

Distance Education Student Handbook



(updated: 6/5/13)



El Camino College
Distance Education Office
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Welcome to the Distance Education Program at El Camino College!

El Camino College offers online courses (via the computer). The **Student Handbook for Online Courses** is designed to acquaint you with our online program, and provide you with the information you will need to be successful in your course. You will find additional information about the College in the current *El Camino College Schedule of Classes*, on the ECC website at <http://www.elcamino.edu/library/distance-ed/classscheduleandmeeting.asp>.

We offer a wide variety of courses in many different subject areas. Our current online course offerings are listed in the table that follows. There are more courses that have been approved for Distance Education delivery, but we do not offer all of them each semester. You may visit our website <http://www.elcamino.edu/distanceEd> to see a complete list of our courses and a schedule of the courses we plan to offer in the future.

Distance Education students are entitled to all of the support services available to traditional students. Many of these services are provided to students online. For more information, please see "Useful Links" on the [Distance Education website](#) or contact our office (310) 660-6453 or email at distanceed@elcamino.edu. The Distance Education Office is located in the basement of the Schauerman Library, East Wing, Lower Level, Room 76.

Distance Education Class Schedule

Many of the distance education courses will have a first class meeting on campus. Details about the first meetings can be found in the Distance Education section of the [DE Class Schedule and Meeting Info](#). **If you do not attend the first class meeting, you may be dropped from the course!**

Some courses are offered entirely online and do not have meetings on campus. You must follow the instructions under the course listing in the Distance Education section of the Schedule of Classes or you may be dropped by the instructor.

Distance Education Course Schedule (For updates and changes see the Distance Education website at <http://www.elcamino.edu/library/distance-ed/classscheduleandmeeting.asp>)

Frequently Asked Questions about Distance Education at ECC

What is Distance Education? Can anyone take these classes?

Distance Education courses are designed for students who desire flexibility and convenience in their studies. Our courses are fully accredited and are considered equivalent to on-campus courses. Anyone who is eligible to take regular courses on campus may enroll in Distance Education courses. Consult the ECC Schedule of Classes or the college website for registration information.

How do these courses work? How will I interact with my instructor?

Students in online courses communicate with their instructor and classmates electronically via a course website. The instructor posts such things as lectures, assignments, announcements, and other information to the site. The class may respond with questions, comments, etc. Some of our instructors are using a website for their course; others are using course management programs such as ETUDES, Blackboard, and others.

Will I be required to attend class meetings on campus?

This is determined by the instructor. Many instructors have on-campus meetings at the start of the semester, but some do not. If you are taking a course that has a scheduled first class meeting, your instructor will give you a course syllabus at that time. Instructors teaching entirely online will provide you with a syllabus online. The syllabus will include the course requirements and information about any on-campus sessions you will be expected to attend.

If my instructor holds a first class meeting, and plans to hold additional on-campus meetings later in the semester, will they be on the same day and at the same time as the first class meeting?

Usually, yes. We encourage our instructors to schedule all class meetings on the same day and at the same time as the first meeting. Check with your course instructor for that information.

The first class meeting conflicts with another course I want to take. What should I do?

Do not enroll in both courses – choose only one.

How are examinations administered?

Again, this is determined by the course instructor. Some instructors administer exams at on-campus meetings, while others administer them online. Your instructor will provide you with details.

What software and hardware do I need?

You must have at a minimum:

- Regular access to the Internet
- A Computer – either a PC with Windows and a Pentium processor or a Macintosh with at least System 10.0
- A recent version of a web browser such as Firefox or Microsoft Explorer
- An Internet Service Provider
- An Email Address
- Current Word Processing Software as required by the instructor

Some courses may have additional requirements. Your instructor will give you more information.

I don't have a computer at home. Can I still take an online course?

Yes, as long as you're sure you'll have regular access to a computer that's connected to the Internet. Some of our students use computers they have at work. There are also computer labs on campus with Internet access. (Like the Computer Commons in the Library Media Technology Center, for example – more details later.)

What kind of computer skills should I have?

In order to succeed in this type of course, you must be computer literate and have experience in computer communication. That is, you should have good word processing skills, and be familiar with sending and receiving email. You should also feel comfortable navigating the World Wide Web. It is very important that you have these skills before enrolling in an online course, because it will take some time for you to become accustomed to the way an online course works. Before you know it, you will need to concentrate on the course material, and you won't have much time to deal with technical matters. Check the "Skills You'll Need" section later in this Handbook. It will help you determine whether or not you're ready for an online course.

I think I have the technical skills I need, but I've never taken a course like this. How do I know if this is right for me?

In order to succeed in a Distance Education course, you must be self-motivated and be able to work well independently with minimum supervision. You do not meet regularly with your instructor in the classroom, so you must be able to manage your time effectively and stay on track with your coursework. It's also important that you have strong reading and writing skills. (See the "Tips for Success" section later in this Handbook.)

Distance Education courses are every bit as challenging as on-campus courses. In fact, surveys we've conducted reveal that some students find Distance Education courses *more* difficult.

Will I have to be online at a particular time?

Some instructors require students to be online at a particular time to take quizzes or exams, or to participate in chat sessions. You may contact your instructor for details.

What do I do if I need help?

It's very important that you get in touch with your instructor as soon as possible if you're having trouble. You may contact them by phone or by email. Our full-time instructors hold weekly office hours, so you can visit them in person, if you wish. A Faculty Directory is available at our office and on our website.

If you find you need help with the course material, check out the Tutoring Program administered by the ECC Learning Resources Center (LRC). Tutors help students prepare for tests, learn new concepts, improve study techniques, and answer questions about assignments. Free tutoring for ECC students is available each semester. All LRC tutors are highly trained and

certified. Visit the Tutoring website for more information:
<http://www.elcamino.edu/library/lrc/tutoring/index.asp>

What do I do if I can't access my course online?

If for some reason you cannot access your course, email or call your instructor or the Distance Education Office. We will get in touch with our Information Technology Services department and find out what the problem is. In the future we hope to have a "Technical Help Number" students can call, but until that time, we will contact ITS on your behalf.

Will I have to buy books for the course?

Yes. Your instructor will give you information about the text materials you'll need for your course. They are available in the El Camino College Bookstore. The El Camino College Bookstore is now open 24/7. They can ship your books to your home or you can pick them up in the store. Visit the online at <http://elcamino.collegestoreonline.com/>.

Does Distance Education courses transfer to other schools?

We advise you to check with a counselor at the school you plan to transfer to so you are sure the course will be accepted. Many schools accept our courses, but some do not. (By the way, your transcript will not specify that the course you took was delivered in a Distance Education format.)

What if I find I can't continue in my course? Can I withdraw from it?

Yes, but in order to receive a "W" (Withdrawal), you must withdraw before the deadline. Consult the current ECC Schedule of Classes or visit the ECC WebServices site (<https://portal.elcamino.edu/portal/main.html>) for more information. Please note that dropping a course is your responsibility. Your instructor is not responsible for dropping you from your course!

I have more questions! Who can I talk to?

Contact the Distance Education Office at DistanceEd@elcamino.edu or telephone 310-660-6453. We are here to help you!

Skills You Will Need for Distance Learning

Here's a list of computer and Internet skills you should have before you enroll in an online course.

Computer Skills

You should be able to:

- Cut/copy and paste within and between documents
- Use spell check
- Set page numbers and set headers/footers in a document
- Attach a document to a message
- Paste text from your word processor into an email message
- Print documents
- Run two or more programs at once and move between them
- Open and close document and directory windows
- Find files that you create on your hard drive

Internet Skills

You should be able to:

- Send and receive email
- Open an attachment to a message
- Find a web page using its address or URL
- Follow links from one web page to another
- Use the forward and backward buttons on the browser
- Print a web page
- Bookmark pages to access them later
- Use a search engine on the Internet (e.g., Yahoo!, AltaVista, etc.)
- Download documents or software from the Internet

If you feel you need to improve your skills, consider taking a course in computer and Internet skills before you enroll in an online course. ECC offers a variety of credit courses in these areas, and "not-for-credit" courses are offered through ECC's Community Education program.

Computers on Campus

If you're on campus and need to use a computer with Internet access, head to the Computer Commons:

Computer Commons - Library Media Technology Center

Schauerman Library (East Wing, Lower Level), 310.660.3593 x6715

The Computer Commons is ECC's central computer center serving students of all academic programs. For more information about the Center, call the number above or visit their site at

<http://www.elcamino.edu/Library/labs>

Text Materials on Reserve

We make every effort to place required text materials for online courses on reserve in the Library (Periodicals/Reserve Dept.) for your use. You must have an ECC Photo ID to use them (see the Library Circulation Desk if you haven't previously used your Photo ID to borrow library materials). These materials may only be used in the library – they cannot be checked out.

Accessibility

El Camino College is committed to providing all students equal access to our program. In accordance with the American Disabilities Act, Distance Education courses, materials, and resources must be accessible to students with disabilities. Please contact our office for information about alternative formats that are available.

Tips from the Librarian

If Distance Education students are close enough to get to campus and get a student ID and library card, there are many online periodical databases available. Students need the ID card to logon via the *MyECC* portal page to access these databases.

http://www.elcamino.edu/library/library_ser/index.asp links to useful resources such as Subject guides, MLA citation help, Ask-A-Librarian online reference help, E-Res, and more.

Communicate

It is very important that you communicate with your instructor and with your classmates. Log on to your course site regularly, read the postings, and contribute your own ideas and opinions.

Don't Fall Behind

Since you do not see your instructor as often as you would in a traditional on-campus class, it can be very tempting to procrastinate. Don't fall prey to this! Log on regularly and complete your readings and assignments in a timely manner.

Speak up if you are having problems

If you are having technical difficulties or problems understanding something in the course, you need to let your instructor know. And, if you feel comfortable doing so, post your question/concern for others to see. That way, if your classmates are having the same trouble they will benefit too.

Be Courteous

Be polite to your classmates and respectful of their opinions. Keep in mind that meanings can be misinterpreted in an online environment, so word your postings carefully.

How to Access your Online Courses

Many of the courses at El Camino College use a Course Management System or Website as a delivery method for their online courses. El Camino College fully supports the ETUDES Course Management System. Some instructors may elect to use other systems. Students should check the Distance Education website (<http://www.elcamino.edu/distanceEd/index.asp>) to determine what system is being used in their online course.

The information that follows will help you use the *ETUDES* system. Additional information may be found on the Distance Education website <http://www.elcamino.edu/distanceEd/index.asp/>

ETUDES Course Management System

The course management system can be used by your instructor to create and manage course content, evaluate performance and communicate with students. Within the course management system you will see announcements, the course syllabus, assignments and grades may also be posted. In addition, class discussions may also take place in the course management system. At El Camino College many of our online courses are delivered using the ETUDES Course Management System. ETUDES stands for *Easy To Use Distance Education Software*.

ETUDES Login Instructions

Once you have officially enrolled in an ETUDES class, please follow the steps below to log in and access your class:

STEP 1: Go to <https://myetudes.org/>

When you log in for the first time, you will be required to enter two pieces of information: your User ID and your Password (see Steps 2 and 3 below)

STEP 2: Your User ID is: the same as your user id used to login to *MyECC* . The Admissions office gives every student enrolled in El Camino College a Student Identification (ID) number.

EXAMPLE: Albert Einstein is enrolled in an online ETUDES class and has the following User ID: albert_einstein [all lower case]

STEP 3: Your default Password is the month and date of birth included in your ECC record.

EXAMPLE: Albert Einstein's birth date is March 25
His Password is: 0325

*Some ECC student ID numbers have been adjusted to accommodate multiple persons with the same name. If step 2 does not work please visit this site to verify your id:

<https://secure.elcamino.edu/portal/logininfo/main.aspx?item=forgot>

STEP 4: Print out this page so that you can refer to these instructions when you log in for the first time.

STEP 5: Now you are ready to login!

STEP 6: Starting on the first day of the semester (and after waiting 24 hours after you registered for the class), log in to your class by going to the ETUDES portal. (<https://myetudes.org>).

REMEMBER TO BOOKMARK THIS SITE TO ACCESS YOUR ONLINE CLASS QUICKLY!!

REMEMBER:

WRITE DOWN YOUR USER ID AND PASSWORD. AND STORE IT IN A SAFE PLACE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

ETUDES Login Tips

Reasons why you may not be able to log on:

- Classes have not started yet. If the term has not started, this explains why you can't log on or access your class site. Typically, registration data is loaded on the first day of class
- You are not a new user of the system, yet you are attempting to log on with the default password. If you are not a new user in the system, please use the user id and password that you had established. Your account is not changed from term to term.
- You have requested to add a class, but you are not officially enrolled in the Registrar's Office. You will be able to log into the ETUDES system the morning after you are officially enrolled in Admissions and entered into the system.
- You are entering invalid login information.
- You are attempting to log on from an unsupported browser, such as AOL or MSN (see [system requirements](#) for information).
- You forgot your password or have the CAPS lock key on. You may request to have your password [reset](#).
- If your class is over and your instructor has disabled the site, you can no longer see a tab for the course.
- If you have been dropped from the course, you'll no longer have a tab to the class.

ETUDES Technical Requirements

Computer and Internet Connectivity (PC and Mac)

General System Requirements:

- Screen resolution set to 1024 X 768
- PC's should be running Win 2000 or XP
- Macs should have OS X 10.3.X or above
- System should have at least 512 RAM (for faculty/authors, 1G is preferred)
- 56K minimum is required. DSL or cable modem strongly advised.

You must have regular, reliable Internet access for satisfactory performance. Many courses require high-speed connections for interactive multimedia such as PowerPoint, Digital Video, etc. These requirements should also be stated in the course syllabus. If your connectivity is slower than a 56K modem, you might experience frustration with slow response.

Browsers for the PC

The recommended web browsers for PC users are **Internet Explorer (IE) 7 SP2*** and **Firefox 3 versions**. Other web browsers are not supported and may not function properly.

Both browsers are available as free downloads below:

Get Firefox: <http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/all-older.html>

Get IE 7 SP2: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/internet-explorer/ie7/> (Make sure you get IE 7)

**ETUDES has NOT been tested with Internet Explorer (IE) 8. We don't recommend IE 8 at this time.*

Browsers for the Mac

The recommended Web Browser to use with ETUDES for Mac users is Firefox 3. Firefox requires OSX.3 or higher. Get Firefox here: <http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/all-older.html>

Notes:

- Internet Explorer and Safari are not supported browsers for the Mac. Safari works well for viewing materials, but you won't be able to use the editor for items that need to communicate with the system, such as discussions, assignments, etc.
- Many of our ETUDES users use Camino browser successfully. We do not conduct QA testing with Camino, however, and thus don't recommend it, as we cannot guarantee optimal performance across all areas of the ETUDES software.
- Netscape, Opera, and other browsers that are NOT listed here are not recommended.

Browser Instructions for AOL and CompuServe (PC and Mac)

AOL and CompuServe (AOL/CS) software includes an integrated browser-like feature that does not provide full access to the Internet. Students MUST minimize the AOL/CS Browser once their Internet connection is established and open one of the supported browsers. Do NOT attempt to use the AOL/CS versions of Netscape or Internet Explorer.

You must download a separate, complete, independent version of Internet Explorer. This will alleviate frustration associated with many known problems caused by the AOL/CS quasi-browser and its inherent inability to access to a significant percent of the World Wide Web.

IMPORTANT note for AOL users!

You cannot use the version of Internet Explorer that is provided with your AOL Account...Instead you must download and install a "real version" of Internet Explorer or Firefox. AOL will still be your "Internet Service Provider" or ISP.

There are three ways to use an External Browser while signed on to AOL:

Method One:

1. Sign on to AOL as your connection.
2. Minimize the AOL screen.
3. Launch Internet Explorer or some other non-AOL browser from your computer's desktop.

Method Two:

1. Sign on to AOL as your connection.
2. Launch Internet Explorer via Start > Programs > Internet Explorer (or other browser's name).

Method Three:

1. Sign on to AOL as your connection.
2. Launch Internet Explorer (or some other non-AOL browser) from the toolbar next to your Start button (usually at the bottom left of your screen).

Your Computer's Cache

You must configure your browser's cache correctly for ETUDES to work properly. 99% of problems are due to incorrect browser cache settings. For instructions as to how to do this on your computer, see the link below.

◆ [PC Browser Cache and Firefox Update Settings](#)

The way you have configured Cookies, JavaScript, and any Pop-Up Blocking Software on your computer may affect the performance of ETUDES. For instructions as to how to configure these items on your computer, see the link below.

◆ [Configure Cookies, JavaScript and Pop-Up Blocker](#)

1. Enable Java & JavaScript

You will need to perform the following adjustments to optimize your browser for use with ETUDES:

Internet Explorer

1. From the Menu, select Tools
2. Select Internet Options >> Security >> Custom level
3. Scroll down to Scripting (near the bottom of the list)
4. Select 'enable' for Active Scripting
5. Click OK
6. Continue on to Step 2: Enable Cookies as listed below

Firefox - PC

1. From the Tools menu, select Options
2. Click on the Content icon
3. Make sure the Enable Java and Enable JavaScript checkboxes are selected
4. Be sure Block pop-up windows is **NOT** checked
5. Continue on to Step 2: Enable Cookies as listed below

Firefox - Mac

1. From the Firefox menu, select Preferences
2. Click on the Content icon
3. Make sure the Enable Java and Enable JavaScript checkboxes are selected
4. Be sure Block pop-up windows is **NOT** checked
5. Continue on to Step 2: Enable Cookies as listed below

2. Enable Cookies

You will need to enable cookies in order to log in to ETUDES and maintain sessions (not get logged out).

Internet Explorer

1. Select "Internet Options" from the Tools menu
2. Click on the "Privacy" tab
3. Manually slide the bar down to "Medium"

Firefox - PC

- (3rd up from bottom) under "Settings"
4. Click "OK"

Firefox - Mac

1. From the Tools menu, select Options
 2. Click on the Privacy icon
 3. Check "Accept cookies from sites"
 4. Click "OK"
1. From the Firefox menu, select Preferences
 2. Click on the Privacy icon
 3. Check "Accept cookies from sites"
 4. Close window

3. Disable Pop-Up Blocking for ETUDES

While using ETUDES, you may have to download and open files. If you are using pop-up blocking software, you may not be able to do this. You will need to disable pop-up blocking. Pop-up blockers work in the background while you browse the internet. When they detect a pop-up window that may be an unwanted advertisement, they automatically close the window. This can prevent ETUDES from performing properly.

Depending on your pop-up blocking software, you may have to set the ETUDES URL (<https://myetudes.org/portal>) as an allowed site,

OR you may need to disable the pop-up blocker while using ETUDES.

To disable pop-up blockers for ETUDES:

a) Search your hard drive for any software with "pop-up" in the name. Disable it or set the ETUDES URL (<https://myetudes.org/portal>) as an **allowed site**. Examples of popular pop-up blocking applications include:

- Pop-Up Stopper
- Pop-Up Defender
- Pop-Up Zapper

b) Pop-up blocking functions are included in some anti-virus, internet security, personal firewall, and browser programs. Disable the relevant setting in the program or set the ETUDES URL (<https://myetudes.org/portal>) as an allowed site. If you don't set the latter, you may not be able to open documents or see instructions that get loaded in pop-up windows.

For more information regarding programs that include pop-ups, visit the ETUDES System Requirements at http://etudes.org/gateway/info_BrowserTuneUp.htm.

How to Add an Online Class

You **must get approval from the instructor** to add a class. There are four (4) ways to contact the instructor:

1. **Attend the first class meeting (orientation) that is held on-campus.** In most cases this will be the only **face-to-face meeting** you will have with your instructor. If space is available, the instructor will give you a **code** and instructions to login to the *MyECC* site for registration. **It is the student's responsibility to follow the directions to add the class.** For details, see below.
2. **Contact the instructor by email.** Many instructors prefer contact by email, especially if the course **does not have any face-to-face meetings**. You can find contact information for the instructor by going to the Distance Education web-page at <http://www.elcamino.edu/library/distance-ed/> and clicking on **“Our Faculty,”** located in the **“Distance Education Quick Links”** box on the right hand side of the home page. DE faculty members are listed in alphabetical order.
3. **Contact the instructor by telephone.** This can sometimes be challenging. Many of our faculty members are full-time instructors and have offices on campus. The start of a semester can be very busy and it is difficult for faculty to respond to a voicemail in a timely manner. **Telephone information** can also be found on the **Distance Education website** at <http://www.elcamino.edu/library/distance-ed/>. Click on **“Our Faculty.**
4. **Contact the instructor in person.** You can try to catch full-time instructors in their offices. You can contact their Division office to acquire their office schedule. Please remember that at the start of a semester, instructors are busy preparing for the new semester and **may not be in their office.**

Online Add Procedure: If you have met all the pre-requisites, have no time conflicts, have not had excessive repeats of the course, and/or do not owe fees, you will be added to the section. If you have questions about pre-requisites, consult the class schedule, school catalog, or speak with a counselor. Before adding the new section, drop the classes you are no longer taking. If you have a time conflict (e.g. a class you are enrolled in overlaps by one minute or more with a course you are trying to add), you will not be able to add the new class and no one is able to override that requirement. *Note: the permission number only works for one student.*

Please use the permission number the instructor has given you and follow the steps below to register for your section.

1. Go to: <http://myecc.elcamino.edu>.
2. Login in with your username and password.
3. Under WebAdvisor, click on “Registration”.
4. Click on “Online Add with Faculty Permission”.
5. You will see the screen below and be asked to enter the two sets of numbers on the sticker.

Online Add (Faculty Approval)

Enter the section's reference number (5 digits):

Enter the authorize code (5 digits):

SUBMIT

COURSE: [blank]
TERM: 2009/WI
SECTION REF #: 116683
AUTHORIZATION #: 01685

6. Click on the “SUBMIT” button.
7. Once you successfully add the section, use the “Make a Payment” link at the left of the screen in the “Financial Information” section and pay the amount due.

You are now added to the class and you do not need to go to the Admissions Office. If you encounter problems adding online, write down the error message you receive, if any, and please take the permission slip to the Admissions Office. If you cannot come to campus, please email your instructor with the error information.

Deadline to Add: You will not be able to add your class before the semester starts or after the add deadline. The deadline for regular term courses is published in the class schedule. Ask your instructor for the short term add deadline or you may examine the Short Term Class Calendar available in the Admissions Office or in the Academic Division offices.

High School Students

High school students follow the same process outlined above. Please review the information on the admission process for high school students located on the El Camino College website at <http://www.elcamino.edu/student-services/highschool/>



Student Services and Campus Resources

Office	Location	Phone	Web Address
Admissions Office and Registration Information	Student Services Center, 1 st Floor	310.538.5700 or 310.660.6034	http://www.elcamino.edu/admissions/
Bookstore	Northwest of Student Services Center, Below Cafeteria	310.660.3380	http://elcamino.collegestoreonline.com/
Cashiers Office	Administration Building, 1 st Floor	310.660.3593 x3142	http://www.elcamino.edu/studentservices/cashiers/index.asp
Counseling Office	Student Services Center, 1 st Floor	310.660.3458	http://www.elcamino.edu/studentservices/co/
Financial Aid Office	Student Services Center, 2 nd Floor	310.660.3493	http://www.elcamino.edu/studentservices/fao/
Library Media Technology Center (Computer Commons)	Schauerman Library, East Wing, Lower Level	310.660.3593 x6715	http://www.elcamino.edu/library/
Periodicals/Reserve Dept., Schauerman Library (Textbooks on Reserve)	Schauerman Library, East Wing, Main Level	310.660.3593 x3528	http://www.elcamino.edu/library/library_ser/index.asp
Learning Resources Center (Free Tutoring) Basic Skills	Schauerman Library, 2 nd Floor, West Wing	310.660.3511 or 310.660.3593 x6012 or 310.660.3593 x7495	http://www.elcamino.edu/library/lrc/tutoring/index.asp

Some Helpful Information

Get connected with MyECC at <http://myecc.elcamino.edu>. El Camino College's new internet based service is the best way to get connected to the college and the numerous services available online. Once registered through MyECC, students can apply, register, add & drop classes; get their FREE copy of the current class schedule; search for classes, make payments or view accounts; view test scores, check financial aid and award letter status; check grades; locate faculty; and print unofficial transcripts.

Students will also receive the latest campus updates and information further connecting them to the El Camino College community. Your course instructor's *name*, telephone number, office hours and office location are in the course syllabus, which is *distributed* by the instructor.

All offices at ECC can be reached by calling 1.866.ELCAMINO or visiting the El Camino College Web Page: www.elcamino.edu. Do you have a quick question about classes or a question for a counselor? Research your questions with our new [FAQs/Quick Questions page](#) to find your answer.

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www.elcamino.edu/DistanceEd/ClassScheduleAndMeetingInfo.asp



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