



ONLINE FACULTY HANDBOOK

Prepared by Online Services

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INTRODUCTION

With the growing popularity of online programs and the influx of military and veteran student populations, it has become extremely important for our full-time and adjunct faculty to have access to adequate resources in order to promote a successful teaching and learning experience for all students.

This **Online Faculty Handbook** is available for faculty teaching online and hybrid sections and provides access to useful resources. You can find additional information on the topics covered in this Online Faculty Handbook on the Virtual Teaching Assistance Center (VTAC) site. You will find help articles, contact information, and live support all in one place. You can view the Virtual Teaching Assistance Center by visiting VTAC.lonestar.edu.

VIRTUAL TEACHING ASSISTANCE CENTER (VTAC)

<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/>

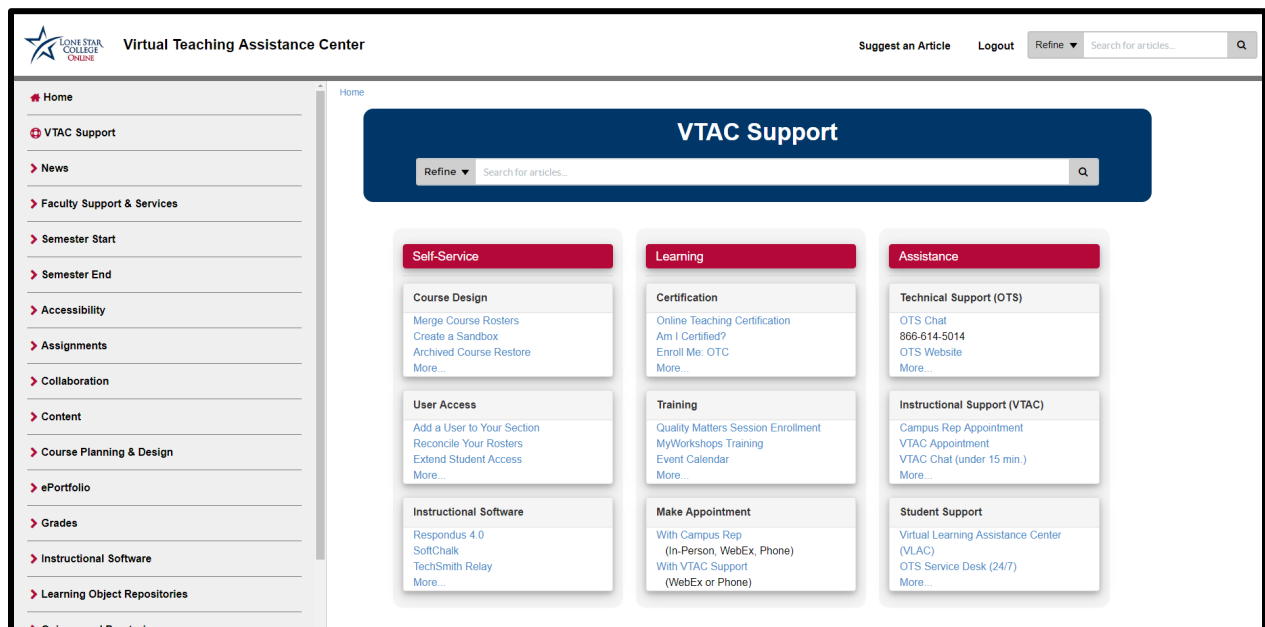
<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/vtac-support>

Using VTAC: <https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/using-vtac>

The **Virtual Teaching Assistance Center (VTAC)** is an instructional resource created for Lone Star College faculty. The VTAC site provides instructional guides and training to assist with the development and implementation of successful online courses.

Virtual Teaching Assistance Center resources also include:

1. One-on-one Support
2. Online Faculty Certifications
3. New Online Instructor Guides
4. VTAC Knowledge Base



ONLINE TEACHING CERTIFICATION

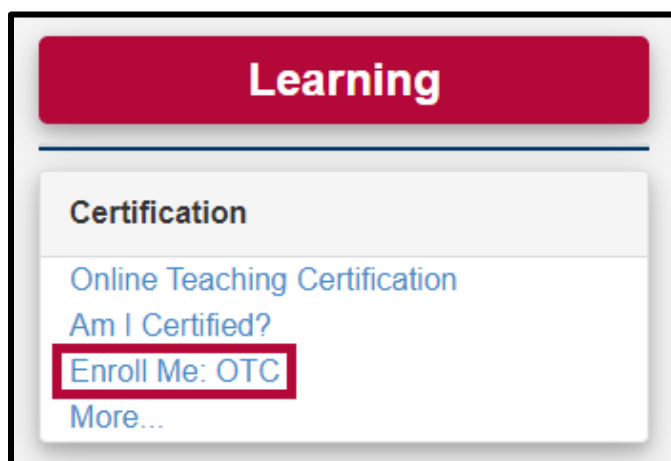
<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/otc>

Online Services provides an **Online Teaching Certification** course as a resource for faculty. The topics covered in the course include student engagement, student interaction, student contact, faculty contact, community building, common social media tools, learning management system (LMS) tools, online tutoring, online proctoring, design for accessibility, copyright, online resources, SoftChalk, Cisco Webex, and open educational resources. Completion of the certification course is supported system-wide and required before a faculty member teaches an online or hybrid class for Lone Star College.

The full Online Teaching Certification course contains two parts: 1) Quick Onboarding, which provides introductory information on the LMS, support options, and best practices, and 2) Full Certification, where upon successful completion of the remaining modules, you will receive the online teaching certification. This certification allows you to teach online and hybrid courses at Lone Star College and is valid until there is a major LMS change.

This certification course is built using a competency-based education (CBE) model and is designed to be completed at your own pace. There are also accompanying activities so you can begin building an online course while taking the certification course.

To get started, visit the VTAC Support page (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/vtac-support>) and click on **[Enroll Me: OTC]**.



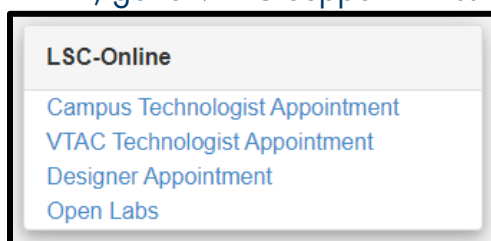
SEMESTER START - INSTRUCTOR CHECKLIST

<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/semester-start-checklist>

Training

- ☐ Become familiar with VTAC Services (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/vtac-assistance>)

- In D2L, go to VTAC Support > Assistance > VTAC Agents



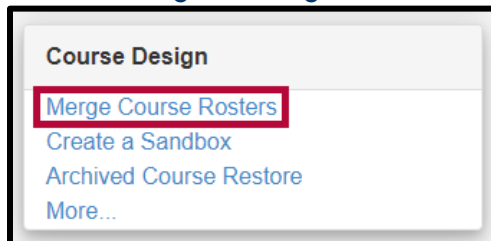
- ☐ Complete any necessary Online Teaching Certification (OTC)
 - See Faculty Instructions for Viewing Certification Status (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/otc>) to determine what certification you may need.
 - In D2L, go to VTAC Support > Learning > Enroll Me: OTC to sign up for the OTC.

Course Shell Verification

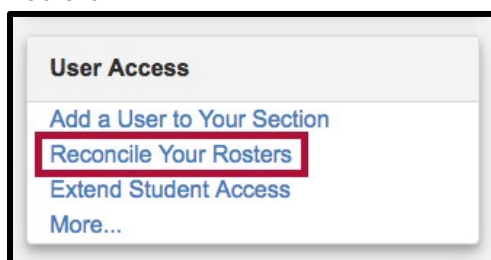
- ☐ Verify your course shell is present in your D2L course list. (<https://vimeo.com/218210599>)
 - If it is not, check in iStar. Contact your chair or Department Manager if the course is missing in iStar. Contact the IT Service Desk if it is only missing in D2L.
- ☐ Activate your D2L section early (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/a005>)
 - Activation allows your students to:
 - Access your course once the start date arrives.
 - See the course link in their My Courses list if they are enrolled in the course.
 - Verify that their course registration is accurate prior to the first day of class.

Confirm Roster

- Merge course rosters. (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/merge-course-rosters>)
 - To merge multiple course rosters, go to VTAC Support > Self-Service > Course Design > Merge Course Rosters

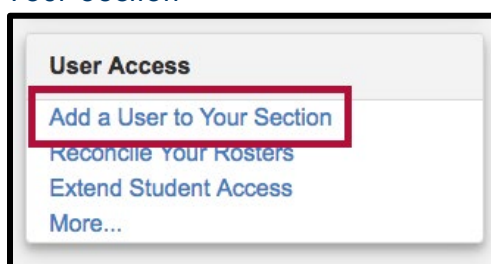


- Verify your D2L roster (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/reconcile-roster>)
 - In D2L, go to VTAC Support > Self-Service > User Access > Reconcile Your Rosters



- Click the **[Enroll into D2L]** or **[Un-enroll from D2L]** button to correct the roster. Repeat for each student until the roster is fully reconciled.
- **NOTE:** Without this tool, it can take up to 24 hours for iStar updates to be reflected in D2L.

- Add other instructors, TAs, etc. (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/add-user>)
 - In D2L, go to VTAC Support > Self-Service > User Access > Add a User to Your Section



- Submit the request form with the Employee Email Address, Username, or ID for all the other instructors, TAs, etc. you want to have access to your course.
- **NOTE:** You must have the Employee Email, Username, or ID of the user; you cannot search with the user's name.

Build Course Content

- ☐ Build, import, or update course content.
 - Build, copy, import, or update course components from sandbox or previous course as needed. (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/copy-course-components-simple>)
- ☐ Update all course dates (due dates, date restrictions, etc.).
 - Add any other desired restrictions, conditional releases, or calendar dates. The Manage Dates tool is available from the Course Management > Course Admin link on the navbar.
- ☐ Update the Lockdown Browser Dashboard after you copy a course.
 - If you use LockDown Browser and have copied quizzes from another course or previous semester, the Dashboard must be visited before the first quiz to avoid student errors. Click on Course Activities > Quizzes and click the LockDown Browser tab to accomplish this task.

APPROVED INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGIES

<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/approved-technologies>

The Approved Instructional Technologies list contains available software and technologies with signed ADA and FERPA compliance agreements with Lone Star College. Please consider using an approved software and/or technology when planning and developing your course(s).

VTAC SUPPORTED TECHNOLOGIES

<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/supported-technologies>

The technologies below are supported by the Online Services team through your campus Instructional Technologist/Designer.

D2L

The D2L Learning Environment provides a platform for online course content in face-to-face, hybrid and online courses. Supporting documentation is found in VTAC by browsing the menu to the left or using the search box in the upper right corner of the screen.

Respondus

- **Respondus 4.0** is an exam authoring software that can be used to create exams and publish to D2L.
- **StudyMate** provides learning activities including flashcards, crosswords, and self-assessment quizzes to help students master content.
- **Respondus LockDown Browser** helps increase exam security by preventing students from printing, using other applications, or visiting other websites while an exam is open. Computers in assessment centers all have Respondus LockDown Browser installed.
- **Respondus Monitor** adds automated proctoring to Respondus Lockdown Browser, recording the student's screen while taking the exam and their testing environment using a webcam. Proctoring results are available to the instructor after the exam is complete.

SoftChalk

SoftChalk is content authoring software that can be used to create engaging, media-rich lessons for your online courses. SoftChalk allows instructors to incorporate images, audio, video and even quizzes into content modules. Lessons can be stored in SoftChalk Cloud for anytime access and portability. Lessons can be shared with the global Softchalk Community or just to specified individuals or groups.

Turnitin

Turnitin.com is an online database that checks for plagiarism in papers and detects if students wrote a paper using the AI tools, like ChatGPT and Gemini. Faculty can use Turnitin.com by simply clicking a checkbox within any Assignment in D2L. Students can also use Turnitin.com to check their work before submitting. For account access information for students, contact your campus Professional Development centers.

Webex - Supported by the IT Service Desk

Webex is video conferencing software that allows instructors to set up synchronous meeting times with students via the web. Webex combines desktop sharing, video, and phone conferencing. All employees have a general Webex account. You can find more information about Webex [here](#).

YuJa

YuJa, the video platform supported by Online Services, offers many exciting features, including machine captioning, video quizzing, viewing analytics, and a video editor.

Zoom – Supported by the IT Service Desk

Zoom is video conferencing software that allows instructors to set up synchronous meeting times with students via the web. Zoom is an alternative to Webex, both applications are supported by Lone Star College. You can find more information about Zoom [here](#).

OTHER HELPFUL SOFTWARE

[Software Available for Faculty and Staff](#)

Adobe Creative Suite (Including Adobe Acrobat Pro)

[Installing and Signing Into Adobe Creative Suite for Home Use \(Faculty & Staff Only\)](#)

Microsoft 365 - Supported by the IT Service Desk

Lone Star College provides Microsoft 365 to every Faculty and Student enrolled at Lone Star College free of charge. [Download and Install Instructions Here](#)

D2L Desktop Supported Browsers

D2L is supported on the following desktop platforms with the **latest browser versions**:

Platform	Apple Safari	Google Chrome	Microsoft Edge	Mozilla Firefox
Apple	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

D2L Mobile Supported Browsers

D2L is supported on the following tablets and mobile devices with the **latest browser versions**:

Platform	Apple Safari	Google Chrome	Microsoft Edge	Mozilla Firefox
Apple iOS for iPhone and iPad	Yes	No	No	No
Android OS for phones and tablets	No	Yes	No	No

SUPPORT SERVICES: WHICH ONE DO I USE?

<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/vtac-assistance>

D2L Virtual Assistant

The **D2L Virtual Assistant** is available at any time by clicking “**Get Help**” in the bottom right corner of D2L. The Virtual Assistant is an AI-based help tool that provides easy access to [D2L Help documentation](#), [VTAC help documentation](#), [VTAC Support](#), IT Service Desk chat, and D2L Help Desk chat. If you have simple questions or need direction on a specific issue, you can turn to the virtual assistant for help.



D2L Help Desk

The [D2L Help Desk](#) offers 24/7 support for all LSC Faculty, Staff and Students. They are available via Chat, Phone, or Support Ticket. The D2L Helpdesk offers assistance with topics such as commonly used D2L tools (e.g., adding content, assignment folders, quizzes, gradebook) and other D2L questions (e.g., intelligent agents, awards, groups, rubrics, statistics).

- Phone: 1-877-325-7778
- Chat: <https://community.brightspace.com/helpdesk/s/contactsupport>
- Support Ticket: <https://enduser.desire2learn.com/user/support.asp>

Online Services

[Online Services](#) provides instructional support and course design assistance through the Virtual Teaching Assistance Center (VTAC) site. For complex D2L issues or course design assistance, we recommend you make an appointment with your [campus representative](#). Campus Representative appointments can be in person, virtual, or by phone. VTAC Support is also available for phone or virtual appointments.

IT Service Desk

The [IT Service Desk](#) provides technical support for basic D2L questions and issues, campus computers, myLoneStar/iStar, email accounts, and licensed software, such as Office 365 and Adobe Creative Cloud. The IT Service Desk offers a team of support personnel to assist faculty with technical issues: **6 a.m. – midnight, 7 days a week**. They will also forward a ticket to OTS or Online Services if they cannot help you.

- Phone: 1-281-318-HELP(4357) or 1-866-614-5014
- Website: <https://www.lonestar.edu/ITHelp>

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS: WHAT CAN THEY DO FOR YOU?

[Instructional Designers](#) are available for each campus to assist faculty with course design and development using D2L and Online Services supported technology.

Ready to assist with:

- Online course development (*New course design and development may require Dean approval)
- Conversion of face-to-face courses to hybrid or fully online courses
- A variety of other specialized, one-on-one strategies

Training

- Using D2L
- Online Services supported technologies
- Online teaching recommended practices

Guidance

- Using D2L tools
- Redesigning a course
- Verifying the student roster within D2L
- Copying content within D2L
- Importing content from other sources
- Uploading exams from Publisher test banks or Respondus 4.0
- Downloading your gradebook or attendance roster

Design Consultations

- Content organization
- Gradebook creation
- Rubric construction
- Calendar usage and date restrictions
- Group creation
- Discussion forum/topic creation
- Assignments
- Quizzes/Exams
- Adding multimedia
- Recommendations for course improvement
 - Alignment of objectives with assessment measures
 - Illustration of effective online instructional strategies
 - Implementation of ADA compliance

NOTE: To receive assistance with your course, visit the Upcoming Events page on VTAC (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/events>) to check for open labs on your campus or schedule an appointment to meet with your campus Technologist or an Instructional Designer. (<https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/campus-reps>)

If you need assistance with the following topics, please utilize these links:

- Accessing Publisher content and test banks – Contact your publisher representative.
- Securing Copyright permission –
Visit <http://www.lonestar.edu/library/copyright.htm>
- Developing multimedia content – Contact your Professional Development Staff.
- Requesting Student technical support – Visit <http://vlac.lonestar.edu>
- Requesting Online student advising assistance – Email onlineadvisor@lonestar.edu
- Posting your final semester grades in iStar –
Visit <https://vtac.lonestar.edu/help/submit-grades-istar>

STUDENT TECHNICAL SUPPORT: VIRTUAL LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER (VLAC)

<http://vlac.lonestar.edu/>

The Virtual Learning Assistance Center (VLAC) site provides students with articles on how to do things in D2L, resources specific for online students, and contact information for technical support through the IT Service Desk.



Resources for Online Students

Technical Support

The Virtual Learning Assistance Center is a collection of resources for online students or students with online course components.

We are here to support you.

Advising Services Library Services Technical Support

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

<http://www.lonestar.edu/OrgDev-Faculty.htm>

Faculty Development exists to provide:

- Support and collaborative partnership with each of the colleges
- Relevant and meaningful teaching and learning opportunities for all faculty
- Continuous improvement of our faculty development programs

Adjunct Certification Program

https://mylonestar.sharepoint.com/sites/OD_TheCenter/SitePages/Adjunct_Certification_Program.aspx

The purpose of the Adjunct Certification Program is to recognize and reward adjunct faculty members who make a commitment to Lone Star College and to improve their teaching skills by providing opportunities for adjunct faculty members to develop and enhance their teaching effectiveness.

Adjunct Excellence Institute

https://mylonestar.sharepoint.com/sites/OD_TheCenter/SitePages/Adjunct%20Excellence%20Institute.aspx

The Adjunct Excellence Institute is a program to better position adjunct faculty who want to expand their role at Lone Star College. The program focuses on the leadership and career development aspects of the faculty role. Program Fellows experience a variety of topics that develop greater awareness of Lone Star College's culture and greater awareness of who they are as a leader, both inside the classroom and as a colleague.

New Faculty Institute

https://mylonestar.sharepoint.com/sites/OD_TheCenter/SitePages/New%20Faculty%20Institute.aspx

New Faculty Institute provides faculty with innovative faculty development experiences and exceptional support to foster continuous improvement in the art and science of teaching and learning.

Teaching and Learning Conference

https://mylonestar.sharepoint.com/sites/OD_TheCenter/SitePages/Teaching_Learning_Conf.aspx