Technical Support Information & Policies

Since online courses rely primarily on the use of hardware and software, there *may* be times that you experience technical problems, which may interfere with your ability to complete course assignments. Hardware breaks down and software incompatibilities exist. Taft College does not have the resources to help with technical problems that occur on your end. We will work diligently in resolving any problems that may arise on our end, such as network down-time, course access problems, passwords, etc.

Have a Backup Plan!

It is prudent to have a computer back-up plan in case you experience problems with your software, browser, computer, or your Internet Service Provider's connection or firewall. Have a backup plan where you can access your course from a friend's system, a campus computer lab, campus or public library computers, or your work computer. Technology glitches happen. Be prepared.

When to Contact Your Instructor

Please notify your instructor *immediately* if you are having problems accessing course materials over the Internet or via email, depending on the course delivery method. These problems include, but are not limited to, accessing the course (inactive or wrong URL), inactive or incorrect password, returned email messages, etc. Also, do not put off contacting your instructor if you are having problems understanding the material. Do not just quit logging on. If you don't "show up" for any length of time, you may be dropped from the course. Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for his/her "attendance & withdrawal" policy.

Please remember that your instructor is NOT responsible for:
(Unless, of course, you are taking a course specifically designed to teach you these skills)

- teaching you how to send attachments.
- teaching you how to conduct web searches.
- teaching you word processing commands.
- teaching you how to download.
- teaching you how to set up your hardware and software.
- teaching you how to configure your email.

Be sure you have the necessary technical knowledge, equipment, and software to succeed in an online course. In addition, we recommend you take an introductory computer class to gain some of the skills listed above.

Contacting Our Staff

Taft College does not have the resources to help with technical problems that occur on YOUR end. We will ensure connectivity on our servers/software. If you cannot access your course site, contact your instructor or post a message on our Help Desk. Be sure it is not a problem with your ISP or computer first.

Contacting Your ISP Technical Support Staff

Please contact your Internet Service Provider for assistance with the following problems. Their technical support can walk you through installation and configuration of software. Locate their technical support phone number on your billing statement or their homepage.
- modem problems
- hardware problems
- local software problems
- problems with your Internet Service Provider
- email accounts (other than your campus account)
- setting up your email account on your home computer
- problems downloading software

General System Requirements:

- Screen resolution set to 1024 X 768. Lower monitor resolutions may cause horizontal scrolling.
- PC's should be running Windows 2000, XP, Vista, 7 or 8
- Macs should have OS X 10.3.X or above
- System should have at least 1G of Ram. Close down other applications to have more system resources.
- 56K minimum is required.
- DSL or cable modem strongly advised. Dial-up or satellite require patience.
- Regular, reliable Internet access. If you don't have decent internet connectivity, you may experience frustration with slow response, especially if your instructors have posted large media files or videos for you to download and view.
- Access to a computer that meets the requirements (see above). Macs and PC's are supported. (Some tablets and mobile phones do not qualify as reliable computer stations).
- A supported browser. Latest version of Firefox, Google Chrome or IE on the PC, and latest version of Firefox or Google Chrome on the Mac.
- An email program (Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail, Microsoft Live, CCCApply, etc.)
- A word processing program (Word, WordPerfect, etc.)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader ([Download Reader for Free](#))
- Please refer to your course syllabus for plugins and other software that may be required by your instructors.

While you may have some success accessing parts of Etudes from non-supported browsers, including ones you might find in mobile phones or tablet, you would be risking your studies. Proper use of the course management system can only be assured using a computer that meets the system requirements.

Browsers

Be sure you are using a supported browser. They are free downloads.

PC Users
    For best experience, use the *latest* version of <u>Firefox</u>. ***Latest*** versions of <u>Google Chrome</u> and <u>Internet Explorer</u>. Some tablet PC's are not recommended, as the browsers don't support all the necessary functions of the course management system.

Mac Users
    For best experience, use the *latest* version of <u>Firefox</u>. The latest version of <u>Google Chrome</u> and <u>Safari</u> are also supported. Mac users must be running OSX 10.3 or above. Some tablets do not fully support all the necessary functions of the course management system.