

# Start Here Module

This Start Here Module was extracted from separate pages in a Blackboard course shell. It is meant for distance, hybrid, or synchronous blended classes.

It contains several options for course delivery and tools. Faculty members customize the pages for the type of distance course and for the delivery method.

This module was created at the Community and Technical College at University of Alaska Anchorage and is based on earlier versions of the Start Here.

---

## 1. Welcome



Welcome to "Start Here". This beginning unit is intended to:

- State the technical requirements of this course (hardware and software)
- Explain my policies
- Make sure you have all the resources to be successful in this course

This unit should take 20 - 30 minutes to complete. Just click on each item below. Some of the links will open in a new page. To get back to this area, just click on Start Here in the breadcrumb trail at the top of the page or on Start Here in the menu at the left.



---

## 2. Become Familiar with Blackboard

We will use Blackboard extensively in this course. If you are unfamiliar with how to use a certain feature, check out the Blackboard Resources under Student Help (or Help) on the left.

---

## 3. How this Course Works

Select the class description that's closest to how you teach and edit it to meet your needs!

### **Face to face class.**

This is a traditional class. We will meet in person <insert days, times, and room>. Assignments will generally be due on <specify day of the week and time> and will be submitted electronically via Blackboard.

### **Collaborate class**

Our class meetings will be held in Collaborate on <insert days and times>. Please go through the Collaborate setup in this module so that you are prepared for class.

### **Asynchronous class**

There are no regular class meetings. You are expected to work on your own according to the schedule. You will be interacting with your classmates via collaborative tools in Blackboard - the discussion board, blogs, and wikis.

### **Blended class -meets every other week**

We will hold class meetings every other week. During the other week, activities in Blackboard will replace the class meeting.

---

## 4. Print and Read the Syllabus



The next thing I'd like you to do is download the course syllabus and print out a copy of it.

To access the syllabus, click on the "Syllabus" link found in the colored menu list to the left, and then click on the attachment found there. It will download to your computer, typically to your Downloads folder.

*Tip:* Review the syllabus and mark important dates in your personal calendar now.

*Tip:* Now is also a good time to create an area on your computer to keep all your course files. Create a folder on your desktop or in your documents and name it with the course name. Put the downloaded syllabus file in it. As you download files, find documents on the internet, or create documents for this class, put them all in this folder.

---

## 5. Check your Browser for Compatibility with Blackboard

Goes to an external site: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/classes/browser-checker.cfm>

---

## 6a. Equipment and Software Requirements

To be successful in this class you will need the proper tools. Here is a list of the hardware and software recommended.

### Computer

Generally, a newer computer with current software and up-to-date security patches is recommended. If your PC is more than 2 years old, you may find that it does not work well.

PC operating systems should be Windows 7 or 8.

Mac operating systems should be Mac OS 10.6.8 or higher. (Snow Leopard, Lion, or Mountain Lion)

### Other hardware

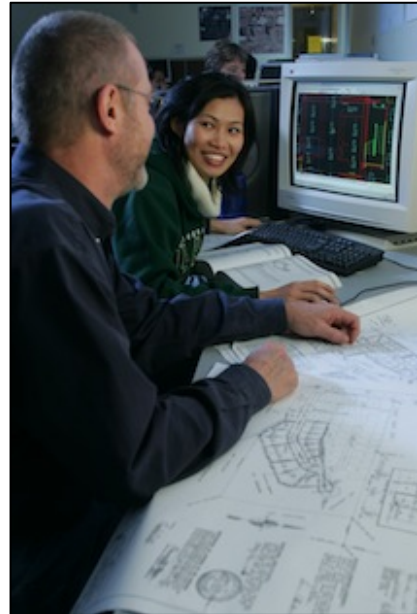
A USB headphone with microphone system (approximately \$8-15) is required for those participating via Blackboard Collaborate or Desktop Video Conferencing

### Internet

Dial up internet connection, 29.8 Kbps minimum. A high-speed connection is recommended.

### Software- recent versions of

- [Antivirus software](#) - available from UAA
- [Java](#) - available from Oracle
- Recent versions of [Chrome](#) or [Mozilla Firefox](#) browsers preferred. Internet Explorer 9 or 10 on PCs. Safari 6 on Macs.
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- [Adobe Reader](#)
- [Flash Player](#)
- Windows Media Player ([Flip4Mac download](#) for Macs)



---

## 6b. Equipment and Software Requirements- CAD

To be successful in this class you will need the proper tools. Here is a list of the hardware and software recommended.

### Computer

- For CADD work, a higher end PC is strongly recommended. Here is the configuration as of August 2013:
- Intel® Core i7 2600 GHz processor 16GB RAM
- 500 MB Hard Drive Space
- Keyboard and three button mouse
- Microsoft 7 operating system preferred

### Other hardware

A headphone with microphone system (approximately \$8-15) is required for those participating via Elluminate Live or Desktop Video Conferencing

### Internet

Dial up internet connection, 29.8 Kbps minimum. A high-speed connection is recommended.

### Software- recent versions of

- [Antivirus software](#)
- [Java](#)
- Chrome or Mozilla Firefox browsers preferred. Internet Explorer 9 or 10.
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- [Adobe Reader](#)
- [Flash Player](#)
- Windows Media Player (maybe)

### CADD software

- Depending upon the specific class, the software requirements are the most recent versions of:
  - Autodesk AutoCAD
  - Autodesk Civil 3D
  - Autodesk 3D Studio
  - Revit Architecture
  - Revit Structural
  - Revit MEP

These are expensive products to buy individually. They are available in the UAA labs for the AET program and the satellite labs across the UAA system. The packages are also available as [time-limited free downloads from Autodesk](#)

---

## 7. Set Up for Collaborate Web Conferencing

During this course, you will be connecting to each class session through an online program called Blackboard Collaborate, a virtual classroom that allows students and instructors to chat, view files, write on a whiteboard, listen to lectures, and engage in discussions all in "real time" through your computer via speakers, microphones, and special software. Collaborate classes may be recorded so you can go back and watch them later.

Everyone in the class must be able to log on to Collaborate, so follow these steps to ensure your computer is set up for Collaborate:

### A. Get a headset with microphone (USB preferred) for you computer

Plug the headset in before starting

### B. First time: Download the Collaborate Launcher

Go to a Collaborate session in this course.

1. Click on Collaborate in the menu, and then select a session that has a purple button to its left.
2. You may be prompted to download the Launcher. If not, click on the linked text "download the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher."
3. Download the launcher. Follow the Windows or Mac directions.
4. [Directions](#) for installing the Launcher on Windows.
5. You will install the launcher.
6. [Directions](#) for installing the Launcher on MacOS.
7. You will unzip the launcher.
8. By default, it sits in your Downloads folder. If you prefer, move it to the Applications folder.

### C. Do a test Collaborate session.

The next step is to actually join Collaborate session.

1. Continue to use the Collaborate session you used in B. First Time
2. Click on the Join Now link.
3. The session should launch in a minute or two.
4. Select your connection speed (if you're not sure, ISDN will do).

### D. Learn more

Check out the attached [Participant Quick Reference Guide](#) for a quick overview of Collaborate.

For resources on Collaborate, go to the [Collaborate Essentials for Participants](#). Please review at least these two sections: Blackboard Collaborate Web Conferencing Room and the Participants Panel.

If you experience any difficulties, call the Help Desk at < >

---

## 8. Application Sharing in Collaborate

Anyone in a Blackboard Collaborate session can share their desktop or an application with everyone else in the room if

- The moderator gives them permission and
- The moderator switches to Application Sharing in the Content Area.

The sharer retains control of the desktop unless she explicitly gives permission to someone to use the mouse. Either the originator of the session or a moderator can end the sharing at any time.

A few tips:

- Have the applications open and behind the Collaborate window before starting to share.
- Click on the desktop share icon or go to Tools > Application Sharing in the menu to start the process.
- While sharing, move the mouse slowly and minimize scrolling while sharing. Each move of the mouse prompts a redraw of the screen

When you get comfortable, find and use the pause/unpause buttons in Collaborate if you need to scroll: pause the desktop share, scroll to the new location, unpause the share.


See [Collaborate Essentials for Participants](#) for more details.



## 9. View Collaborate Recordings

You can view a recording of a Collaborate session if your instructor has recorded the session. Go to the Collaborate area of the class. Click on the recording link.

Select the recording that you want to view. It will start like a regular Collaborate session. View the attached file on how to view/navigate a recording.



### Blackboard Collaborate







**Scheduled Sessions** | **Recordings** 

Search  Start Date   End Date  

### Blackboard Collaborate

**Scheduled Sessions** | **Recordings**

Search  Start Date   End Date  

Title 	Date & Time	Session Duration	Version	Blackboard Collaborate	Audio (MP3)
201401 AET / CM A101 Fundamentals of CADD 	Tuesday, January 21, 2014 4:08:52 PM AKST	3:53:41	12.5		
201401 AET / CM A101 Fundamentals of CADD	Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:06:06 PM AKST	3:48:37	12.5		
201401 AET / CM A101 Fundamentals of CADD	Thursday, January 23, 2014 4:05:56 PM AKST	5:44:26	12.5		
201401 AET / CM A101 Fundamentals of CADD	Monday, January 27, 2014 4:04:01 PM AKST	3:47:08	12.5		





## 10. Email

I will send all email correspondence to your UAA email account. Emails sent from Blackboard are sent to your UAA email account.

This means you must login to your UA email account several times each week or put a forward in your account to your preferred email address. You can access your email at the [UA Google Apps page](#). It is your responsibility to make sure that you are receiving emails addressed to your UAA email account.

I will not email grades or course progress to a non-UA account due to university policies.

All emails to me must:

- Be sent from your UAA Gmail account
- State the course name in the subject line
- Be written in a professional style
- Be signed with your first and last name

You can send email from Blackboard. Go to Tools in the Course Menu and select Send Email.

**TASK: Please send an email to me from your UAA Gmail account:**

- Subject line: <course name>: Configuration.
- In the email, tell me about your computer configuration and whether it meets the minimal standards for the class.
- Sign it with your first and last name.

---

# 11. Desktop Video Conferencing

## (DC)

Some of you will join the session via video conferencing from your computer. The University of Alaska Office of Information Technology Video Conferencing Services (VCS) in Fairbanks coordinates this.



### System Requirements for Desktop Videoconferencing (Jabber)

- VCS's [minimum computer system configuration](#) for Jabber clients
- Broadband Internet connection (512 kbps synchronous or better preferred)
- Camera (webcam, built into some laptops)
- Microphone (built into some webcams and laptops)
- One of the following:
  - Ear-buds
  - Headphones
  - Headset

Note: USB headset with built in microphone is ideal.

### Set Up

To become a registered user and get the Jabber software, [complete this form at least two days](#) before your first class (one week before is better). You can contact VCS at 800-910-9601 or 907-450-8390, option 1 after you have completed the form. You will need your UA ID number for the call. VCS will schedule a time to:

- Set up a username and password for you to access the video conferencing session
- Assist you in downloading and configuring the desktop video conferencing software (Jabber client)
- Do an audio/video test of your system
- Give you a short orientation on how to use the software

### Class Meetings

A few minutes before the start of class:

- Plug your headset into your computer
- Start Jabber
- The video conferencing session will send an invitation to your Jabber client to join the session
- Click the join button on the window
- Unmute your mic to greet your classmates at the other sites
- Read the section on Videoconferencing Etiquette

If you have any difficulties with the video conferencing, contact VCS at 800-910-9601 or 907-450-8390, option 1. Select option 1 again if you are in class.



### In case of technology problems

Sometimes things happen... Be prepared.

- Give your phone number to your professor.

- Know how to mute and un-mute your microphone.
- Have the telephone number for the main room.
- Keep the phone number for VCS handy (800-910-9601 or 907-450-8390, option 1).
- **Expect problems if you change your configuration** - e.g. a new headset, different location, etc. Call VCS to test your new configuration.
- If you must connect in a public place using the wi fi, you must use a headset with microphone. Hotel rooms are also unpredictable. Expect that the internet connection could be inconsistent and/or delays of 1-2 seconds. This is not a recommended environment.

Sources: OIT, UAA Project Management

---

## 12. Checklist

Have you:

- Read everything in Start Here?
- Printed the Syllabus?
- Entered important dates in your planner?
- Sent an email to your instructor?
- Set up and tested Elive or Jabber if you're using them?

If you have, congratulations!

You are on your way to a successful semester. You can begin the first reading assignment in your textbook.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License. To view a copy of this license, visit

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 444 Castro Street, Suite 900, Mountain View, California, 94041, USA.