

Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium

Student Handbook

2011-2012



ADEDLC



AECHS



DCDL



ODE



AVHS



Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium

Student Handbook- Promoting Student Success

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Welcome.....	3
Structure of Distance Learning Classes	3
Academic Dishonesty.....	4
Attendance	4
Classroom Discipline	4
Computer Usage	5
Grade Reporting	5
Make-Up Policy	5
Parental Involvement	5
Reporting Concerns	6
Student Safety Tips	6
Testing	6
Expectations for Student Success.....	7
AVHS Specifics	8
AECHS Specifics	8
Audio/Visual Release Form.....	9
Memorandum of Understanding	10
Consortium Contact Information	11

ARDL Consortium Operating Policies

Student Handbook - Promoting Student Success

■ **Welcome**

Welcome to the exciting world of distance education! Your school district has chosen to provide these 21st Century technology classes on your campus to offer curricular opportunities that may not otherwise be available to you. To make the most of this privilege, it is helpful for students to be aware of the structure of the classes, policies, and tools utilized by instructors. This handbook is designed to help you become a successful distance-learning student and make the most of your technology-based learning experience.

■ **Structure of Distance Learning Courses**

Overview of Technology - Compressed Interactive Video (CIV) is the technology utilized to teach the face-to-face portion of the classes. This technology allows students and the instructor to see and hear one another in real-time. Interaction is much the same as in the traditional classroom. All distance learning courses follow a blended-learning model of instruction that includes face-to-face time and online time. Students may be engaged in online content utilizing *Moodle* or *Blackboard*. *Moodle* and *Blackboard* are learning management systems utilized for content shared via internet –capable computer.

Your Classes – Distance learning classes meet Monday through Friday during the scheduled time. Students in distance classes are from various school districts in Arkansas and may share class time with students from another school. Your school receives classes from a particular content provider. Content Providers employ instructors and provide distance learning services to your school. The Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium Content Providers are listed on Page 8 of this handbook.

Your Instructor - Instructors are highly qualified teachers in their subject areas with the responsibility of teaching and grading students in a distance learning course. Each instructor has an individual web page with contact information, content resources, lesson plans, and tutoring information to help you succeed in the course(s).

Your Facilitator: The facilitator supervises students at individual schools while receiving instruction under the guidance of your instructor. The trained site facilitator is responsible for printing handouts/lesson plans, maintaining a positive learning environment, collecting student work, managing ethical testing, and communicating with the instructor. The facilitator has the authority to enforce school, provider and instructor policies.

Your Grades: Distance learning instructors utilize online programs such as *WebGrade* and *EdLine* to post student grades. Each student will be given a username and password for individual and parental access to view his/her grades at any time. Students are encouraged to check grades on a weekly basis and communicate any concerns to the instructor immediately. Other online programs that instructors utilize for online testing and review are *Quia* and *Examview*.

■ **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic Dishonesty is an ever-increasing problem in the age of technology. Institutions across the globe are implementing policies and educational modules to ensure that students do their own work and give credit to the originator of the ideas when using the thoughts or work of others. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, stealing academic property and cheating. Students identified as being in violation of a content provider's Academic Dishonesty Policy may not receive credit for that work. If a facilitator discovers that a student is in violation, the facilitator should notify the instructor in addition to following the policy of their school. If an instructor suspects academic dishonesty the instructor may call a conference with the student and facilitator. If the academic dishonesty persists, the distance learning provider may report problems to local principal.

■ **Attendance**

Attendance is extremely important for distance learning courses. There will be times when students have to miss class for scheduled activities, such as assemblies or organizational meetings at the local school district. If a school has scheduled an event that will interfere with a distance learning course, the instructor should be notified in advance. Students who are absent from distance learning classes are responsible for making up the missed assignments. Facilitators are responsible for taking attendance and reporting it to the instructor and appropriate individual at their school. As in the traditional classroom, we feel the distance learning courses should take priority over extracurricular activities but realize this may not always be possible. Attendance for Arkansas Early College High School is specialized due to preparation for post-secondary involvement. Any student who misses more than 8 classes of a concurrent credit course is subject to NOT receive college credit. Advanced Placement classes do not end until the Advanced Placement exam is given. In the event of extenuating student circumstances (illness, medical emergency, etc.), the content providers will work with the local administration to devise a plan for the student on a case-by-case basis.

■ **Classroom Discipline**

Classroom discipline will be in accordance with the policies of your school district. Each instructor may establish his/her own class rules and procedures as long as they do not conflict with local school policy. In the event of serious student discipline issues, the name of the student and the specifics of the problem could be reported to the local principal. If action is merited, the procedure below may be followed upon each violation:

1st offense – Facilitator will be asked to complete a Discipline Report.

2nd offense – School Principal and Parent contact may be requested.

3rd offense – Student may lose privilege from classes for one week. Parents may be notified in writing. Student is expected to complete all assigned work for that time.

4th offense – Student may be officially dropped from the class. If this occurs, the student may not receive credit for the distance learning course.

*Please be aware that some actions may result in immediate removal from class, regardless of whether it is the first, second or third offense. If a student is removed from class, he/she may not receive a W, F, or not receive a grade.

■ **Computer Usage**

The school district's computer usage policy will be enforced in the distance learning classroom. In regards to distance learning applications (i.e. *Moodle, Blackboard*), unacceptable usage includes but is not limited to using inappropriate language, cyber bullying, and trespassing in the files of others. These actions may result in the loss of access to these applications and websites. Any communication or content within the distance learning applications are subject to access and review by local school and distance learning program personnel at any time.

■ **Grade Reporting**

The distance learning instructors will provide numerical grades based on a range from zero (0) to one hundred (100) in four nine-week periods based on the Arkansas Distance Learning Initiative academic calendar. Calculation of the semester averages will be based on each local school's policy. Progress grades will be provided upon request. The facilitator should submit the request for a progress report to the instructor at least one week prior to the date the progress report is needed.

Concurrent Credit Students – College grades earned through the AECHS are part of a student's permanent college transcript. The grade can affect grade point averages. The effect of pre-freshmen status grades vary from one post-secondary institution to another. Each student is encouraged to check with the post-secondary institution they plan to attend after high school graduation for advice if the student is concerned about their grade assignment.

■ **Make-up Policy**

If a student has an excused absence, the student should complete all graded assignments as allowed by their local school's make-up policy and submit the material to the facilitator. It is the student's responsibility to check with the facilitator/instructor for the materials needed for make-up. If the absence extends more than three days, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the instructor for timely completion of the work. In cases of extended excused absence, the distance learning program may consult with the local principal to develop a plan for the student to complete the coursework. In the case of unexcused absences, make-up is at the discretion of the instructor.

■ **Parental Involvement**

Instructors and content providers maintain frequent contact with parents regarding student performance and achievement. Please contact the instructor at any time to request a conference or student progress and achievement information. Many instructors participate in the local district Open House nights. Please contact the instructor to request any specific parental involvement.

■ **Reporting Concerns**

If a student, facilitator, or administrator has a concern or a personality conflict with an instructor, they should share the concern with the local site coordinator. The local site coordinator should report the concern to the program manager of the content provider.

Concurrent Credit – The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) Coordinating Board policy regarding off-campus instruction provides a process by which ADHE will resolve any conflict between institutions related to service area. Please contact the AECHS Program Manager for details regarding this policy.

■ **Student Safety Tips**

- **Maintain Privacy** – It is fun to meet new people in *Moodle* or *Blackboard* but you should not share your name, age, telephone number, email address or home address anywhere within the online distance learning sites. Do not share your passwords with anyone. Keeping your password private will prevent other people from having access to the accounts that you are responsible for.
- **Don't Respond** – If you receive an inappropriate message that makes you feel uncomfortable or is hurtful, do not respond. Notify the facilitator or instructor right away.
- **Don't Participate in Cyber Bullying** – Inappropriate pictures or writing is not allowed within distance learning coursework. Screenshots may be kept of all student work and will be utilized in discipline referrals if necessary.
- **Stay on Task** - When students have an individual computer to access coursework, there is sometimes the temptation to “surf the web” or visit non-instructional websites. In order to keep you safe and engaged in the instruction, refrain from visiting non-instructional websites.

■ **Testing Policy**

Students enrolled in a distance learning course are required to take all 9 weeks and semester exams as instructed by the instructor. **There are no exemptions for distance learning course cumulative exams.** If a student misses a major exam, the student must present acceptable documentation to be allowed to make up the exam. If a student misses a major exam and does not make it up during the time-frame allowed by district policy, the student will receive a zero for the exam. For Advanced Placement Courses: A student must take the AP exam for each AP course enrolled.

■ Expectations for Student Success

- **Attend Class** – Attendance is extremely important. If you are absent, you remain responsible for homework, notes, and all class-related assignments and materials per your school’s policy. Check with your facilitator and if necessary with the instructor for the materials you need for class.
- **Avoid Plagiarism** – Plagiarism continues to be an ever-growing problem in our current world of sharing resources online. Each instructor will provide a review of plagiarism and share resources to assist you in following policies of academic honesty.
- **Be Considerate** - You may be in class with students from different schools with varying backgrounds. Treat everyone in your class with respect at all times. This includes instructors, facilitators and students from all sites. Any disrespectful or derogatory comments towards the distance learning community members are not acceptable.
- **Be Prepared** – Come to class prepared and on time. Student should bring all required materials to class every day and begin work immediately when class begins.
- **Be Responsible** - Take responsibility for your learning. Students are expected to be mature learners by paying attention, asking questions, completing homework and studying for quizzes/tests.
- **Communicate Special Needs** - It is the policy of the Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium to accommodate individuals with disabilities pursuant to federal law in regard to equal educational opportunities. It is the responsibility of any learning-disabled student to inform the instructor of any necessary accommodations at the start of the course in any semester. Disability notifications must be made within the first ten days of class and may be confirmed with the local school administration.
- **Engage in Developing 21st Century Technical Skills** – By nature, distance learning courses will provide you with the opportunity to master keyboarding skills, creating/saving/uploading files, email communication, and basic software utilization.
- **Know Your Policies** - Become familiar with your local school student policies, the ARDL Consortium Operating Policies, and instructor procedures.
- **Participate** – Participation in the class is vital. Participation involves paying attention during instruction, answering when called upon and asking questions related to the topic being covered. To ask a question wait to be recognized and politely speak. In order for a student to be fully enrolled in the course, the signed audio/visual release and student M.O.U. should be returned.
- **Practice Ethical Testing Procedures** – follow instructor’s procedures for ethical testing which may include utilizing a cover sheet, forbidden usage of electronic devices and clearing your desk. Do not engage in academic dishonesty of any kind.

■ **Arkansas Virtual High School Students** (in addition to other listed policies)

General Drop Policy - AVHS instructors will do everything possible to help students succeed in coursework but there may be situations when students are dropped from enrollment in AVHS. These situations are usually failure to complete work or an academic integrity violation. Students should not procrastinate and wait until the last minute to complete coursework.

- Students who have not logged in to begin working within the first two weeks of enrollment may be dropped from class.
- At the end of four weeks of enrollment, students who have not completed 50% of the assigned work with a passing grade may be dropped.
- After the first and third nine-weeks, students will not be dropped. They will receive grade earned.
- The school will be notified by email prior to a student being dropped from AVHS.

■ **Arkansas Early College High School Students** (in addition to other listed policies)

General Drop Policy - Students should be prepared for the academic rigor of concurrent credit courses.

- Before withdrawing/dropping a course a student should consider the impact on future financial aid. College hours attempted in high school under pre-freshmen status count towards the maximum number of hours allowed to attempt under federal and state grant programs.
- Students should use good judgement and consult the post-secondary institution they currently attend as well as the post-secondary institution they plan to attend after high school graduation for advice before withdrawing. To contact your instructor for guidance, visit the AECHS website.
- If it is determined that withdrawal is the best option, the form for withdrawing from the class is also on the AECHS website. The high school principal and/or counselor must submit the form to the AECHS Coordinator and follow the university's procedure for withdrawing. Students are responsible for course drop fees and withdrawal from the institution if applicable.

Grading Policy – College grades earned through the AECHS are part of a student's permanent college transcript. The grade can affect grade point averages. The effect of pre-freshmen status grades vary from one post-secondary institution to another. Each student is encouraged to check with the post-secondary institution they plan to attend after high school graduation for advice if the student is concerned about their grade assignment.

Transcript Requests – To request a transcript, go to the post-secondary institution website and go to the registrar page. Each institution has specific instructions on how to send a transcript with your college grades.

Attendance - Attendance for Arkansas Early College High School is specialized due to preparation for secondary preparation. If a student misses more than 8 days of class, they may not receive college credit. Each student is responsible for following the instructor's syllabus in regards to make-up work as is common practice at the University level.

Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium

Audio Visual Release

Yes, I _____ authorize the Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium
Parent/Guardian Name
and/or Content Providers to use audio and visual representations of _____
Child's Name
of the _____ in class recordings, publications, web sites, video
School District
presentations or any other electronic or published media used to promote or communicate for the
advancement of Arkansas K-12 Distance Learning. I understand that when the Arkansas Distance
Learning Providers use an audio or visual recording of my child, the image or recording will not
contain personally identifying information but may include the name of the school that he/she
attends.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

OR

No, I do not authorize the Arkansas Distance Learning Content Providers to use audio and/or visual
representations of my child and or legal dependent(s) in any way as described above. However, I DO
give permission for my child to participate in courses delivered over Compressed Interactive Video.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium

Student Memorandum of Understanding

1. It is my responsibility to familiarize myself and abide by all Arkansas Distance Learning Policies as outlined in this handbook. The electronic version may be found at <http://ardl.k12.ar.us>
2. I will maintain appropriate classroom behavior as outlined by my high school handbook, the ARDL Student Handbook, and my distance learning instructor classroom procedures.
3. I will be accountable for all class activities including on-line and off-line instruction.
4. I will be respectful to all distance learning instructors, facilitators, and other students participating in class.
5. I will actively participate in my distance learning experience.
6. I will not willingly participate in activities that are dishonest including but not limited to cheating and plagiarism.
7. I will follow the computer usage guidelines of my local school district and my distance learning instructor.
8. I will make my distance learning class a priority and make every effort to attend class daily.
9. If I am absent, it is my responsibility to obtain missed assignments.
10. I understand that I may be removed from a distance learning class and receive a W or F or no grade if I am involved in a severe discipline or academic dishonesty incident.

Student Signature

Date

Name of School/District

Parents: Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understand the Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium Student Handbook.

Parent's Signature

Date

Arkansas Distance Learning Consortium

Contact Information

AEEDLC



Arkansas Department of Education Distance Learning Center

601 Carnahan Drive Maumelle, AR 72113
Phone: 501-803-5400 Fax: 501-803-5410 <http://dlc.k12.ar.us>
Program Manager: Michael Lar

AECHS



Arkansas Early College High School

Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative
1022 Scogin Drive Monticello, AR 71655
Phone: 870-367-6848 Fax: 870-367-8179 <http://se.sesc.k12.ar.us/echS>
Program Manager: Ellora Hicks



Arkansas Virtual High School

Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative
17 Garren Lane Enola, AR 72047
Phone: 501-849-3548 Fax: 501-849-2175 <http://avhs@windstream.net>
Program Manager: Sandy O'Reilly

DCDL



Dawson Center for Distance Learning

Dawson Education Service Cooperative
711 Clinton Street Arkadelphia, AR 71923
Phone: 870-246-2813 Fax: 870-403-0662 www.dawson.dsc.k12.ar.us
Program Manager: April Shepherd

ODE



Office of Distance Education

Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts
200 Whittington Avenue Hot Springs, AR 71901
Phone: 501-622-5141 Fax: 501-622-5144 <http://ode.asmsa.org>
Program Manager: Chris Robbins



State Office of K-12 Distance Learning, Arkansas Department of Education

101 Bulldog Drive Plumerville, AR 71272
Phone: 501-339-8056 Fax: 501-354-0167 <http://ardl.k12.ar.us>
Program Director: Cathi Swan