

Distance Education Policies (Summer 09)

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Christian Life & Lifestyle

An EBC student should give evidence of a personal commitment to Christ and be leading a life that reflects Christian values, including service to God and humankind. Because the college has goals for graduates in the areas of character, spirituality and preparation for ministry, lifestyle guidelines pertaining to substances, entertainment, personal disciplines, regard for others, and expression of sexuality have been established. They are outlined in the Student Handbook (available on the EBC website).

Christian Foundations Certificate

The Christian Foundations Certificate program is equivalent to one year of full time study but generally takes longer than one year to complete because of the time frames of the DE courses. The program consists of 10 courses: 6 required (New Testament I and II, Old Testament I and II, Spiritual Formation, and Interpretation and Application of the Biblical Text) and 4 electives (one Biblical Studies course, one World Mission Course, one General Studies course, one free elective), all of which are completed by Distance Education through EBC. The certificate also requires two credits in Field Education, providing opportunities to apply knowledge and exercise gifts in supervised ministry settings.

A student interested in applying for this program is encouraged first to take any one DE course for credit as an occasional student in order to determine if this method of learning is compatible with his/her learning style and personal characteristics and habits. This course, once successfully completed, counts as one of the ten courses required in the program.

Previously completed EBC in-class courses may be applied (up to 5 courses), but no transfer credits are accepted. A student must achieve a minimum GPA of 1.8 in order to graduate from this program.

Registration

The cost of each Distance Education (DE) course for audit or credit is listed on the application form (available on the website www.ebcollege.on.ca). Full payment is to be submitted with the application form. All tuition prices include a packet of materials, but they do not include the required textbooks. Textbooks may be ordered from the Distance Education department by listing them on the application form and including payment. Current textbooks and costs are listed in a link (under the heading *Course Descriptions and Textbook Costs*) from the DE page on the website. There is an initial fee to mail the course materials and textbooks. This fee is waived for students picking up their materials at the college.

Registered Between:

Aug. 1 - Nov. 30

Dec. 1 - Mar. 31

Apr. 1 - Jul. 31

Registered in:

Fall Semester

Winter Semester

Summer Semester

Audit or Credit? Students may choose to audit courses. They register in the usual manner but pay one third of the regular rate. They receive all the material and the syllabus. However, they may only submit one large assignment or two small assignments for comments. They do not receive credit or a grade for the course. Students may switch between audit and credit status within four weeks of their registration date.

Limits on Registration

First time EBC DE students are allowed to take only one course by Distance Education. On successful completion of the first course, the student may be permitted to take two or three more DE courses at a given time, subject to appropriate approvals. No student may be enrolled in more than three DE courses at any one time. The total number of courses done by DE cannot exceed half of the courses required for a program, with the exception of the Christian Foundations Certificate Program.

Discounts

There are four college-wide discounts that apply to DE courses (and one that does not), and two discounts particularly applied to DE courses. Only one discount applies to any one course.

1. Church Partnership

50% off tuition with Church Partnership coupon signed by pastor of participating church – not applicable for program students

2. Seniors

50% off tuition for students 60 years of age and older

3. Faculty/Staff and dependants

Not applicable to DE studies

4 Married student bursary

50% off tuition for a student married to another student in full-time studies

5. Degree completion

50% off the tuition for students in the Degree Completion stream, as notified by the Registrar's office.

6. Group study

Graduated discounts according to size of group (see below)

7. Course of the month

10% off the tuition for a certain DE course designated each month (see below)

Group Study

Group study of DE material is called 'Where Two or Three are Gathered'. The option of group study is intended to attract occasional and new credit students who have never taken an EBC course before. Current EBC students are permitted to join a group; however only up to half of the group can be EBC students. The definition of an EBC student for this purpose is "anyone who is registered in a program and has taken at least one course for credit".

Tuition discounts for the group option are as follows:

2-3 people:	10% off each
4-5 people:	20% off each
6-8 people:	25% off each

All group members should apply together. One person should be identified as the group contact person. Students are permitted to audit the course and receive the same discount as the other members. However, the discount for the group members is based on the number of credit students involved in the program.

Additional group members can join within a month. They receive the same discount as the other group members (even if this addition boosts the total number of members to the next category). They also receive the same start date as the other group members.

A student wishing to withdraw from the group study receives a refund based on the discounted tuition paid (with the normal refund policy) and is charged a \$25 administrative fee.

An information sheet offering suggestions for organizing the group and working through this kind of study is provided to the group. An encouragement contact is made to the group contact person after one month. Course evaluations are sent to the group contact person for distribution to the group members and preferably submitted together in a supplied envelope.

Course of the Month

Each month a certain course (one of the courses developed in house at EBC) is featured and a 10% discount on the tuition is offered for all applications submitted with payment for that course during that month.

The Course of the Month schedule is generally set 6 months in advance and is published on the DE page on the EBC website.

Professor-Assisted Courses

Professor-Assisted (PA) DE courses are courses designed to be offered to individual degree students. A PA course may be a version of an in-class course that has been customized for individual learning, perhaps at a time when the course is not being offered in class. On the other hand, it may be a specially designed reading- or research-based course that covers material not normally covered by in-class or DE courses.

PA courses are only offered to individual current EBC degree students working with specific instructors. PA courses are generally not allowed for 100-level courses. Students may take only one PA course at any one time. Students may not take any more than three such courses as part of their overall academic program.

There is a separate application form for PA DE courses. Before submitting the application, the student must obtain the signature of an instructor willing to work with the student on the course. Instructors may be suggested by the DE department, the appropriate Department Head, or the Academic Dean. The signature of the instructor does not constitute academic approval of the course. PA courses cost the same as other DE courses.

Once the application is received, it goes through the regular approval process in the DE department, including confirmation with the registrar that the course fits into the student's program. The instructor is sent the guidelines for administering a PA course and asked to develop a course syllabus indicating the details of the course material, the course requirements, meetings, due dates, assignments, etc. This can be done with or without the student's input. PA courses can be undertaken within the timeframe of a normal semester or can fit into the regular 8-month DE time frame (with up to four months of paid extensions).

The syllabus is submitted electronically to the DE department. The DE director, the department head and the Academic Dean review the syllabus to ensure compliance with normal academic expectations and the suitability of the course and instructor. Once approved, four copies are made: one for the student, one for the marker, one to attach to the student's application, and one to file in the DE office. PA syllabi are also filed electronically under DE/Administration/Prof Asst Syllabi.

If approved, the course is registered with the alphanumeric code ending in 'I', which indicates a professor-assisted course. The registration of the student and the administration of a final grade for the student are done by the DE department. All assignments, tests, exams and other course requirements are administered entirely by the instructor. When the course is completed, the professor submits the final grade to the DE department.

Online Courses

The DE department is currently (Summer 2009) exploring a process by which we may offer online courses. Our first course offerings may begin in Summer 2010.

Currently, there are electronic components for all of our courses. Many courses are released on CDR or DVD. All written work with the exception of most tests and exams can be submitted electronically as email attachments and is marked and returned electronically. Email addresses for the department staff and the course markers are available to students and email contact is encouraged.

Applications and Approval

All DE applications must be approved by the DE department and by the registrar. Checks are made that the application is complete, including the signature and the reason for taking the course(s) by DE; that the payment has been made; that any prerequisites for the course(s) are met; that the student is abiding by the limits on registration (above); that the course(s) fit(s) into the student's program; that occasional students with over four courses are asked about choosing a program; and that the student is not on academic probation. If the student is on academic probation, the academic dean must be consulted for approval of the application.

Timeframes

DE courses are run with continuous intake. The start date (or registration date) is the day the student receives the course, or within reasonable mailing time. Students have up to eight months to complete each course. The dates are calculated from the start date to the day the college receives the final assignment or the date a supervisor puts on the final exam. The dates of registration and completion are given in the student's acceptance letter.

Timeframes for Graduating Students

A graduating student who takes a Distance Education course must submit the application and payment by January 31 of the year of graduation and must have all course work submitted by the last day of campus classes in order to graduate, regardless of the date given in the acceptance letter.

All graduating students in DE courses with final exams are encouraged to make final exam arrangements by mid-March. Final exams are not sent to supervisors until at least half of the course work has been submitted and no exams are sent out after the last week of March.

Graduating students can write exams on campus up until the last day of on-campus classes but must have submitted all other course work at least a day before writing the final exam.

All DE students who are graduating (including those in DE courses without a final exam) must have all DE work submitted by the last day of on-campus classes in April.

Extensions

A student needing more than eight months to complete a course is automatically given an extension of up to four extra months (maximum) for an added fee (\$25 per month). Each part of a month that is used (e.g. two days or two weeks) counts as a full month. At the end of the course, the student is billed for the number of extensions needed (maximum \$100). Extension fees are calculated by the Distance Education office and charged by the business office. Grades and/or graduation may be delayed until a student pays the extension fees. At the end of

twelve months, if the course is not completed, no further extension is given, and a grade of "F" is assigned. (No extension fees are charged.) This "F" can be removed if the course is retaken and a higher grade is received. When a course is repeated, the lower grade is eliminated from the permanent record, and the Accumulated Grade Point Average (AGPA) adjusted accordingly.

Extension policy is applied equally to all Distance Education courses, including professor-assisted courses except where specifically stated otherwise on the syllabus.

Course Requirements

Course requirements usually include readings, short written assignments (under 5 pages), long written assignments (over 5 pages), other types of assignments and/or tests or exams, which can be written on or off campus. A student should budget 3-4 hours per week for each Distance Education course to finish in the 8-month time limit, and 6-8 hours per week if wanting to finish in one semester (4 months).

Scheduling

There are no set dates for completing assignments; students set their own schedules for submitting work and for writing tests and exams. Students are encouraged to space the work throughout the course so there is sufficient time for assignments to be marked and returned, and learning and growth are enhanced. A course assignment planning sheet is included in every syllabus and help in monitoring progress through the course is offered. More specific details regarding submission scheduling are stated on some course syllabi.

The department aims for a three-week turnaround period for submissions. This is sometimes unachievable due to staff and marker availability at the busiest times of the year and at holiday times. In addition, when several assignments have been submitted at once, the student cannot expect a three-week turnaround period.

Submissions

All assignments must be typed with the exception of memorization assignments and most tests and exams. Exams, tests and memory work are NOT to be done electronically (with the exception of online tests).

Assignments and essays can be submitted on paper or electronically. Students are asked to use a Word program and save the file in Rich Text Format (RTF) for best results. Each complete assignment is to be submitted in a single file. It is the responsibility of the sender to ensure that a complete, readable copy of the material is received.

Electronic submissions should be received as email attachments, labelled as directed. If a submission is not submitted correctly, it is returned to the student, with a message giving the directions for electronic submissions. The submission is not considered to be submitted until a properly formatted and labelled attachment is received.

Assignments are to be submitted to the 'Assistant to the Director of Distance Education' (electronically to tpeters@ebcollege.on.ca) and NOT to the marker of the course. The student

should include the assignment and title, the course name and number, the words “Distance Education”, the marker’s name, the student’s name, and the date on the title page and/or cover email for each submitted assignment.

An audit student may choose to submit one large assignment or two small assignments for feedback but no more. This work will receive comments but not a grade.

Library Use

Many of our DE courses require essays or research papers. DE students can access the EBC library on the college website and have material mailed to them if they live in Canada or the continental US, outside of Waterloo Region. The online resource collection can also be accessed from home. For more information, students are asked to contact the EBC library at library@ebcollege.on.ca .

Essay Format

There are certain format expectations for essays written for college courses. For Psychology and Sociology courses, APA (American Psychological Association) format is used and for Bible and Theology courses, Traditional (Notes and Bibliography or Chicago Manual) format is used. For all other courses, if not specified in the syllabus, the student may choose to use APA, Traditional, or MLA (Modern Language Association) format. *Cite it Right* is the format guide used at EBC. It is available for purchase from the front desk of the college or from Amazon.ca. The EBC supplement to the format guide is available free of charge from the college front desk.

Tests and Exams, Supervision, & Returning Exam Results

Many DE courses require tests (60 minutes) and/or exams (2 hours). There are two options for handling tests which are not online:

- 1) A student may arrange to take a test/exam at the college. Tests and exams can be booked for 9:30 am or 1:00 pm on any weekday.
- 2) A student may write off-campus with a supervisor who will administer the test/exam. This supervisor must be a non-related adult who is not a current EBC student (defined as someone who is currently registered in a program at EBC). The student must send in the supervisor's name, address, and daytime telephone number at least three weeks in advance of wanting to write the test/exam. It is sent to the supervisor who administers it and returns it to the college for marking.

Up to five tests will be sent at once. Mid term, final, and sectional exams are sent at separate times, the final or last exam only after half of the course work has been submitted. All assignments must be handed in at least one day before a final exam is written.

The supervisor is asked to arrange a time when the student can write the exam/test in his/her presence. This does not mean they have to sit in the same room for the whole time, but the supervisor is committed to being in the building and regularly checking to ensure the integrity of the process. The student is not to see the exam/test prior to the time of writing or to have it in his/her possession after the time of writing. The exam is the property of the EBC Distance Education Department. It is not to be copied or altered in any way. The supervisor is informed of

the time limit (2 hours for exams, 60 minutes for tests) and asked to enforce this and also instructed that there is no need for the student to have a Bible, notes, books, or bags. When the exam is over, the supervisor is asked to sign, date, and send the question and answer sheets in a postage-paid envelope to the college.

In the event that a supervisor cannot complete supervision of all course requirements, any material in his/her possession is to be returned to the college by the supervisor, and the student must submit information for a new supervisor.

Missing information on submitted tests/exams/memory work is followed up. If the version is not specified on memory work, the student is contacted. If the supervisor's signature and/or date are missing on any supervised work or for other anomalies, the supervisor is contacted.

If the supervision policy is contravened, penalties are applied. Memory work must be rewritten. Tests and exams receive a reduced grade in the first instance, must be redone for a reduced grade in the second instance, and are given a grade of zero with no opportunity to rewrite on subsequent instances.

No exams (final, midterm, or sectional) are returned to students. Notification of the exam grades is given to students by email or letter. Exams are kept in the students' files and the students are asked to make an appointment with the assistant if they wish to see them. Students from a distance are asked to communicate with the director if they wish to know more specifics about their exam results. The director may approve the release of a photocopy of the exam and request that this not be copied and that it be returned.

Releasing Grades to Students

A student is sent a final letter when he/she finishes a course. He/She is told that the Student Achievement Record (SAR) will be generated by the registrar's office shortly. If the course had a final exam, the grade for that exam is given in this letter. The calculation of any applicable extension fees is also included in the letter and the student is asked to pay any outstanding fees before the SAR will be sent. The business office is informed when students are over the 8-month deadline that they will have to pay extension fees if they actually finish the course. Library fines and unreturned material fees should also be paid before the SAR is released.

Withdrawals

If, after enrolling in a course, a student is not able to complete it for any reason, a written explanation, signed and dated, must be submitted to the Distance Education Office in order to formally withdraw. A withdrawal later than four months after registration will result in a grade of 'F' being assigned. There is a \$10 administration fee charged on all withdrawals (\$25 for the Where Two or Three are Gathered option).

<u>Time</u>	<u>Refund</u>
Within 2 weeks	100%
Within 4 weeks	90.90%
Within 6 weeks	81.80%

Within 8 weeks	72.70%
Within 10 weeks	63.60%
Within 12 weeks	54.55%
Within 14 weeks	45.50%
Within 16 weeks	36.70%
Within 18 weeks	27.20%
Within 20 weeks	18.10%
Within 22 weeks	9.10%
After 22 weeks	No tuition is refunded

Course material must be returned unmarked and in excellent condition for any refund over 70% or a fee for replacement is deducted from the refund. Textbooks can also be returned to the college for a refund, if they are unmarked and in excellent condition.

Course Evaluations

Final course evaluations are given to all students (except those in Professor-Assisted courses) so they have an opportunity to comment, give suggestions, express opinions, and evaluate course material, marking, tests, administration, facilities, and policy. There is a supplemental page for participants in group study.

On receipt, a course evaluation is read over and immediate and/or serious concerns are addressed as soon as possible. General satisfaction or dissatisfaction is noted. Comments on course evaluations are acted on to improve student satisfaction, improve the quality of the DE experience, improve the quality of material, etc.

The forms are filed by course and consulted for evaluating or revising course offerings, departmental policy and procedure, and markers. Individual anonymous comments may also be used in DE publicity.

Distance Education Committee

The DE committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council. Decisions regarding policy and courses are ratified/approved by the Academic Council. In addition, this council is notified of major decisions regarding procedure. The DE committee is made up of the DE director and assistant, the academic dean, the registrar, a faculty representative, and a student representative. The committee meets on an ad hoc basis as called by the director of DE. The DE director chairs the committee and the assistant acts as secretary, taking minutes. The committee has responsibility for setting DE policy, giving input on DE initiatives, and deciding on action in any unusual or exceptional circumstances, and is informed of course status changes (any suspended, on hold, or being amended) and procedural changes.

Appeals

Any decision regarding application of policy may be appealed in writing, to the DE committee, c/o of the DE director.