6. To read your classmates responses, click on the subject line of their postings.
7. If you want to respond, click on the **REPLY** button and then type your response.
8. If your instructor allows you to start new discussions, return to the listing of threads, and click on **Add a New Thread**.
9. After typing your message, click on **SUBMIT** in the lower right hand corner.



Time Management Guidelines

Taking an online course requires that you plan and organize your time and tasks carefully. **Online classes are not independent study.** There are due dates and timelines to be met. At the beginning of each semester, mark a calendar with every assignment due date so you can keep track of all of your classes.

Online courses are not easier than traditional on campus classes. They may even take *more* of your time because reading and writing take more time than listening and speaking. Some classes have more written assignments, too. Many of you organize your studies around your job and family obligations. This makes it very important to take the initiative and set up a schedule.

If you do need assistance, you need to ask for it early enough to get a response from the instructor or Blackboard Administrator before the assignment is due. It is **never** in your best interest to leave assignments until the last minute. Examples:

<p>Scenario 1 <i>You have left a Discussion Board until the last minute because you know exactly what you want to say and are sure it will only take 15 minutes or so. When you sit at your computer you realize the Internet server is down and you have no way to post your entry.</i></p>	<p>Scenario 3 <i>It is 9 pm at night and you are working on an assignment that is due at 12pm. You discover that you do not understand one of the questions and need clarification from the instructor. You email your instructor asking for help but the instructor is not checking email at that late hour. You are unable to complete the assignment without further clarification.</i></p>
<p>Scenario 2 <i>Your work is nearly done, and you plan to finish it right before it's due. A family emergency comes up and you must be with your family. You do not have time to finish your assignment by the due date and time.</i></p>	

Very few people can keep a detailed schedule day after day over a long period of time. Even with a schedule, you realize that sometimes things get in the way of completing your tasks. The following method of organizing time has been helpful to many students.

Weekly Schedule:

Make a list of the **major events** for the week with the **estimated time** it will take to accomplish each event, and the **completion date**. This may include activities that are not related to college.

Example Schedule:

Major Event	Estimated Time	Completion Date
Quiz for CIS 120	Reading for quiz: 4 hours Take quiz: 1 hour	Must be done by Friday, May 4, noon
Assignment for ECE 234	Reading: 3 hours	Thursday, May 10
Discussion Board for ECE 125A	20 minutes	Must be done by Wednesday, June 2, 8pm
Assignment for ECE 283	Reading: 3 hours Written assignment: 2 hours Discussion Board: 20 minutes	Thursday, May 10

These events will change each week. Sunday night might be your best time to make up your new weekly schedule.

Daily Schedule:

Every day make a new schedule that reflects the goals of the week. Have this list done the night before so you know exactly what you have to accomplish the next day. For example:

To Do	Time
Do Discussion Board for ECE 125A	Lunch break
Complete 1 hour of reading for CIS 120	7-8 pm
Do Discussion Board for ECE 283	Lunch break
Work on ECE 283, written assignment	8-9 pm
Reading for ECE 234	9-10 pm

Cross out each item as you finish it. If you don't get it done, make sure it goes on the next day's schedule.



Glossary

Blackboard – A Web-based program that serves as a “classroom” for online classes.

Body of the Message – The main message of an email or discussion board message.

Click – To tap on a button on the left hand side of your mouse, pressing it down and then immediately releasing it-usually with your pointer finger. **Right Click** means to tap the button on the right hand side of you mouse.

Cookie – A message given to a Web browser by a Web server. The browser stores the message in a text file. The message is then sent back to the server each time the browser requests a page from the server. The main purpose of cookies is to identify users and possibly prepare customized Web pages for them.

Discussion Board or Forum – A grouping of similar threads. Forums allow threads to be categorized.

Drag – To move the mouse with the button held down. Dragging allows one to move objects in a document, select sections of text, scroll, and “lasso” multiple objects together.

Email – The messages that students and instructors send and receive between their computers using an email system. At CAC, we use Outlook.

File – Documents that you create on your computer which can be stored, attached to emails or discussions, or uploaded to Blackboard.

Internet – A world wide communications network that provides a way for people to exchange information with each other. This word is sometimes used synonymously with the World Wide Web (www), though the Web is really one part of the Internet.

Outlook – The program used by CAC for email

Scroll – To move from side to side or up and down on a web page or in a document. When you scroll down, new lines appear at the bottom of the screen and the other lines move up so that the top lines disappear. You scroll clicking down on the scroll bar on the right side or the bottom of the screen. Hold your finger down, and “drag” your mouse to make the bar go up, down, right, or left.

Subject Line – The part of an email or Discussion Board message that identifies the topic of the message.

Thread – A conversation, or discussion. Discussion Board Forums contain one or more threads. Also called, “Threaded Discussion.”

Word Processor – a program that allows you to create a text document, or file. Common word processing programs are Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect.

