

Hi

This is not a sign of good skills with art, but of my concern about students, including about some students having technical problems. I do hope it helps. If you have questions, just ask.

Your history course is one of two broad types of distance learning courses that the Distance Learning Department encourages faculty to use. Some people call this type of course a “pathway” course because it tries to provide a safe “path” for taking a distance learning course.

Since this course may be different from what you have used before at WCJC or at other colleges, I’m providing these tips. This is **not** a substitute for your doing WCJC’s required Course Orientation, but a way:

- To avoid some technical problems that students in face-to-face and probably distance learning have been having
- To get you to that Orientation successfully and to help you avoid getting off the “path”

### Making Sure Your Device and Browser Will Work with Blackboard and Logging into Blackboard

1. Use the “Computer Requirements” link before you login.
2. Log into Blackboard. You’ll need your Banner ID (@##### twice). Do change your password.

The image shows a screenshot of a web browser displaying the Blackboard login page for Wharton County Junior College. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://wcjc.blackboard.com/>. The page features the college's logo and a navigation menu. The main content area is divided into three columns: Blackboard Login, Student Help Desk, and Additional Information. The Blackboard Login section includes a login form with fields for Username and Password, and a Login button. The Student Help Desk section provides contact information for IT support and links to resources like Computer Requirements and Frequently Asked Questions. The Additional Information section includes links to various resources and a section for Faculty. Several callout boxes with arrows point to specific elements on the page, providing additional tips and instructions.

**Save this URL in case the WCJC site is down (rare) and Blackboard is still up.**

**Tip: An 8-week course is hard. Be sure you match online learning. If you have never taken an online class, consider this useful self-test.**

**Read this and this.**

**Tip: If you are on a public computer, logout when you are done. Blackboard stays open.**

**Use the "Computer Requirements" link before you login. Having a new device or that your device worked last term won't protect you. Your device and your current browser must match Blackboard. Students are not seeing links, not see all quiz questions, and so on. Check first!**

**If you need to download a browser, use these links. In general, Firefox seems safest.**

**Downloadable Resources**

[Download Firefox](#)  
[Download Chrome](#)  
[Download LockDown Browser](#)  
[LockDown Browser User Guide](#)

**Announcements:**

Once in Blackboard, enter your course in the way shown—and no other way.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard interface for Wharton County Junior College. The top navigation bar includes the college logo, the user name 'Connie Bibus 202', and links for 'My Institution' and 'Courses'. Below this is a 'Personalize Page' button. The main content area is divided into three sections: 'Tools', 'My Announcements', and 'Course List'. The 'Tools' section on the left contains links for Announcements, Calendar, Tasks, My Grades, Send Email, Personal Information, Goals, Browse NBC Learn, NBC Learn Playlist, Course Materials, and Course Materials Hub. The 'My Announcements' section in the center contains a red-bordered box with the following instructions:

1. For success in this "pathway" course, start in only 1 place.
2. Click the URL for your History course here only.
3. For this course, only use the email inside the Blackboard course. It is called Messages and it is on the left menu inside the course.

The 'Course List' section on the right shows a list of courses where the user is a student, including 'FACREDEV012: Faculty Redevelopment Course - Bibus' and several 'US History I' and 'US History II' courses.

When you enter the course, Blackboard automatically displays the required items for Getting Starting—including the required "introductory tasks" you must do before the date in the Course Schedule.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard course page for 'SP15\_HIST1302\_BibusC\_28\_WWW (US History II (Core 060))'. The page is titled 'Getting Started - Course Documents and Orientation (MA)'. The left navigation menu includes links for Home Page, Read Me First, Instructor Information, Course Materials, Syllabus & Schedule, Learning Units & All Assignments, Course Tools, Announcements, Calendar, Discussions, Messages, My Grades, Web Resources, College Resources, History Resources, and On Demand for Students. The main content area is titled 'Read Me First' and includes a 'Table of Contents' with the following items:

- I. Read Me First
- II. Syllabus & Schedule
- III. Syllabus Acknowledgement Quiz
- IV. Course Orientation
- V. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- VI. Good Habits for Evidence - REQUIRED
  - a. 5 Good Habits for Evidence-t
  - b. Definitions to Help You with th
  - c. File to Download, Complete, a
  - d. Instructions from Turnitin on f
  - e. Good Habits for Evidence Pers
  - f. If You Have a Question about
- VII. The links below are shortcuts to
- VIII. Discussions
- IX. Messages

Annotations include:

- A red box pointing to the 'Syllabus & Schedule' link in the left menu: "You can click to display the Syllabus & Schedule from 2 places."
- A blue box pointing to the 'Read Me First' link in the left menu: "Tip: the words and organization used are from the WCJC Distance Learning Department. They have given their permission for faculty to use them. (In other words, it is not plagiarism.)"
- A red box pointing to the 'Read Me First' document in the Table of Contents: "Read Me First automatically opens on the right. It is a pdf so you can save it to your computer and leave it open until you do each required task—and you need to."
- A red box pointing to the 'Syllabus & Schedule' link in the Table of Contents: "In addition to Read Me First and the Syllabus & Schedule, these 2 links cover the required introductory tasks."
- A blue box pointing to the 'Syllabus & Schedule' link in the Table of Contents: "Tip: Print the 1-page Course Schedule at the end of the Syllabus. Check it off as you work and you will do well."
- A red box pointing to the 'Messages' link in the left menu: "The left menu is explained in Course Orientation."

The right side of the page shows a 'Welcome to the Class!' message with a tip: "Save this file to your computer, but keep it open where you can see it until you finish all the tasks." Below this is a list of instructions for getting started, including reading the syllabus, completing the syllabus acknowledgment quiz, reviewing the orientation, and checking the frequently asked questions.