



Privacy, Safety & Security of Data: Acceptable Use Policy for Distance Learning

Failure to review the responsibilities outlined in the Manatee Technical College Distance Learning Handbook will not relieve the student or the parent/guardian of the responsibility for compliance with the code or accountability for loss or damage to the School District of Manatee County

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1. Introduction

The IT staff of the School District of Manatee County (SDMC) and Manatee Technical College (MTC) hold credentials in the following areas: server infrastructure, desktop infrastructure, private cloud, enterprise devices and apps, data platform, business intelligence, messaging and communication. This allows direct knowledge regarding best practices in technology infrastructure.

2. Data Storage & Network Access

The Administration of MTC manages all staff and student access to distance learning management systems. They work closely with SDMC IT staff to ensure that MTC is operating with a safe and adequate infrastructure.

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MTC employees and students are provided with credentials to access the MTC and SDMC networks and are provided server space to store digital materials. When an employee is no longer a staff member or when a student is no longer enrolled, their access to the server and network is revoked.

3. Privacy, Safety, & Security Application and User Security

User Authentication: User data on our database is logically segregated by account-based access rules. User accounts have unique usernames and passwords that must be entered each time a user logs on.

User Passwords: User application passwords have minimum complexity requirements and include double identification requirements.

Data Encryption: Certain sensitive user data, such as account passwords, are stored in encrypted format or masked to all but limited individuals with specific requirements for viewing.

4. Physical Security

a. Data Centers: MTC's information systems infrastructure (servers, networking equipment, etc.) for the distance learning management system is in a server facility off-site due to our managed hosting/SaaS system configuration. Some limited use servers are secured at the district level and are housed at the School District of Manatee County's secure datacenter, where they are monitored and maintained by district staff.

b. Data Center Security: The School District of Manatee County's data center is surveilled 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Access is fully secured with district security entry requirements.

c. Environmental Controls: All district and MTC IT facilities are maintained at controlled temperatures and humidity ranges which are continuously monitored for variations. Smoke, fire detection and response systems are in place. Distance learning data is housed in a secure data facility.

5. Responsibilities of Institution

a. Introduction

The IT, instructional and administrative staff members of Manatee Technical College hold credentials in those areas of expertise that determine their

responsibility to ensure the quality of distance education offered by the institution.

b. IT Staff Responsibility

The School District of Manatee County IT Department will maintain equipment designated for student use, will provide support to the network (local and district), and will work with MTC staff to ensure access to resources. They will communicate periods of down time, and will provide appropriate technical support at all levels, as requested through instructional faculty.

c. Instructional Faculty Responsibility

Manatee Technical College instructional faculty members will provide access to high-quality distance education curriculum that is aligned to state and industry standards. They will provide initial training on the use of the LMS, relevant to the specific course. The curriculum will be reviewed by an advisory panel of industry members and will use instructional materials that represent up-to-date and relevant theory within the discipline. The institution ensures timeliness of its responses (synchronously or asynchronously) to students' requests by placing a requirement on response times to no more than 24 hours during regular school hours. After school hours, holidays and weekend response will be outlined in course syllabi and/or program specific guidelines manuals. Courses will be continually evaluated, both by the instructors and by administrators, to ensure that the elements of high-quality and standards-aligned online coursework are in place.

6. Responsibility of Administration

Manatee Technical College administration will review distance education courses for content and structure annually. They will communicate expectations for quality to instructors, participate in advisory meetings, and address student concerns as they related to distance education needs, in an impartial fashion.

7. Technology Requirements

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology needed in order to have a successful course. We recommend that you meet the technical requirements below when using any MTC learning management system (LMS).

Note: For additional required hardware or software requirements for your course(s), contact your instructor or refer to the course syllabus for additional information on their requirements.

8. Required Hardware

- A computer (desktop/laptop) or mobile device (smartphone/tablet) that is less than 5 years old is recommended.
 - Computer must have USB/USBC port (s)
- Speakers/headphones/earbuds for listening to audio or videos presented in courses.
- Webcam for interacting in course activities that require video feedback from students (such as Studio), video test proctoring (such as Respondus), or other third-party tools.
- Thumb drives for external use and backup storage.

9. Required Software and Connections

The following software is required:

- Google Chrome (latest version)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (latest version)
- Microsoft Office (includes Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint). Students have free access to install the suite on their computers. Find your Office 365 apps on your MTC Dashboard at <https://www.MTCdashboard.net>.
- Windows Media Player
- Internet Connection
A stable Internet connection of 56K or greater is required. Please note that a 56K connection may degrade the quality of your experience.
- Internet Browser(s)

Various browsers may be able to access the learning management system. For more information, please visit specific requirements for the LMS used by your MTC program

[Canvas requirements](#)

[Respondus LockDown Browser](#)

[PlagiarismCheck.org](#)

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Manatee Technical College has a license agreement with PlagiarismCheck.org, a service that helps detect plagiarism and the use of AI (i.e. ChatGPT, Bing AI, Chatsonic, Jasper Chat etc.) by comparing student papers with PlagiarismCheck database and internet sources. Students who take this course agree that all required papers may be submitted to PlagiarismCheck.org. Papers submitted to PlagiarismCheck.org retain student copyright to the work they created.

A copy of submitted papers is retained in a PlagiarismCheck database archive to be compared with future submissions—a practice that helps protect and strengthen copyright ownership. Use of the PlagiarismCheck service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on [PlagiarismCheck.org website](https://www.plagiarismcheck.org/).

Respondus

This course may require the use of Respondus LockDown Browser for online exams (remote and in-class). This is a link unique for Manatee Technical College privately owned computers and laptops. For installation on SDMC computers and laptops please contact your instructor who will contact IT support.

10. Acceptable Use Policy

a. Introduction

This document sets forth the policy of acceptable use by users of the learning management systems utilized by Manatee Technical College (MTC). Manatee Technical College currently uses Canvas and others as learning management systems (LMS), and this policy should be read in conjunction with the Terms of Use for your program's specific LMS. All users, including, but not limited to, students, teachers, school administrators, and educational organizations are subject to this policy and are expected to comply with its provisions.

b. User Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of any person using the LMS to read, understand, and comply with this policy. Any person with questions regarding the meaning of the policy, or application of this policy in a particular context, should seek clarification from the LMS administrator. For Canvas, questions may be directed to chamberlainl@manateeschools.net on the East Campus and detomac@manateeschools.net on Main Campus. The use of the LMS shall constitute acceptance of the terms of this policy.

c. Acceptable and Unacceptable Uses

The LMS is available only for educational purposes. Users may not use the LMS to store any files that are not educational.

It is unacceptable for users to use the LMS for:

- furthering any political or religious purpose.
- engaging in any commercial or fundraising purpose.
- sending or posting threatening, harassing, or disparaging messages or content to or regarding an individual or group of people.
- gaining unauthorized access to computer or telecommunications networks.
- interfering with the operations of technology resources, including placing a computer virus on any computer system, including an LMS;
- accessing or sharing sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate materials.
- intercepting communications intended for other people.
- attempting to gain unauthorized access to any LMS;
- logging in through another person's account or attempting to access another user's password or files.
- sending defamatory or unfounded material concerning a person or group of people.
- furthering any criminal or illegal act, including downloading, uploading, or distributing any files, software, or other material in violation of federal copyright laws.
- infringing on any intellectual property rights; or
- downloading, uploading, or distributing any files, software, or other material that is not specifically related to an educational project.

The LMS may not be used to transmit or store messages or other data that are prohibited or inappropriate under this policy. Users may not create, send, or store messages or other data or content that are considered offensive, contain sexually explicit material, or otherwise offensively address the age,

race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability of a person or a group of people. Users also may not create, send, or store messages pertaining to dangerous devices such as weaponry or explosive devices. Users should take all reasonable precautions against receiving or downloading messages, images, or other data of this sort.

d. Expectations Regarding Academic Integrity

Enrolled users will participate and submit required assignments as requested or required. The assignments submitted by users will represent their own work, or, where the work is not their own, the sources appropriately credited. Any user who is found to have submitted work that is not his or her own, either in whole or in part, and that has failed to credit the source, will be subject to one or more penalties. Penalties may range from loss of credit for the assignment to failure of the course, depending on the nature and severity of the act or omission. For further information, refer to the MTC Student Handbook.

e. No Expectation of Privacy

Use of the LMS constitutes consent for administrators to monitor and/or inspect any files that users create, any messages they post or receive, and any web sites they access. MTC may inspect any user's account and the files it contains at any time. MTC also has the right to give permission to teachers, school administrators, law enforcement officials, and others, as appropriate, to review the LMS to determine the online activities of a user who MTC has reason to believe may be in violation of this policy. Users are advised that messages in discussion forums, including deleted messages, are regularly archived, and can be retrieved. In addition, an Internet firewall automatically checks all data moving between the local area network and the Internet and logs the sending and receiving destinations.

f. Passwords

Each user shall be required to either create or maintain the administrator-assigned password in a manner directed by the LMS vendor and shall use and maintain the password as directed by the same as set forth in this policy. This password is to be used to access the LMS computer network and any resources that reside within the network and require password access. LMS users are expected to keep their passwords confidential and are responsible

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for all activity under their accounts. If a user suspects their password has been compromised, they must notify their instructor, who will notify the LMS administrator.

g. Violations

Failure to comply with this policy may subject a user to termination of the user's LMS account. MTC will notify school or organization administrators of any inappropriate activities. It will also advise law enforcement agencies of activities conducted through the LMS which MTC believes may be illegal. MTC will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the LMS.

h. Disclaimers

Manatee Technical College makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for LMS services and resources. MTC is not responsible for any damages incurred, including, but not limited to: loss of data resulting from delays or interruption of service, loss of data stored on the LMS, or damage to personal property used to access LMS resources; the accuracy, nature, or quality of information stored on LMS resources or gathered through the LMS or the Internet; or unauthorized financial obligations incurred through LMS-provided access. Further, even though MTC may use technical or manual means to limit user access, these limits do not provide a guaranteed means for enforcing the provisions of this policy. All provisions of this agreement are subordinate to local, state, and federal laws.

i. Social Media

[Student Social Media Guidelines](#)

11. Authentication of Academic Examinations

a. Introduction

MTC has several systems in place to ensure that examinations administered to students are completed by the same student who has registered for that course or program of study. Students are required to agree to standards of academic integrity and to adhere to specific codes of student conduct; in addition, all students of Manatee Technical College are required to adhere to an agreement for Network/Internet Acceptable Use, prior to being permitted

access to any electronic resources. Any additional fees charged to students to verify student identity shall be disclosed prior to the student's enrollment in the program.

b. Off-Site Exam Administration

When online students are required to take tests at a location other than at an MTC campus location, distance learning instructional personnel have several options for securing the test, including:

- Requiring the use of a separate password to access the examination
- Timing the exam
- Setting the exam to “turn on” and “turn off” within specific time frames
- Randomizing questions for each re-examination
- Limiting the location where the exam can be taken, based upon the IP address
- Employing remote proctoring technologies and software.
- Requiring the addition of a browser extension to a personal computer.

c. On-Site Exam Proctoring

For added security, distance learning instructional personnel also schedule on-site exams for students, and secure testing locations for those students to test when they arrive on-campus. In addition, there are testing centers on campus that have been established for specific industry certification testing purposes with certified proctors, to ensure the validity and authentication of such examinations, as required by the testing bodies.

12. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The School Board recognizes the positive impact that Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology may have in the District's educational program and operations. Any use of artificial intelligence technology in the District's educational program or operations must be in accordance with State and Federal law as well as Board policies.

Unauthorized use of AI/NLP tools is considered a form of plagiarism per Policy 7540.03 and any student found using these tools without permission will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Students can use AI/NLP tools in the school setting if they receive prior permission/consent from their teacher, so long as they use the AI/NLP tools in an ethical manner including proper citation.

- Research assistance
- Data Analysis
- Language translation
- Writing assistance
- Accessibility

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary consequences. Students may be disciplined for violations, up to and including suspension or expulsion. For additional information see School Board Policy 7540.03.

13. Americans with Disabilities Act:

To the best of its ability, Manatee Technical College purchases, develops, and repairs digital resources to comply with all federal and state accessibility guidelines, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Should you find an accessibility issue, a document that you cannot read or need an alternative accessible format, please contact Tammy Ralston Ed.D, RalstonT@manateeschools.net, and include the information related to your concern (e.g., URL/location, issue experienced, etc.)