CTAVHS

Connecticut Adult **Virtual** High School

POLICY HANDBOOK
2023-2024   (Revised: June 2022)

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Connecticut Adult Virtual High School (CT AVHS) provides students enrolled in Connecticut's Adult Credit Diploma Programs the option of earning credits online. These online courses are designed specifically for the adult student and include assignments and one-on-one teacher interactions.

Online courses are as rigorous as the traditional face-to-face format. In fact, some students find online courses to be more challenging, demanding more time and effort. Each CT AVHS course contains six weeks' worth of course materials, averaging six hours of coursework for each week. However, due to the flexibility of the online format, students will have ten weeks to complete each course in its entirety. Students are also required to spend a designated number of hours onsite (verifiable hours) at an Adult Education Center.

All CT AVHS online teachers are CT certified and trained to teach online asynchronous courses. They understand students will be logging on at different times of the day and on different days of the week to access and complete their coursework.

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

The CT AVHS system supports four account types: Student, Teacher, Mentor and Online Learning Coordinator (OLC). Within each Adult Education Center (AEC), a primary administrator (OLC) is designated.

ONLINE LEARNING COORDINATOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- OLCSs must take the "Counselor & OLC Success Course" through CT AVHS to become an OLC.
- OLCs provide administrative support for the CT AVHS.
    - Coordinate eligible staff and students into the CT AVHS online program.
    - OLCs act as primary liaison for all communications regarding CT AVHS.
    - Some AECs employ more than one OLC to accommodate scheduling requirements.
    - OLCs facilitate publication of CT AVHS online course offerings and descriptions in their AEC's marketing materials.
    - OLCs collaborate with their AEC Director to disseminate news and implement updates as approved by CT AVHS Board of Directors.
    - OLCs ensure that onsite AEC computer equipment is functional and that technology requirements for running CT AVHS online courses are met. They provide information and support to students regarding use of public computers and personal computer equipment to ensure that they can successfully access courses remotely.
    - OLCs make certain that books, textbooks, binders, calculators, and other required external course materials are available at the AEC for students to use while enrolled in courses requiring them.
- OLCs directly manage registration and course enrollment for all their students and staff (including the validation of email addresses) that are entered into the CT AVHS registration system.
    - OLC accounts are created by CT AVHS program staff only, but OLCs can edit their own and other OLC accounts within the same AEC.
    - OLCs create and maintain student accounts. Valid IDs and emails are required when entering student data into the CT AVHS registration system to ensure that students receive important notifications from CT AVHS and their course teachers.
        - A User Type must be selected for each student: ACDP, GED, and/or Other. Students may only be ACDP or GED; they cannot be simultaneously enrolled in both a credit diploma program and GED preparatory program. The Other category allows for non-credit course access.

- - OLCs should avoid making enrollments in the system during holidays and vacations.
    - OLCs collaborate with their school district's guidance counselors to enroll academically ready and technically proficient students into appropriate CT AVHS online courses.
    - Upon graduation, OLCs should set student accounts to "Graduated" within the system to remove further access to the AVHS program.
  - OLCs create and maintain mentor accounts. Mentor accounts must be added to the system before student accounts are created.
  - OLCs enroll and/or drop students in/from active courses and contact CT AVHS staff for assistance past official add/drop dates.
  - OLCs work with the AEC Director to assign appropriately qualified Mentors to provide consistent student support. In the event of Mentor absence(s), OLCs enlist and/or provide continuing support for students actively enrolled in the program.
  - The CT AVHS registration system is longitudinal, and accounts cannot, therefore, be deleted if they contain associated student data. Those accounts shall be deactivated instead. OLCs review these accounts annually.
- OLCs collaborate with their AEC Director to create and schedule technology literacy training for all staff and students associated with the CT AVHS program.
  - OLCs require that their students enroll in the Student Success course each year as part of their overall technology literacy assessment.
  - OLCS require that their Mentors enroll in the Student Success course (Mentors Only) and the Mentor Success course each year.
  - OLCs require that their Counselors enroll in the Counselor and OLC Success course each year.
  - OLCs maintain their enrollment in the Counselor and OLC Success course each year.

MENTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Mentors must take the Mentor Success Course through CT AVHS in order to be assigned as a Mentor.
  - Mentors are required to be enrolled in the Mentor Success Course and Student Success Course (Mentors Only) each year in order to stay up to date with the CT AVHS program.
- Mentors are expected to login to CT AVHS and Blackboard to review announcements and to check and reply to Messages every other day. If Tuesdays and Thursdays are the chosen regular check-in days, a weekend day is also suggested to be added.
- Mentors are specifically assigned to support individual students in CT AVHS courses by OLCs who will notify Mentors when they have new actively enrolled students.
  - As soon as students are enrolled in new courses, Mentors work directly with them to review the CT AVHS syllabus to create a time management plan for successful and timely completion of coursework.
  - Mentors inform OLCs about additional required course supplies (books, binders, calculators, etc.) that students will need to ensure that these materials are available at the AEC.
  - Mentors should be aware of holidays and vacations when reviewing a student's "Course End Date". If there is a conflict, the Mentor should reach out to the OLC or Counselor to remedy the situation.
  - Mentors establish consistent communication plans with individual students via in-person, phone and/or email to support successful completion of course assignments and activities. Once per week contact is advised to review student progress and to provide necessary tutoring, learning resources, and encouragement.
  - Mentors are not permitted to complete any coursework for students.
  - Mentors are expected to review corrected assignments and teacher comments in the Grade Center with their students each week as part of the established time management plan.

- o Mentors must review the Progress Report students receive so they can implement effective learning strategies to help the students toward successful completion.
- Mentors are required to copy the OLC and teacher when replying to important student communications.
- Mentors are required to contact teachers and OLCs as soon as it becomes clear that a student is experiencing issues that require increased support and oversight.
- Mentors should not give out personal contact information of the teachers.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Teachers are required to develop measurable learning outcomes (for the course and for each week's assignments), develop ways of assessing the outcomes, and review existing source materials (including supplemental materials as appropriate).
- Teachers will keep the course up to date and review the course before it runs.
  - o Teachers will make sure the course meets and maintains ADA requirements.
  - o Courses will be available at least one week before registration begins so the instructor can check to make sure there are no issues within course such as broken links, missing images, etc.
  - o Teachers will maintain their contact information within their course(s).
  - o Teachers will fix any problems that arise in the teaching shell or request assistance from the AVHS Coordinator.
  - o Teachers will notify the AVHS Coordinator if changes need to be made to the Master Shell.
- All course work and instructor-to-student interactions needs to be done within the course.
- Teachers are required to grade the work within 48 business day hours of student submission.
  - o Teachers must provide feedback on all assignments.
- Teachers are required to respond to student messages in Blackboard within 48 business day hours.
- Teachers are required to respond to mentor emails within 48 business day hours.
- Teachers are required to send each student a Progress Report midway through the 10-week period
  - o Teachers should send a Progress Report sooner if the student is having academic difficulty or is in danger of failing the course.
  - o This report must be completed within the CT AVHS Registration System.
  - o Teachers must comment on any student issues and/or poor academic performance.
  - o It is highly recommended that the teacher message the Mentor and OLC directly as well.
  - o Teachers may send multiple reports as needed.
- Teachers are required to post weekly announcements (when students are enrolled) to keep students engaged in the course.
- Teachers make two documented contacts to students, copying OLCs and mentors, about the outstanding orientation message assignment.
- Teachers are required to submit final grades within seven days of the student's completion of the 10th week.

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

ORIENTATION

There are two forms of orientation to the CT AVHS program:
- The "Student Success (Online Learning Orientation)" is a required yearly course for students that is designed to acquaint new students to the CT AVHS program, help students with Blackboard assignment types, and keep students up to date with the CT AVHS program. It is assumed that the selected students for this program are technically competent. The Orientation course does not cover computer literacy

basics. This course is **not credit-bearing** and students should remain in the course for the duration of the school year.

- Within each credit-bearing course, students must complete one task at the beginning of every ACDP course to maintain enrollment in the course. Students have one week to message the teacher and introduce themselves to their instructor. If students do not complete this message during the add/drop period, they will be automatically removed from the course. Warnings are issued to students, teachers, mentors and OLCs when students are in danger of being removed for non-compliance.

FLEXIBLE ENROLLMENT COURSES

- All courses within the CT AVHS Registration System are "Flex" courses.
- Courses are offered from September to May and students can be enrolled at any time.
- Some "Flex" courses will be offered for a specific Summer Term.
- Students have 10 weeks to complete their coursework starting from their enrollment date.
- The orientation message is required, and students have one week to complete it.
    - Students receive automated warning emails if Orientation message is not completed.
    - Students are automatically dropped after one week if students fail to complete the orientation message.
- OLCs can drop students up to three weeks after the enrollment date.
- If students do not complete coursework after 10 weeks, teachers issue a grade of "Not Retained 1".
- Students need to follow the Prerequisites listed within the CT AVHS Registration system. Students cannot enroll in a "Session 2" course if they have not completed the "Session 1" course with a passing grade first. These courses are labeled in the descriptions within the CT AVHS Registration system.
    - Courses without a Prerequisite can be taken in any order.
- If a student does not complete the orientation message by the student's specific "Drop Date", they will be removed from the course. It is the OLCs responsibility to reenroll them into the course as needed.
- Once a final grade has been submitted, course extensions/reenrollments are handled on a case-by-case basis with teachers having final approval. Extension requests shall be submitted to CT AVHS program staff for review through completion of the Reenrollment Application. OLCs/Mentors must complete the Reenrollment Application. Extensions are for emergency and/or extenuating circumstances only and will only be granted once in a school year.* If a student earns a letter grade, no reenrollments will be allowed.* If a student earns a grade of Not Retained 1 (0-24% of coursework completed), a student can reenroll for a new 10-week period if approved.* If a student earns a grade of Not Retained 2 (25%-49% of coursework completed), a student can reenroll for a two-week extension period if approved.* *(*Documented medical reasons will follow stated dates in the doctor's note.)*

PREPARATORY COURSES

- GED, Accuplacer, and SAT Preparatory courses are designed to be used as supplemental instruction to existing on-ground programs.
- Students who are actively enrolled in a local preparatory program can utilize the online courseware to augment instruction if their teacher opts to utilize the online courseware.
- Students are not required to fulfill the 12 verifiable hour requirement for ACDP courses and are not required to meet with a local mentor, but the system does require a mentor selection upon account set-up.
- Each LEA will have their own courses for students. Each LEA will provide their own instructor in each course.

ACADEMICS

The CT AVHS curriculum is aligned with Common Core State Standards, College and Career Readiness Standards, and contain 36 seat hours per 0.5 credit. Students interact with teachers and their course materials through the Blackboard Learn course system and are supported by a local mentor. While online, students are still required to have 12 verifiable hours at their local Adult Education Center. These hours are often used for mentoring time to ensure students are on task and on target.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

An Academic Honesty statement is posted within each course. The consequences of cheating or plagiarism are at the discretion of the teacher and may result in a failing grade for the course or assignment.

VERIFIABLE HOURS

For each online course, the State Department of Education requires students to complete 12 verifiable hours on-site at the local Adult Education Center. A general practice is to use those 12 hours for mentoring time, spreading across the 8-10 weeks term (1.5 hours per week). Another proven practice is to use part of those 12 hours to support subject specific tutoring.

WEIGHTED GRADES

CT AVHS uses a system of weighted totals within the course's grade book. Each of a students' six weeks of course work is typically worth the same percentage amount, however, individual assignments and tests within each week still have specific numbers of points assigned to them. This method of grading is designed to encourage students to persist throughout their coursework to completion.

GRADING

All students start off with a 0% in every course and work up from there. A student's overall course grade increases with each assignment they complete. Students must attempt to do all the assignments in a course.

Failure to do an assignment will result in 0 points for that assignment and will be calculated into the final grade for the course. There is no extra credit. If a student withdraws or leaves the course having not completed all the assignments, 0 points will be given for the unfinished work and calculated in the final grade.

Teachers issue Final Course Grades based on the criteria below:

If 50%+ of coursework was completed:

Letter Grade Issued	Percent Grade
A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82

Letter Grade Issued	Percent Grade
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D *	65-66
D- *	60-64
F	59 and below

D and D- are special ranges to account for districts who use 65% as passing grade.

If 0-49% of coursework was completed:

Grade Issue	Course Work Percentage Range
Not Retained 1 (NR1)	0-24% of coursework completed
Not Retained 2 (NR2)	25%-49% of coursework completed

REPORTING

The CT AVHS reporting system allows the local Adult Education Center to review current student enrollments, course/grade histories, and aggregate completion data.

ROSTER REPORT

The Roster Report documents current and past course rosters, including start date and projected end date for Flex students.

PROGRESS REPORTS

CT AVHS teachers are required to send each student a general progress report midway through the 10-week period or sooner if the student is having academic difficulty or is in danger of failing the course through the CT AVHS system. The OLCs/Mentors must review the Progress Report that students receive so they can implement effective learning strategies to help the students toward successful completion.

GRADE HISTORY REPORT

The Grade History Report will document the students' earned grades for their respective courses. For Flex courses, the grades will be available 7-10 days after the teacher submits a grade. The final grades need to be transferred to the LACES system to be included as part of the student's official transcript.

COMPLETED REPORT

The Completed Report documents a program's overall complete percentages per course for the given terms selected.

COMMUNICATIONS

The CT AVHS registration system allows all of its currently enrolled users (teachers, students, OLCs and mentors) to communicate with each other using its internal messaging system. Teachers and students can easily locate each other and send important information to one another without needing to use an internet email account.

STUDENT/TEACHER

Much of the student/teacher interaction will happen with the Blackboard Learning system/courseware. Students can utilize the messaging tool for private conversations with the teacher. The teacher will also utilize the progress report to communicate with the student and the associated mentors and OLCs. Some teachers may offer additional phone and email contact information for their students.

STUDENT/MENTOR

Much of the student/mentor interaction will happen in-person. The CT AVHS system does allow for internal messaging between the two parties. Additionally, mentors will be copied on any progress reports from the teacher to the student.

TEACHER/MENTOR

In addition to being copied on all teacher-initiated Progress Reports, mentors can utilize the internal messaging tool within the CT AVHS Registration system to communicate with teachers.

SUPPORT

All CT AVHS registration system and Blackboard LMS support requests should be directed to ctavhs@charteroak.edu.