



# Best Educational E-Practices (BEEP)

Prepared and disseminated by [Project Eagle St. Petersburg College](#)

Number 2

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November 1, 2000

## Student Support Services for Distance Learners

*"Our first graduates demonstrate the power of the Internet to help motivated adults achieve their personal educational goals."*  
(Dr. Gary E. Miller, Executive Director, [Penn State World Campus](#))

The delivery of support services to distance learners has expanded tremendously from a link to an institution's library, one of the earliest off-campus aids offered to students. Most schools with a distance alternative provide opportunities for all their students to apply for admission, register, and, increasingly, to pay for courses, get financial aid, and purchase textbooks online. The colleges and universities linked to this issue are samples of ones that have developed a Web-visible assortment of support services beyond the basics and specific to distance learners.

### Online Directories and Handbooks of Services for Distance Learners

(Comprehensive Web pages that include links to all necessary services)

- [Brevard Community College](#) (FL).
- [Montgomery College](#) (MD).
- [Albuquerque Technical and Vocational Institute](#) (NM).
- [University of Minnesota](#).

### Self-Assessment for Distance Learning Readiness

(Tools for interested students to determine if distance learning is right for them)

- [Brevard Community College](#) (FL).
- [Hudson Valley Community College](#) (NY).
- [Montgomery College](#) (MD). Offers instruction along with assessment.
- [Sauk Valley Community College](#) (IL). Lists links to a learning style assessment tool, as well as necessary information about taking distance courses.
- [Stephen F. Austin State University](#) (TX).
- [Virginia Tech](#).
- [West Virginia University](#). Links to a ten-question self-discipline quiz at the PBS Web site.

### Orientation to Distance Learning

- [Berkeley College](#) (NY/NJ). Gives multimedia orientation in both self-paced and auto-paced formats.
- [National American University](#) (SD). Requires a one-week online orientation to all beginning online courses.
- [Penn State](#). Offers World Campus 101, an online orientation.
- [Stephen F. Austin State University](#) (TX). Includes a feedback form evaluating the orientation.
- [Virginia Tech](#). Deals with topics related to all forms of distance learning.

### Hardware Requirements for Distance Courses

- [Montgomery College](#) (MD). Includes equipment requirements for all types of distance learning.
- [National American University](#) (SD).
- [Penn State](#). Contains a link to diagnostic tests for proper computer setup.
- [Stephen F. Austin State University](#) (TX). Has added information on software, proper computer configuration.

## Counseling Services

- [Albuquerque Technical and Vocational Institute](#). Offers “off-campus distance learning advisement.”
- [Sauk Valley Community College](#). Includes direct email link to a distance learning counselor.
- [Rio Salado College](#) (AZ). Provides counseling information bilingually.

## Tutorial Services

- [Clackamas Community College](#) (OR). Offers online tutoring in English and Science.
- [Community College of Denver](#). Accepts form-based requests related to math courses.
- [Paradise Valley Community College](#) (AZ). Presents simple instructions to email a math tutor.
- [Rio Salado College](#) (AZ). Includes daily Beep-a-Tutor service in selected subjects.
- [Utah Valley State College](#). Maintains a multi-function online writing lab.
- [Winona State University](#) (MN). Provides writing assistance and evaluates essays to 1200 words.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- [Brevard Community College](#) (FL). Presents answers in the form of “Everything You Need to Know...”
- [Montgomery College](#) (MD).
- [National American University](#) (SD).
- [Stephen F. Austin State University](#) (TX). Groups questions by subject under Student Support Services FAQs.

## Other Online Support Services

In addition to the services above, some institutions have added other innovative touches:

- **Career Services.**
  - [Rio Salado College](#) (AZ).
  - [West Virginia University](#).
- **Bulletin Boards.**
  - [Brevard Community College](#). Has discussion/message boards in an “Online Intervention Center.”
  - [Penn State](#).
- **Digital Student Newspapers.**
  - [Penn State](#) (*The Digital Collegian*).
  - [Virginia Tech](#) (*Point to Point*).
- **Student Union Station.**
  - [Utah Valley State College](#). Includes message room, game room and chat room, as well as other useful quick links.
- **Sample Placement Tests.**
  - [Albuquerque Technical and Vocational Institute](#) (NM).
- **News Articles About the Distance Learning Program.**
  - [Penn State](#). Presents a history of the program via media reports.
- **Sample Online Lessons.**
  - [Rio Salado College](#) (AZ). Offers lessons from various departments.

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