

FISHER COLLEGE

PROFESSIONAL STUDIES ORIENTATION

A guide to being successful in online and blended courses



2019-2020

This orientation will cover:

- 1. Preparing For Your Course**
- 2. Completing Your Course**
- 3. Policies and Procedures**
- 4. Support Services**

Getting Started

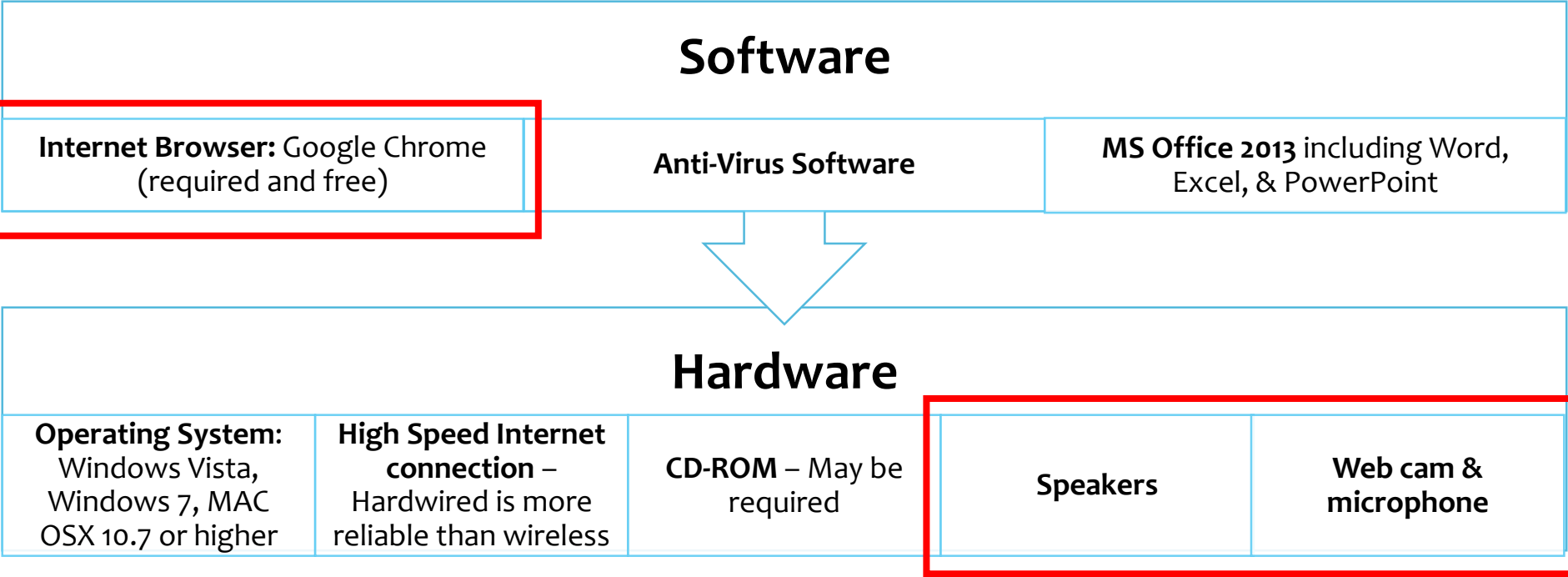
**1. Computer
Requirements**

2. Blackboard

3. Collaborate

4. Textbooks

You Must Have Access to a Computer!



Required for Collaborate Sessions!

Required for Collaborate Sessions!

Computer Use Policy

No student is allowed to use another user's password, ID, or account. Nor should any student attempt to capture or guess another user's password. Students should not access restricted files to which they have not been given official access, should not use e-mail to "spam" others, and should not release worms or viruses or other destructive code into the system. Students must obey local, state, and federal laws (copyright and other intellectual property laws), and must not use the College information system to pursue any personal business or use the name of Fisher College to suggest a College endorsement. Most importantly, the College information system must not be used to harass anyone or make repeated unwelcome contacts with others. Students must not display material that is explicitly sexual or offensive, which is inconsistent with the College Policies on Non Discrimination and Anti-Harassment.

The Computer use policy is posted in the Computer laboratories throughout the College. By using the College's computers, students acknowledge agreement with the Computer Policy. For further details on the Computer Policy, please visit the Department of Information Services (<http://www.fisher.edu/student-life/student-services/computer-and-information-services>).

Office365

As a student at Fisher College (non-degree and matriculating) you have access to Office365 through your Fisher.edu email account.

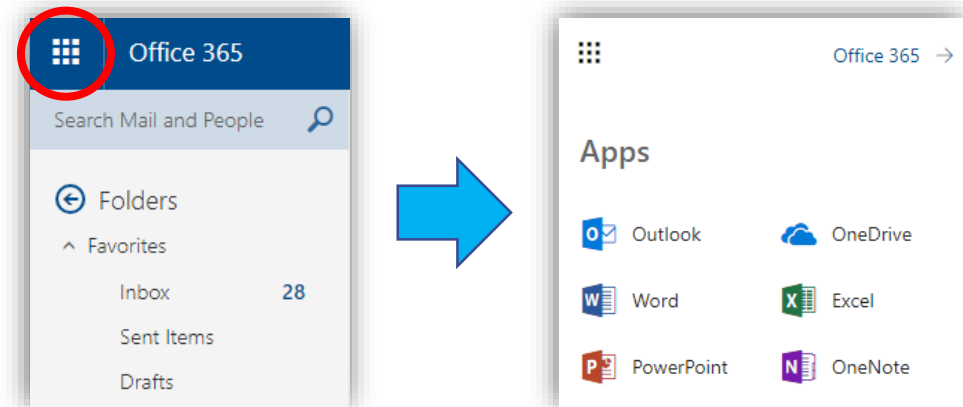
Office365 is a web version of Microsoft Office which also provides cloud storage to enrolled students. Through your student email account you can access the following web based apps:

- Outlook (student email)
- OneDrive (cloud storage)
- Word
- Excel
- PowerPoint

Because Office365 is web-based, you don't have to download or install any software onto your computer, and its accessible anywhere you have an internet connection.

To access your Office365 Account:

1. Go to <http://www.fisher.edu/current-students> and click on the link for E-Mail
2. To access the apps available through your Office365 account, you would click on the grid icon in the top left hand corner of the screen.
3. Then select the app you'd like to use and it will open in a new tab on your browser.



Blackboard (Bb)

Blackboard is the learning management system where you will access your courses.

There is an app that you can download to your mobile device to supplement computer access – look for the Blackboard app in your App Store.

BB101 is a practice course that gives you a chance to get familiar with Blackboard and the layouts of a course.

Your courses will typically be available for you to login and view the weekend before the class officially begins.

Navigating Your Course in Blackboard

Getting Started

Announcements

Start Here!

Syllabus & Information

Required Textbook & Materials

Course Content

Weekly Modules

Collaborate Session Links

Shortcuts

Assignment Submissions

Tests/Quizzes

Discussion Board

Student Resources

External Links

Student Tools & Grades

Library Information

Academic Integrity

Where To Go For Help

Every course uses this standard menu.

Under the **Getting Started** heading you will find announcements, your syllabus, other important information, and the required textbook.

Under the **Course Content** Heading you will find the weekly modules which contain all of your instructional materials for each week as well as links to Collaborate sessions.

Under the **Shortcuts** heading you will find quick access to your assignments, tests, and discussions.

Under the **Student Resources** heading you will find links to your grades, email, and other helpful resources.

Blackboard Ally

Ally creates alternative files that are easier to use by all students. Ally works within your online course so it's available right where you need it.

Alternative files include readable text for screen readers, pictures with captions, and easy-to-navigate content.

Alternative formats aren't just for a select group of students, **Alternative formats benefit everyone.** For example, maybe you have a lot of course material to read and get eye strain. You can listen to an audio format of the file your instructor uploaded instead.

While not every file type is supported, most are, and Blackboard is always adding more. To access an Alternative Format of a file:

- 1) Locate a file in your course
- 2) Click on the Ally icon



- 3) Click on the file format you'd like to download.

Please Note: Some file conversions can take up to 2-5 minutes depending on size and available bandwidth.

Collaborate

Collaborate is a web-based virtual classroom tool used in all online courses.

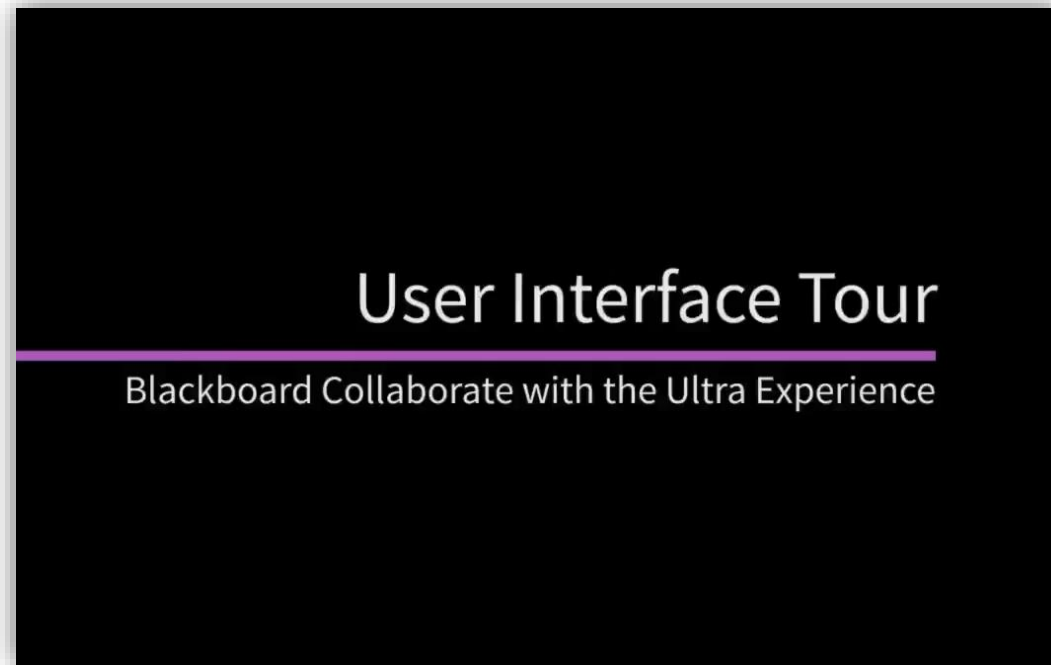
Instructors and students log in at the same time, and use video and audio to communicate with each other.

There is nothing to download; just use **Google Chrome** to access the session via the link your instructor provides.

Using Collaborate

Visit this YouTube link to view a short video tour of the user interface:

<https://youtu.be/1W4sGpVmJaY>



Textbooks

Textbooks are required for every course. Order your textbook as soon as possible! You will need it for the first day.

The bookstore site is: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/fisher.htm>

You will receive additional information via email once your registration is processed.

Completing Your Courses

**1. Class &
Homework
Expectations**

**2. Academic
Responsibilities**

3. Being Successful

Class and Homework Expectations

In all course formats, you can expect to spend approximately 17 hours per week engaging with course materials.

Online Courses

No in-class instruction

6 hours online instruction

Learning Activities

- Readings
- Writing assignments
- Discussion Boards
- Test/Quizzes

Blended Courses

3 hours in-class instruction

3 hours online instruction

Learning Activities

- Readings
- Writing assignments
- Discussion Boards
- Test/Quizzes

Know Your Academic Responsibilities

Courses typically have the following Academic Responsibilities:

1. Weekly Textbook reading
2. Supplemental instructional materials
(including written documents, outside websites, videos, etc.)
3. Weekly Discussion Boards
4. Collaborate sessions
5. Other Assignments

Your course syllabus will outline all required elements of your course.

Course Syllabus

Review your course syllabus when you first log in to your course.

Your syllabus will provide:

- Instructor's contact information
- Course materials, books, etc.
- Course grading information
- Course expectations
- Course schedule to help manage workload

Course Requirements: Collaborate

All online courses utilize 4 Blackboard Collaborate sessions per term to enhance the student experience.

Collaborate sessions give students the opportunity to engage with their instructor and classmates in a live setting.

Students are expected to either attend the live session, or watch the recording for all sessions.

Course Requirements: Discussion Board

All online and blended courses require participation in weekly discussion boards. You will be required to introduce yourself and provide a photo during the first week of the course.

- Instructors will provide question prompts. You will respond with an initial post and then respond to other students' postings.
- Read all posts and flag the ones that you find particularly interesting to respond to.
- Plan to log in daily to keep up with the readings/postings.
- The Discussion Board is an academic forum. Please refrain from using texting language. Consider drafting your message in Microsoft Word before posting.

Discussion Board Netiquette

- Think before you write, and think twice before you send. Don't send anything in writing that you wouldn't feel comfortable saying to someone in person. This is an academic forum.
- Take a few moments to proofread before you send something. Frequent typographical errors or misspellings are distracting, and leave a bad impression.
- Remember that your audience may be international and intercultural.
- Avoid potentially offensive terminology. Do not use words that could be considered sexist, racist, ageist, or any other perspective that demonstrates disrespect.
- Be cautious when using humor (especially sarcasm).

Course Requirements: Assignments

In addition to Collaborate and Discussion Boards, most courses also require tests and/or quizzes, exams, and other written assignments.

You may be required to complete different kinds of assignments including:

- Response papers
- Research papers
- Participate in group projects

Exams and all other assignments are always completed through Blackboard.

To Be Successful

Have reliable access to a computer!

- Computers are available at each campus location. Check for available hours.
- Check your local library for computer availability.

Actively participate in your course (daily login is recommended)

- Check for announcements.
- Review instructional materials in each weekly module.
- Participate in discussion boards.
- Complete tests/quizzes.
- Complete assignments.

Set a weekly schedule

- Set aside time for weekly readings, discussion boards, and other assignments.
- Set reminders on your calendar and/or phone to remind you of due dates.
- Don't fall behind in readings and assignments.

Know who to contact if you need help

- Instructor
- Academic Advisor
- Student Service Representative

Log in to Blackboard and check Fisher email every day

- Empty email inbox AND trash regularly.
- Remember that you must only use your Fisher email.
- Remember to change your email password when prompted.

Policies and Procedures

**1. Information
Systems**

2. Email

**3. Dropping and
Withdrawing**

**4. Viewing
Mid-term &
Final Grades**

**5. Obtaining
Transcripts**

Accessing Blackboard, Email, and MyFisher

You may access these portals through the following page on the Fisher website: <http://fisher.edu/current-students> or through the direct URL's listed below.

Blackboard: <http://fisher.blackboard.com>

MyFisher: <http://myfisher.fisher.edu>

Email: <http://outlook.office.com>

*Contact Marjorie Hewitt mhewitt@fisher.edu if you cannot log in to any site.

**ALL COMMUNICATION WITH COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS AND FACULTY MUST
BE SENT THROUGH FISHER EMAIL ONLY.**

Fisher Email

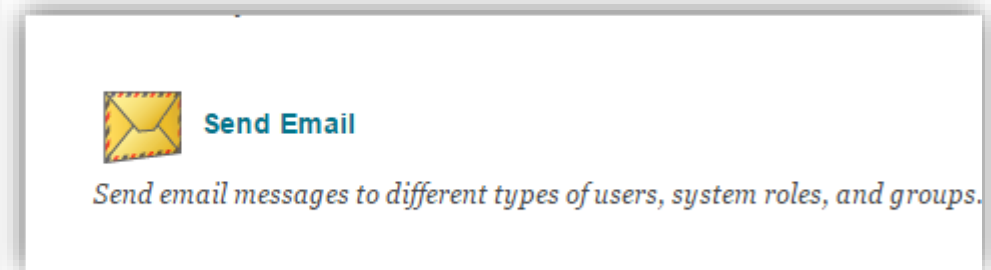
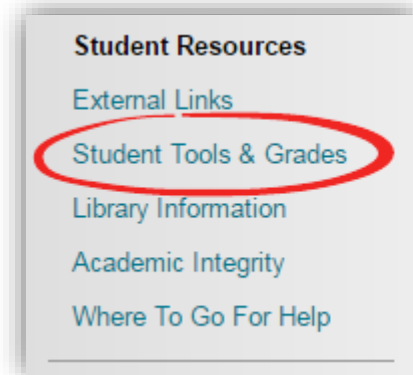
ALL COMMUNICATIONS WITH COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS AND FACULTY MUST BE SENT THROUGH FISHER EMAIL ONLY.

Your email inbox cannot be accessed through Blackboard.

You can send email through your course in Blackboard, but it is sent from your Fisher email address, and responses can only be viewed by logging into your Fisher email directly.

When you send an email through Blackboard, a copy is sent to your inbox.

**To access
email in
Blackboard:**



Dropping a Course

To drop a course without penalty, you will need email Marjorie Hewitt mhewitt@fisher.edu, or login to your MyFisher account to make the change.

1. Log into MyFisher <http://myfisher.fisher.edu>
2. Open the Menu and choose “My Info”
3. Choose “Register for Classes”. A page will then appear which has classes to register for, and also the classes that you have already added to your basket (which is located at the bottom of the page).
4. TO DROP: Locate your basket, and the class you want to drop, and click on the “Drop” link on the left side of the screen next to the class.

If you have problems, please contact Marjorie Hewitt right away.

Viewing Mid-term and Final Grades

Mid-term warning grades are entered by the end of week 4. Mid-term warning grades are only entered for grades of C- or lower. If you see “NW” it means “no warning”.

Final grades are entered within 48 hours of the last day of the term.

Mid-term and Final grades are viewed through **MyFisher**.

1. Log into MyFisher <http://myfisher.fisher.edu>
2. Open the menu and choose “MY INFO”
3. Select “Midterm Warning Grade” or “Final Grade Report”
4. Choose semester

Withdrawing From a Course

If you are thinking of withdrawing from a course, first start by contacting your Instructor. Your instructor may be able to help you successfully complete the class.

If you wish to withdraw from a course, you will need to send an email to Marjorie Hewitt mhewitt@fisher.edu by the last day to withdraw.

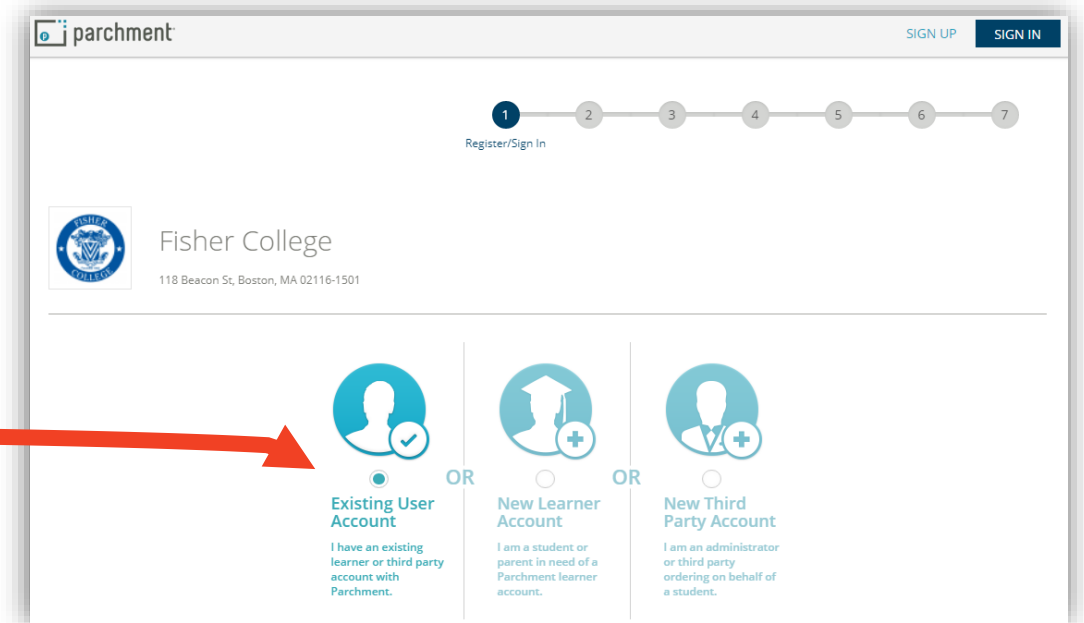
Withdrawing from a course may result in out-of-pocket tuition expenses.

How to Order Your Transcript

All transcripts are ordered online from the Fisher College Website at <https://www.fisher.edu/academics/academic-resources/registrar/academic-transcripts> using a portal called Parchment.

If you have never requested transcripts from Fisher, you will need to set up an account, but it is easy to do.

Official Transcripts cost \$15 per copy for normal processing.



Support for Success

**1. Course Level
Support**

**2. Grievance
Process**

**3. Technology
Support**

**4. Your Point of
Contact**

Course Level Support

If you have questions about your course, including course requirements, assignments, and concepts, try one of these methods:

1. Post a question to the general discussion board forum in your course.
2. Email or speak with your Instructor

Concerns With Your Course or Instructor

Although we do not anticipate that you will encounter problems, the following suggestions are in place in the unlikely event that you do have a concern.

- If you have a problem or concern about a course or Instructor, you should always start by addressing your concern with the Instructor. If the Instructor is not aware of a problem, they cannot correct it. If your problem is not satisfactorily addressed, then you should consult with your Student Service Representative. They will assess the situation and advise you on further action, which may include consulting with a Site Director, or the Dean of the Division of Accelerated and Professional Studies.
- If you are unsure about how to address your concerns with your instructor, you may always consult with your Student Service Representative for the proper course of action.

Grievance Process

If a grievance is not resolved directly and informally by the student, the student may file a written grievance complaint (the “Grievance”). The Grievance complaint must be filed within 10 calendar days from the last attempt to resolve the matter directly with the interested parties. All Grievances shall be filed directly with the Dean of Students by certified mail, regular mail, or in hand. A student may withdraw a Grievance at any time by filing a withdrawal request in writing with the Dean of Academic Affairs.

For the complete process, please visit:

<https://www.fisher.edu/about/institutional-information#fs-panel-12280>

If a complaint cannot be resolved internally, students may be able to file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

More information about the DHE’s complaint process can be found at: <https://www.mass.edu/forstufam/complaints/complaints.asp> (for students residing in MA) and <https://www.mass.edu/foradmin/sara/complaints.asp> (for students residing in SARA states and territories outside of MA)

Technology Support

If you have questions or concerns regarding technology used in your courses please email:

Patrick McGovern

Instructional Technology Support Technician

pmcgovern@fisher.edu

Additional Help Resources

FISHER COLLEGE EMAIL HELP

Your Fisher College email password expires every few months. Do not ignore the email notification alerting you to the impending expiration. If you do become locked out of your email, you may contact Marjorie Hewitt by phone.

BLACKBOARD AND COLLABORATIVE HELP

Blackboard Help: <https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student>

Collaborate Help: <https://help.blackboard.com/Collaborate/Ultra/Participant>

Your Point of Contact

Any time you have a question, problem or concern, you may always contact:

Marjorie Hewitt
mhewitt@fisher.edu
774-296-7652

Congratulations!

You have now completed your orientation and are ready to begin your journey to success here at Fisher College.