

# DIVISION OF DISTANCE LEARNING

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The Office of Distance Learning includes the Distance & Digital Learning Department, Instructional Technology, and the Panola College website. To accommodate varied student schedules and learning styles, Panola College provides distance learning courses in online and hybrid formats.

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## About the Division of Distance Learning

The Division of Distance Learning provides instruction and support for faculty and students through the departments of Distance Learning and Instructional Technology and through the Panola College website.

## Distance Education

To accommodate varied student schedules and learning styles, distance education courses are presented in a variety of course formats including online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses.

Panola College offers these degrees online:

- AAS - Associate Degree Nursing
- AAS - Computer Information Technology
- AAS - General Business
- AAS - Health Information Technology
- AAS - Medical Laboratory Technician
- AAS - Office Professional
- AAS - Office Professional (Medical Option)
- AAT - Teacher Education
- AS - Core Curriculum

In addition, several certificate programs are offered online.

Online courses offer students flexibility in coursework that can be accessed from home, work or other locations, including in open computer labs available at Panola College. All instruction in online classes is provided through the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS), and testing services are available at Panola College facilities in Carthage, Marshall and Center, Texas, and on several area high school campuses. Hybrid courses combine elements of both face-to-face and online formats, and many instructors use the Canvas LMS to provide resources to enhance traditional face-to-face classes.

## Virtual College of Texas

The Virtual College of Texas (VCT) is a collaboration of community colleges instituted to enhance access to higher education by sharing distance education resources among colleges. These resources include instruction, student and administrative services, and technology. VCT serves students who need distance education courses that are not available at their home institutions at the point that they need them. Panola College provides courses for students across the state through VCT, and Panola College students benefit from the service by having access to courses from other institutions as well.

## Instructional Technology

Making the transition between the traditional classroom and the Interactive Television or online classroom is made easier with specialized training facilitated by the Distance Learning department's Coordinator of

Educational Technology. Instructors are trained and supported with individual and small group instruction and online resources. Professional Development opportunities are offered throughout the academic year and training sessions are based on the needs and interests of faculty and staff members.

Distance Learning support for students is provided face-to-face, by telephone, and online. Orientation for online learning is provided on campus and through the Canvas LMS, and technical support is available upon request. Students wishing to know how they may fare in online courses can access the *SmarterMeasure* assessment, which assesses reading comprehension, computer skills, learning styles, and much more. A link to the *SmarterMeasure* assessment is located on the Panola College website.

## **Panola College Website**

The Panola College website at <http://www.panola.edu> is maintained through the Division of Distance Learning. The website provides access to all Panola College departments and resources.

## **Mission of the Division of Distance Learning**

The mission of the Division of Distance Learning is to provide training and resources to support faculty and students in designing and participating in all types of instruction at Panola College, and to provide equitable access to College courses and resources through instructional technology and the Panola College website.

## **Admissions, Counseling, Testing, Registration**

Admissions, counseling, and registration for Panola College distance learning courses is the same as for other courses. Students should contact the Student Success Center for more information. For online courses, some instructors require face-to-face orientation, while others provide orientation online. A schedule of courses is available online at <http://www.panola.edu>.

Testing services for online courses are available at Panola College facilities in Carthage, Marshall and Center, Texas, and on some area high school campuses. Testing information can be found on the Distance Learning page of the Panola College website.

## **Dual Credit Orientation**

Orientation for students enrolled for dual credit is the same as for other students and is available through the Panola College Student Success Center and the Distance Learning face-to-face and online orientation sessions.

## **Continuing Education**

The Distance Learning staff works with the Division of Workforce and Continuing Education to provide online instruction and resources in various areas of continuing education. Offerings include courses for Continuing Education Unit credits and classes for personal enrichment.

## **Professional Development**

Professional Development opportunities are offered throughout the academic year through the Division of Distance Learning. Training ranges from the use of instructional technology to pedagogy focusing on needs and interests identified through faculty surveys. Sessions are offered face-to-face or online in the Canvas Learning Management System and through synchronous collaboration tools, and are taught by Distance Learning staff members and faculty members with expertise in selected subjects. Guest lecturers are also invited to present instruction in relevant topics.

## **Faculty/Staff Resources Course**

The Faculty Resources course in the Canvas LMS is available to all faculty members and provides resources related to instruction, technology, and Panola College policies and procedures. Faculty and staff members are encouraged to access the course for information and tools that can enhance instruction and productivity.

## **Distance Learning Handbook**

Through the *Distance Learning Faculty Handbook*, the Distance Learning Division provides information and resources for faculty members who deliver instruction using online tools. The *Handbook* is available on the Distance Learning webpage.

## **Adjunct Orientation**

Face-to-face Adjunct Orientation is provided at the beginning of each semester for adjunct instructors at Panola College. Instructors receive information about College policies and procedures and about resources available for instructional and technical support.

## **Adjunct Academy**

Instructional and technical training for adjunct instructors is available in the Adjunct Academy course offered by the Distance Learning Division through the Canvas LMS. Adjunct instructors are required to complete the training prior to teaching classes at Panola College. In addition, adjunct instructors must complete the Certification in Instructional Technology training, offered in both face-to-face and online sessions.