

# DISTANCE LEARNING - ONLINE COURSES

ST. JOHNS RIVER STATE COLLEGE

Many students have difficulty meeting educational goals because other responsibilities prevent them from taking courses in the traditional manner. Distance learning is often the tool that enables these students to make their dream of a college education a reality. At SJR State, distance learning students may take online courses that do not require them to be on campus on a regularly scheduled basis.

Distance learning is simply learning that takes place when the instructor and the students are in physically separate locations for some or all of a course. Distance learning allows students to take college courses from home and accommodates students who have work or home schedules that would prevent them from being able to attend a traditional on-campus class. The distance learning courses provide a complete educational experience comparable to the course objectives, assignments, and examinations required in traditional classroom instruction. The content and college credit hours earned in distance learning courses are equivalent to on-campus courses.

Distance learning courses use technology for teaching and communication. At SJR State, distance learning courses utilize a learning management system that contains tools for managing the course, such as an online syllabus; course content and notes; email, discussion board, and chat system for collaboration and communication; interactive quizzes and exams; and much more. Distance learning instructors use a variety of learning methods and assignments in online courses just as they do in an on-campus class.

Live online courses are synchronous online courses that hold regularly scheduled course meetings that take place using virtual web conferencing tools such as Canvas Conferences, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom. Live online courses may be recorded. Students who do not wish to be recorded should consider taking asynchronous (online only) courses.

All of SJR State's distance learning courses are instructor-led and use the same schedule as on-campus courses. Contrary to many people's assumption, distance learning courses are not a "learn at your own pace" type of course. The courses require students to work from written directions without face-to-face instructions, adhering to timelines and due dates. Distance learning courses require students to dedicate AT LEAST as much time as on-campus courses.

In a typical distance learning course, students may have regular reading and writing assignments, quizzes, tests, midterm and final exams, papers, and discussion assignments to complete, all with deadlines explained on the course schedule. Although distance learning courses do have firm deadlines and due dates, they also provide the students the flexibility to "attend" class and submit assignments any time of the day or night according to their schedule. Some distance learning classes require on-campus tests, labs, or other meetings. See course schedule for details.

All distance learning students are required to have access to, and be comfortable using, the following technology:

- Computer with access to the Internet (e.g. a computer with a modem, DSL, or cable modem connection)
  - 1 GB RAM (minimum)
  - 2 GHz processor (minimum)
  - 512 kbps Internet speed (minimum)
- SJR State student email account and portal

- Web browsers - suggested browsers:
  - Chrome: Version 87 or later
  - Firefox: Version 85 or later
  - Edge: Version 87 or later
  - Safari: Version 13 or later (Macintosh only)
- Preferred Operating Systems:
  - Windows 7 or later (preferably not Vista)
  - Mac OSX 10.9 or later
- Virus checking software
- MS Word
- Web cam
- Some courses may require additional software. For details about specific course requirements, refer to the information found online at [SJRstate.edu/distance.html](http://SJRstate.edu/distance.html)

Use of a desktop or laptop computer is recommended. Please note that if you use mobile technology (smart phones, tablets, or net books) you might not be able to use all features of the Learning Management System.

Some Distance Learning Courses require proctored exams. Most exams will be remotely proctored using technology such as Respondus LockDown browser and/or Respondus Monitor. Some courses may require on-campus exams that are proctored through the Office of Testing and Student Support Services. These exams require a government issue photo ID or College photo ID for admission and the following items are expressly prohibited during testing sessions unless otherwise stated in examination instructions:

- Firearms and weapons
- Bags, purses, backpacks (subject to inspection)
- Electronics (e.g. phones, iPods, tablets, laptops, earbuds, head phones, watches, gaming devices, etc.)
- Calculators
- Food and drink
- Outerwear: subject to inspections (e.g. coats, jackets, hoodies, scarves)
- Headwear: subject to inspection (e.g. hats, bandanas, headbands)
- Other items as identified at time of sign-in by the Test Administrator

See the course schedule for details about course proctoring requirements.

**For more information about distance learning at SJR State, please call (386) 312-4077 or visit our website at [SJRstate.edu/distance.html](http://SJRstate.edu/distance.html).**