

# MSTC's Online Supervisory Management Courses Overview

Students may combine QuickTrac Supervisory Management courses and online courses to meet the requirements of the Supervisory Management Associate Degree or complete their degree through online classes only. Several online courses in the Supervisory Management Associate Degree program are available through Mid-State Technical College and those that are not are available through eTech College, a clearinghouse of on-line courses offered by the Wisconsin Technical College System's 16 technical colleges.

MSTC offers the following Supervisory Management program online courses:

- Business Operations
- Leadership Development
- Managing for Quality
- Personal Skills for Supervisors

Additional courses are under development. Please consult the MSTC schedule of classes to identify available online courses.

The schedule of eTech College online courses can be found at [www.etechcollege.com](http://www.etechcollege.com). In addition, a process for registration to these classes is found at this website.

Students potentially may complete their Supervisory Management Associate Degree totally online over an extended period of time by taking online classes through MSTC and eTech College. Courses taken through the eTech College are transferred into Mid-State Technical College to apply towards an Associate Degree.

Students who wish to take online Supervisory Management courses should be aware of the characteristics of this delivery. On the following pages you will find good information to help you decide if an online course is for you.

## General Online Course Information



Online courses are taught through the use of the internet. MSTC uses Educator, a learning software platform, to deliver its online courses. Educator is designed to help students learn by providing a user-friendly framework for navigating online course content. eTech College online courses may use Blackboard instead of Educator as their learning software platform.

Students are informed of course procedures and requirements and often obtain their course materials in the Educator online course. Generally, the student completes course assignments independently and then sends his/her homework assignments via email to the instructor. Courses usually require students to meet with one another via the internet to discuss course topics, complete team projects, etc.

The student must have access to a computer with Internet capabilities and it is helpful for the student if he/she feels comfortable using this technology.

### Is An Online Class for You?

How well would an online class fit your circumstances and lifestyle? A successful distance learner needs certain skills, most importantly, a high degree of discipline and motivation. The self-assessment below will give you an indication of whether or not this type of learning experience is for you.

#### ONLINE COURSE SELF-ASSESSMENT

1. My motivation for taking an online delivered course is:

- A. High – I need it immediately for my degree, job advancement or other important reason
- B. Moderate – I could take it later or I can substitute another course
- C. Low – It's personal interest, it could be postponed

2. Having face-to-face interaction with my instructors and fellow students is:

- A. Not particularly necessary to me.
- B. Somewhat important to me.
- C. Very important to me.

3. I would classify myself as someone who:

- A. Often gets things done ahead of time.
- B. Needs reminding to get things done on time.
- C. Puts things off until the last minute.

4. Classroom discussion is:

- A. Rarely helpful to me.
- B. Sometimes helpful to me.
- C. Almost always helpful to me.

5. When an instructor hands out directions for an assignment, I prefer:

- A. Figuring out the instructions myself.
- B. Trying to follow the directions on my own, then asking for help as needed.
- C. Having the instructions explained to me.

6. I need faculty comments on my assignments:

- A. Within a few weeks, so I can review what I did.
- B. Within a few days, or I forget what I did.
- C. Right away or I get very frustrated.

7. Considering my professional and personal schedule, the amount of time I have to work on an online course is:

- A. More than enough for campus class or a distance education course.
- B. The same as for a class on campus.
- C. Less than for a class on campus.

8. When I am asked to use VCRs, computers, voice mail, or other technologies new to me:

- A. I look forward to learning new skills.
- B. I feel apprehensive, but try it anyway.
- C. I put it off and try to avoid it.

9. As a reader, I would classify myself as:

- A. Good - I usually understand the text without help.
- B. Average - I sometimes need help to understand the text.
- C. Below average - I frequently need help understanding text.

10. If I have to go to an approved testing center to take exams or complete work:

- A. I can go frequently.
- B. I may miss some exam deadlines if the approved testing center is not open evenings and weekends.
- C. I will have difficulty getting to the approved testing center, even in the evenings and on weekends.

11. If asked to use computers I:

- A. Have access to a relatively good computer and know how to use it
- B. Have access to a relatively good computer, but not too familiar with it.
- C. Do not have access to a computer

### Scoring

- Add 3 points for each "A"
- 2 points for each "B"
- 1 point for each "C"

If you scored 20 or over:

- Online courses are a real possibility for you.

If you scored between 11 and 20:

- Online courses may work for you but you may need to make a few adjustments in your schedule and study habits to succeed.

If you scored 10 or less:

- Online courses may not currently be the best alternative for you; talk to your counselor and/or advisor.

## **Explanations**

The questions in the self-assessment reflect some of the facts about taking online courses.

1. Online students sometimes can end up neglecting these courses because of personal or professional circumstances, unless they have compelling reasons for taking the course.
2. Some students prefer the independence of Online courses; others find it uncomfortable.
3. Online courses give students greater freedom of scheduling, but they can require more self-discipline than on-campus courses.
4. Some people learn best by interacting with other students and instructors, but Online courses often do not provide much opportunity for this interaction.
5. Online courses require you to work from written directions without face-to-face instructions.
6. It may take over a week to get comments back from your instructor.
7. Online courses require at least as much time as on-campus courses, if not more.
8. Online courses frequently use technology for teaching and communication.
9. Printed materials are the primary source of directions and information for Online courses.
10. Online courses may require some on-campus visits. Student schedule flexibility is important.
11. Online classes require the use of computers to access lecture material, obtain and hand in homework, communicate with instructor, etc. It is important that Online students have access to a computer and know the basics of the Internet.

## DO YOU HAVE THE COMPUTER SKILLS REQUIRED FOR ONLINE COURSES?

Online students are required to have an Internet e-mail account that is provided by MSTC and to be able to use a web browser. We strongly recommend that you have your own computer rather than relying on computers at office/public sites that are not available to you on weekends or evenings. Your particular course may also have additional requirements such as specific software that runs on your computer, which may or may not entail additional hardware needs.

### ONLINE COURSE COMPUTER SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT

The following statements can help you assess your computer skills and determine which courses might suit you best.

- |  |                          |     |                          |    |
|--|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|
| 1. I can use a web browser such as Netscape Communicator or Navigator, Internet Explorer, or AOL.            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| 2. I'm comfortable using a word processing program such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Works, and WordPerfect. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| 3. I can use more than one program at a time or view more than one web page at a time.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| 4. I can send e-mail with an attachment.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| 5. I can cut/copy and paste text.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| 6. I can download and install a computer program or plug-in.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| 6. I am comfortable learning a new computer program.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| 6. I am comfortable using online Help or a manual to solve problems and Answer questions.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No |

Add 2 points for each "Yes" answer, 1 point for each "No" answer

**Total Score between 9 and 16:** Online courses can be for you.

**Total score 8 and below:** Online courses require greater computer skill than you have indicated. Please select a different delivery method for your courses until you improve your skill.

## **DO YOU HAVE THE COMPUTER SYSTEM REQUIRED FOR ONLINE COURSES?**

In order to be successful in online courses, you will need access to a reliable computer, Internet access, and an e-mail account. Having your own personal computer at home is best.

Before you select an online course we recommend the following minimum configurations on your computer:

- 1.2 Ghz or greater (Intel Pentium or Celeron, or AMD Athlon processors)
- Windows 98, XP, or 2000
- Microsoft® Word
- A current anti-virus application
- 256 MB RAM or greater
- 20 GB hard drive or larger
- 56.6 kbs modem (DSL or cable modem is recommended)
- 1024x768 or greater monitor and video card
- Sound card with speakers
- CD ROM
- Inkjet or laser printer
- Internet service provider (ISP) account
- Microsoft Internet Explorer Version 6.0 or later
- Additional software may be required for some courses

## Success in Online Courses



Learning on-line is a new experience for all of us; however, it is a way of learning that will increase in the future, as more institutions and organizations use the Internet for distance education. Being a student in an on-line environment requires new strategies for maximizing your learning. Below are some simple tips to help you succeed as a student on the Web.

In general, you should:

1. Familiarize yourself as much as possible with the Educator website for your course. What are the components? How do you use them to get to where you want to go? Find out: what the course schedule is; what the course requirements are; what the method for contacting your professor is; what conferences are you to join; where the help section is, etc.
2. Log in to the course website on a regular basis (some people log on twice a day - you will find what pattern suits you the best). Check the course announcement portion of your course frequently. Regular attention to the course website allows you to be aware of course updates; of progress in conference discussions; of assignment information; and messages requiring immediate attention.
3. Be aware of and keep up with the course schedule. Although these are distance courses, they are designed to provide you with a semester schedule of course units, assignments, conferences, etc. These web courses require that you adhere to the course schedule for you to benefit from the course material and discussions.
4. Contact your course instructor whenever you have questions about any aspect of the course. You can also try to post general questions to your class conferences, as fellow class members may have similar questions or else the answers. In those courses that have on-line group work, be sure to fulfill your responsibilities to the best of your ability. Remember, how well your group does - and how well you do - depends on all the group members working cooperatively.
5. Finally, remember that the Internet is a public place. Speak and behave as you would in a classroom.

Successful online students have this advice to share with students who are new to the Web-based learning environment:

1. Get to know your resources  
There are many people who are ready to help you, including your online teacher, your school contact person, your guidance counselor, your parents and your classmates.

2. Get to know your online classmates

Introduce yourself to the class by writing an introductory message; read your classmates' messages to get a sense of who they are. We encourage you to send them email, ask about an interesting hobby someone mentions, or make contact with someone whose interests are the same as yours. Once you have started an online conversation, it quickly becomes an easy and natural way to communicate.

3. Budget your time

Online is not easier than the traditional educational process. In fact, many students will say it requires much more time and commitment. Be aware of and keep up with the course schedule. Although these are online courses, they are designed to provide you with a semester schedule of course units, assignments, conferences, etc. These online courses require that you adhere to the course schedule for you to benefit from the course material and discussions.

4. Stay in touch

Develop the habit of logging on regularly. Communication with your classmates and teacher is at the heart of the learning experience. You will be eager to see who has commented on your postings and read the feedback of your teachers and classmates. You will also be curious to see who has posted something new that you can comment on. If you let too many days go by without logging on to your course, you will get behind and find it very difficult to catch up.

5. Communicate with the teacher

Don't hesitate to take a problem related to the course to your teacher. They can't help you unless they're aware of your difficulty.

# MSTC Online Course Procedures

## Initial Student Contact

Online instructors will contact all enrolled students prior to the first day of the semester via telephone or letter. At this time the instructor will provide information on how to access the online course.

## Course Pace

Online courses are not courses that you complete at your own pace. Assignments are usually due on a weekly basis. So, be sure to get started by the first day of the semester.

## Course Access and Log On

Access to most online courses is provided approximately one to two days before the first day of the semester. You should access the course and familiarize yourself with the Educator Learning System and the course requirements prior to the first day of the online course. Online courses are accessed through the MSTC website at [www.mstc.edu](http://www.mstc.edu). Once at the Educator site you will be asked for a log on name and password. Your log on name is your last name and the first four numbers of your MSTC student ID. Your password is the same. Your student ID can be found on your Schedule of Classes or a previous Grade Card.

## Course Textbooks

Information on required textbooks for online courses can be found in the online course on Educator, in the textbook list found at the MSTC Website under Bookstores and at any MSTC Bookstore. The textbook inventory for online courses is located in the Wisconsin Rapids Bookstore, but textbooks can easily be transferred to other campuses upon request. You may wish to acquire the textbooks from an online book source such as Amazon at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or Barnes and Noble at [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com). In addition to the above sources, many additional online book sources exist.