

# Online Orientation: The Student Perspective

Jessica Hale and Cristina Buzas

*This study explores student perceptions of the value of an online orientation. New students who completed the online orientation as part of their admissions process at Washtenaw Community College were the target population. A sample of 44 participants took part in the focus groups conducted to learn about the student experience with online orientation. Data from the focus groups were analyzed and coded to identify the components that students perceived as quality. Two overarching themes emerged from the data analysis: interactive components and a customized experience. Participants expressed that the interactive components like quizzes in between modules and a tuition calculator, helped them retain information covered in the orientation. Despite linking student record information into the online orientation, participants desired an even more customized online orientation that could be tailored to their interests and academic intent. The data analysis also highlights distinctions between traditional and nontraditional student perceptions of quality in an online orientation. Traditional students (21 years of age and younger) perceived the step-by-step instruction to be particularly useful. Nontraditional students (22 years of age and older) noted the simplicity of design and ability to fit the online orientation into their busy schedules. This study provides practical implications to consider when developing an online orientation. It also serves as a launching point for further research on student perceptions of online orientation programs.*

## Introduction

The goal of orientation is to help students begin the transition and acclimation processes on their college campuses. Specifically, orientation programs seek to help students integrate into their new environment socially and academically, a combination Tinto (1993) found to lead to increased retention. Additionally, Astin's (1984) Student Involvement theory purports that students are more likely to stay at their institutions when they are engaged with their campus community. One way to begin involving students on their campuses is through an orientation program. Particularly at the two-year college where student characteristics commonly include working, caring for a dependent, attending college part-time, and entering college underprepared, orientation programs are an opportunity to

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Jessica Hale (jhale15@wccnet.edu) is a member of the Professional Services Faculty in the Academic and Career Skills Department at Washtenaw Community College.

Cristina Buzas (cbuzas@wccnet.edu) is the New Student Orientation Manager at Washtenaw Community College.

help students prepare for success (CCCSE, 2012).

Over the last few decades, orientation programs have experienced rapid growth and evolved to meet the changing needs of students (Strumpf, Sharer, & Wawrzynski, 2003). One of the greatest changes in higher education has been the advent of online education. In a report published by Allen and Seaman (2011), more than 6.1 million students were enrolled in at least one online course in the fall of 2010, an increase of over half a million from the previous year. In particular, distance learning at community colleges is the source of increased enrollment, despite declining enrollment totals (Instructional Technology Council, 2013). The Instructional Technology Council (2013) found that distance education program administrators cited adequate student services for online learners as one of the greatest challenges. This serves as a growth opportunity for colleges to not only expand online education, but also online student services. Students have come to expect the flexibility, convenience, and immediacy that online education provides (Kramer, 2003).

To meet the needs of this rapidly changing student body, institutions are investing time and effort into integrating technology into orientation programs and creating online student services like online orientations. Online orientations can prepare distance students not only to transition to the college, but also for the online learning environment. In a study conducted by Connolly (2010), online degree granting programs were surveyed to identify how their new student orientations address standards outlined by the Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). While the majority of these programs offered an orientation for their online learners, in many instances, participation was optional. The online orientations offered did meet the CAS standard of sharing college information, policies, expectations, and resources available to students. Half of all online schools that participated in the survey did not evaluate their orientations to identify areas of improvement (Connolly 2010).

As this area of student services is so new and with the lack of an assessment process for online orientations that Connolly (2010) noted, there is a dearth of research on what constitutes quality in an online orientation. Many institutions are faced with developing online orientations with little more than theory to direct their decisions. Additionally, what limited empirical research is available focuses on input from orientation professionals or faculty members (Miller & Pope, 2003; Tighe, 2006), but does not illuminate the concept of quality from the student perspective. Furthermore, studies on orientation programming are often associated with traditional four-year universities (Miller & Pope, 2003). There are fewer studies available that examine orientation at the community college (Derby & Smith, 2004; Hollins, 2009). The lack of research in this area was the impetus for the current study. The purpose of this study is to identify what components students perceive as valuable in an online orientation.

## Methodology

In this section, research methodology for this study is described. The research

questions, research design, research context, and research procedures are addressed. The section on research procedures is divided into four phases, including the selection of participants, instrument development, data collection, and data analysis.

## Research Questions

The guiding question of this research study was as follows: What do students believe is valuable in an online orientation? Specifically, the researcher will answer the following question: What do students identify as valuable components of Washtenaw Community College's online orientation?

## Research Design

Qualitative methodology was chosen as the research strategy for this study because the investigator seeks to address "how social experience is created and given meaning" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 8). In qualitative research, the investigator is the primary instrument of data collection (Seidman, 1998). As such, the researcher must carefully examine her own biases and beliefs in an effort to remain as objective as possible. Maintaining a non-judgmental perspective throughout this study was essential to the researcher's goal: "to observe and describe group patterns, similarities, and differences as they occur" ("Ethnography," n.d.).

## Research Context

Washtenaw Community College (WCC) is a two-year public college located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, offering certificates and associate degrees. The college attracts a diverse student population of varying ethnicities and ages. WCC served 20,796 for-credit students in the 2007-08 academic year.

A new student will complete an admissions process that also includes a mandatory orientation program with two-components: online and in-person. All students are required to complete the online orientation, except for those who are attending WCC for the English as a Second Language program. Then, students sign up for and attend an in-person orientation. Students are exempt from in-person orientation only if they have successful prior college experience as defined by completion of 15 college credits with at least a 2.0 GPA.

In an effort to stay abreast of changes in the higher education landscape and student population, the online orientation program was launched in fall 2007. It was designed and developed in-house with the collaboration of the orientation and information technology departments. The online orientation is web-based and interactive. Personalized information for the student is pulled into the online orientation because of the link with the student records system. Security and flexibility of completion is available by logging in and out with a WCC online user

account. Interactive features are incorporated throughout the orientation; students can use a tuition calculator to figure out estimated cost, complete quizzes to assess mastery of content, and watch videos to learn more about the college.

The online orientation is divided into 10 modules that cover content areas related to the process of enrolling in credit classes at WCC. The placement testing module is adaptive, meaning if students already have placement test scores recorded in the system, then they can move on to the next module. The last module is also adaptive by informing students of their next step based on the information pulled from the student records system. On average, students take about 20-30 minutes to complete the online orientation, and the overall completion rate is 97%.

## Research Procedures

The structure of this study can be conceptualized in the following four phases: participant selection, instrument development, data collection, and data analysis. A detailed description of each phase is included in the following sections.

**Participant selection.** The participants in this study consist of new students at Washtenaw Community College that were required to complete online orientation as a part of their admission to the college. Participants for this study were self-selected from a pool of students that completed the online orientation between August 4, 2008 (its release date) and September 28, 2008 (the end of the regular registration period). Students received an email invitation to participate in this study (Appendix A) and self-selected by responding. A total of 44 students participated in this study, which included 25 females and 19 males. Of those participants, 27 were traditional-aged students (21 and under), and 17 were nontraditional-aged students (22 and over). The researcher conducted nine focus groups comprised of 3-10 people each. The anonymity of participants was preserved as much as possible; no participant is mentioned by name, nor are names included on the focus group transcriptions.

**Instrument development.** Based on the constructivist research tradition, the researcher created an open-ended question directed at eliciting information from individuals about their views regarding the experience with WCC's online orientation (Appendix B). The question was "What was your experience with WCC's online orientation?" The direction of the focus group was guided by the participants and unstructured.

**Data collection.** The method for data collection in this study consists of focus groups. Focus groups were chosen because the insights and data produced in this setting are the result of interactions between participants. "Focus groups are fundamentally a way of listening to people and learning from them" (Morgan, 1998, p. 8). In addition, focus groups can reveal the level of consensus among group members, while also allowing for divergent viewpoints (Morgan & Krueger, 1993).

The focus groups were composed of 3-10 people, a number well within the accepted size for focus groups stipulated by Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, and Robson

(2001). Using Morgan's (1998) suggested timeline, focus group sessions lasted long enough for every participant to respond to each of the two focus group questions for 3 minutes (i.e., meaning that 18 to 60 minutes, depending on the specific focus group's size, will be reserved for discussion of each research question).

The questions used to engage participants in meaningful conversation during the focus group sessions were developed using the guidelines proposed by Krueger (1998). As such, the questions were open-ended, allowing the student to identify elements of his or her experience that were most salient, assign value, and build upon ideas triggered by others; limited in scope, focusing solely on the experience of WCC online orientation rather than online orientations, online education, or their experience at WCC in general; and direct (Krueger, 1998). In addition to inquiries directly related to the study, an "icebreaker" question was also included to help participants become comfortable and engaged in the discussion process (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The icebreaker question was "What is your name and what are you studying at Washtenaw Community College?"

Prior to the beginning of each focus group, participants were asked to sign two copies of the informed consent form (Appendix C); one copy was kept by each participant, and one copy was kept by the researcher. The researcher facilitated the focus group discussion. Follow up questions and statements, such as "Tell me more about that" and "I heard you say \_\_\_\_, can you explain what you mean by that?" were used to "build upon and explore participants' responses" (Seidman, 1998, p. 9). Data was collected from the focus group and stored using a digital voice recorder. The researcher then transcribed the audio recording of the focus group discussion.

**Data analysis.** Data from focus groups was analyzed based on qualitative research tradition. Thematic coding, or classifying, as it is also known (Seidman, 1998), was used to identify answers to the research question posed in this study, namely, what constitutes quality in an online orientation from the student perspective? In thematic coding, the researcher organizes interesting and relevant excerpts from transcripts into categories (Seidman, 1998). These categories emerge from the process of reviewing data, "noting what is interesting, labeling it, and putting it into appropriate files" (Seidman, 1998, p.107). The researcher then interprets the categories, data is coded, and themes are identified.

**Triangulation of data.** Triangulation can occur during data analysis but also in the research inquiry itself. As asserted by Huberman and Miles (1998), "By self-consciously setting out to collect and double-check findings, using multiple sources...the researcher will build the triangulation process into ongoing data collection" (p. 99). In this research, the "multiple sources" were the students, and findings were double checked for authenticity.

## Results

The thematic analysis conducted in this study highlighted two overarching themes as well as two traditional student subthemes and two non-traditional subthemes. The first overarching theme suggests that students assigned increased

value to interactive components. Specifically, students expressed that the interactive components increased their retention of orientation materials. In the words of one student, "Being able to interact was really... key to remembering, you know, parts of it."

In addition, both traditional and non-traditional students shared that being forced to accurately complete the quizzes before being able to move on to the next module was a beneficial experience. "The quizzing on there... Sometimes I would kind of wait, and I'm like 'Man, what was that?' you know, doing the quiz thing. That was cool. I liked that." Rather than being a barrier, the mastery level quizzes seemed to engage the student and highlight important information.

Another interactive feature, a tuition calculator, also earned praise from students, despite the fact that it had little to do with successfully completing a unit. In the words of one student, the variety provided by the calculator was a benefit to the overall learning experience. "I like the ...calculator for like the credit hours, and I mean, there's more interactives than just true/false/true/false." Creating opportunities for interaction, required and optional, emerged as a motivating factor for students and an indicator of quality.

The second overarching theme demonstrated that students assign value to having a custom experience. Despite customized features like a personalized ticket stub and custom completion path, students felt the orientation needed more customization.

**Student A:** It might be kind of cool if it was more like personalized, you know, like, in the beginning, you can answer some questions that would kind of steer you in different directions, maybe.

**Student B:** Yeah. It needs to ask you more about yourself, like what you're going to study.

The desire to be seen and have an experience based on personal interest or academic discipline came up in several focus group sessions. Other ways to customize the experience included suggestions about customizing the graphics and letting students select their own soundtrack. Further suggestions included providing multiple sets of directions that students could choose from: "give them an option like showing them the shorter version of how to do it or a long version of how to do it. I mean, for me that helped." This desire for personalization may be a reflection of how students have come to experience the Internet, with a wide variety of ways to express themselves (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) and cater the experience to their needs and desires (e.g. bookmarks, favorites, search engines, custom homepages, and YouTube channels).

Beyond these overarching themes, subthemes emerged for traditional students and nontraditional students. In addition to craving interactivity and customization, traditional students also expressed a desire to be entertained. They frequently compared the online orientation to the types of entertainment media they preferred, including television shows, video games, and YouTube videos. "I barely even read tutorials for anything online anymore. I just watch videos, you know?" Another student expressed that completing online orientation should be "like a

game...kind of like 1 in 100 would, like, get something so that everyone would be like 'Am I 1 in 100?'"

Catering to a short attention span and self-expressed concerns about boredom emerged as another component of being entertained. One student expressed relief that the orientation only took about 30 minutes to complete: "I mean, it's like a show!" The relatively short length of time required to complete the online orientation was an important factor for this group. When reflecting on WCC's online orientation, one student shared, "It gives you a lots of information, you know, it's really great. It's not boring because ... you know, I get bored easily." It would seem that an online orientation targeted at traditional students must be short and use a variety of media (e.g. games and videos) to instruct rather than relying solely on text.

Traditional students also expressed a strong desire for step-by-step instructions. This desire for guidance spanned multiple areas, including the enrollment process, academic advising, and even a campus tour. "I like that it originally listed all the steps necessary to actually becoming a student....Rather than people just running around not knowing like what to do, it lays it out for you." It appears that many traditional students were uncomfortable with exploring and discovering things on their own. During one of the focus group sessions, a conversation was initiated about the student resource tour video used in online orientation. While the video was deemed helpful by the group, concerns were expressed about students having to discover things on their own. One student offered the following suggestion: "maybe, if they had a part that showed where the buildings are, so then you could see this building ... Because otherwise you'd have to just come here and find out." Beyond concerns about exploring the physical campus on their own, traditional students expressed a desire for guided conversations with campus staff. For example, one student told interviewers to "Put a video of a person walking up to the counseling office saying, 'Can I speak to so and so?' and having them walk into the counseling office ... that'll make it easier." For the traditional students in this study, step-by-step instructions and intense guidance emerged as important indicators of quality in an online orientation.

Nontraditional students, on the other hand, were more concerned about the simplicity of the online orientation and their ability to fit completing the orientation into their complex lives. In terms of simplicity, nontraditional students viewed a simple online orientation as anxiety provoking.

I was like, 'I don't know what to do.' So once I did the online orientation, I felt more comfortable about my next steps because I guess that's where the anxiety comes from because you don't know what you're supposed to do. Some nontraditional students reported asking their friends and family to help them complete the online orientation, but discovered that they were able to complete it themselves. "I was about to call my friend to help me because I thought it was going to be hard, but it was actually easier than I thought." Overcoming the anxiety about technical skills was one barrier for nontraditional students in this study, and another was finding access to computers and the Internet itself. While the WCC campus offers hundreds of computers onsite, many non-traditional

students chose to complete the orientation at home using whatever equipment they had on hand.

I just did it on my own yesterday, and I have a computer, but it's been in the attic for years. So it's like if I could figure it out after not using a computer for years, it was all pretty much common sense really.

Like many students, the quotes captured here reflect the sense of technological confidence acquired from successfully completing the online orientation. For these students, the simplicity of the online orientation's design was an important component in the quality of their experience.

Another subtheme that emerged for nontraditional students was the need for flexibility when accessing and completing the online orientation. The nontraditional students shared that their lives are often a balancing act. Juggling jobs and families seemed to be a common theme for these students. Carving out time to complete the online orientation took creativity and the ability to do it in more than one sitting. As the primary caregiver for her children, one student shared some of the challenges she faced while trying to complete the orientation:

I had two poop diapers... I had to save and come back... it was great, though, because all you had to do is log back in, and it basically put you right back in the same spot. Because once you do that and they're screaming and you're like 'Okay, just hold on a second.' You forget what you're doing for some reason.

Several students shared stories of completing their orientations during breaks at work or, even more challenging, in cars with their children. "Can you imagine me with my laptop in a Ford Focus with two kids, and they're fighting over a DS? I just thanked them for their patience when it was over." These challenges and interruptions often result in longer times for completion. For one student, the time it took her to complete the work was more than an hour longer than the recorded average. "I was at Panera Bread with my laptop, and my kids were in the car with me, so the 45 minutes, or however long it should have taken, took an hour and a half." In situations like those shared by the students in this study, flexibility was a key factor in the student's ability to complete the orientation and an indicator of a quality experience based on student perception.

Taken as a whole, the themes that emerged from this study highlight some aspects of online orientation that practitioners should explore when developing programs for their own institutions. Specific recommendations for how to use this information will be made in the following section.

## Discussion

When developing online orientation programs, begin with the CAS standards that provide guidelines for a quality orientation program. The CAS standards address 12 categories related to new student orientation programs: mission, program, organization and leadership, human resources, ethics, law, policy and governance, diversity, equity and access, institutional and external relations, financial resources, technology, facilities and equipment, and assessment and

evaluation (CAS, 2012). The assessment and evaluation category outlines that student responses must be included in the data used to assess and evaluate the orientation program. Learning from students' perspectives and experiences is an important component when translating in-person practice into an online format.

From the student perceptions in this study, researchers recommend focusing on components that require the student to interact with and apply the information that was presented, for example, including quizzes at the end of each module to test for mastery of content or after the completion of the online orientation. Quizzes are a common method used in online orientation courses to test competency (Tighe, 2006). Additionally, incorporating activities and simulations to prepare students for what they may see and do on campus is another method that was cited by research participants.

The research revealed that students desire a personalized experience. With the features of technology, consider ways to make the online orientation feel customized by developing branching paths based on student responses and syncing with student records systems. Graphics, music, and other screen details can be additional options to provide a tailored online orientation that gives students a sense of personalization.

Traditional students, in particular, request increased use of technology and engaging design. Videos, avatars, and games can be incorporated to increase the level of engagement with online orientation. However, keep in mind that traditional students prefer content presented in short lengths as well as with a level of detail that helps them develop a sense of comfort with the information.

Given the competing priorities of nontraditional students that were presented in the study, it is important to develop features that allow them to complete the orientation in multiple settings and restart where they left off without penalty. Among the community college population, there are varying comfort and experience levels with technology (Miller & Pope, 2003). It is recommended to limit the technological savvy needed to complete online orientation by creating simple navigation to access and complete the online orientation, limiting links away from the page and keeping typing to a minimum. Additionally, community college students may have limited access to computers and the Internet at home (Miller & Pope, 2003); therefore, developing on-campus resources that provide access to and support with the online orientation can help students, particularly nontraditional students, be more comfortable with the process.

These are a few recommendations gleaned from the perspectives of the students who completed online orientation at Washtenaw Community College. The online orientation is modified annually to reflect any changes in college information, practices, and policies. Additionally, research efforts in the form of quantitative and qualitative data are continuing to reveal any changes in students' participation with and perception of the online orientation. An increase in interactive components and modification of videos is currently under review so that the online orientation can remain engaging and informative.

While online orientations are gaining popularity (Kramer, 2003; Tighe, 2006), budgets have rarely been increased to meet this new demand. The type of

engaging online orientation that most students seek requires resources in terms of information technology infrastructure, staff, time, and money that are often limited at higher education institutions, particularly two-year colleges. Therefore, identifying cost-effective ways to offer diverse online orientation experiences is an important consideration.

When developing online orientation programs, there needs to be a balance between engagement and access. Not all students come to college with computer literacy or in-home access to technology (Miller & Pope, 2003). If students have computers at home, there are variances in software, hardware, and Internet speed that can impact their experience with online orientation. Access is not just about technology, but also concerns students with disabilities. Being aware of the advances and limitations of assistive technology is important to providing access for online orientation to all students.

## Limitations and Conclusion

Generalizing the findings of this study to other institutions may be limited due to the sample size and institutional context. Given that students self-selected to participate in the study, results may not be representative of the entire student population at the college. More students and colleges need to be included to further research student perceptions of quality components in an online orientation.

In conclusion, this qualitative research study identified several components of an online orientation that students perceive to be valuable that can be adapted at other institutions, whether two- or four-year: interactive technology, personalized experience, flexibility, and simplicity. Online orientations will only continue to expand as higher education is increasingly available at a distance and student expectations are focused on convenience and service. Institutions have a unique opportunity to develop and refine online orientation as another means to help students successfully transition to college.

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## Appendix A

### **SAMPLE Email to Students**

#### Email to Students to Request participation in Research Study

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am the orientation advisor at Washtenaw Community College and I am researching quality in online orientation programs. I am interested in learning what students consider to be quality components of an online orientation and I hope you will be willing to assist me in this endeavor.

I would like to ask you to participate in a focus group consisting of new students who completed WCC's online orientation between August 4, 2008 and September 28, 2008. If you are interested in participating in this research please reply to this email or contact me directly at 734.973.3701 or at [jhale15@wccnet.edu](mailto:jhale15@wccnet.edu). You are also welcome to contact me with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Jessica Hale

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## Appendix B

### **SAMPLE Focus group Questions**

- 1) What is your name and what are you studying at Washtenaw Community College?
  - 2) What was your experience with WCC's online orientation?
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## **DRAFT Informed Consent Form for Focus Group Participants**

I agree to participate in a research study that focuses on identifying quality components in online orientations. My participation will include one audio-recorded focus group discussion, the duration of which will approximate one hour.

I understand that no harm or discomfort should occur since my identity will be kept confidential at all times. To ensure confidentiality, all interviews will be coded before the transcription process begins; and all identifying information will be replaced with pseudonyms. Upon completion of the study, the coding list, the consent forms, the transcripts, and all audiotapes will be destroyed immediately.

Through sharing my reflections on the student experience and perceptions of quality in an online orientation, both higher education institutions and individual students may benefit from online orientations which increase student integration into both the social and academic environment of the college. I further understand that data collected may be used for presentations and publications but that neither my name nor that of my institution will be associated with the presentations or publications.

For questions about this research, please contact Jessica Hale, Orientation Advisor, Washtenaw Community College at 734.973.3701.

I confirm that I know the purpose and parameters of the research study outlined above. I am aware that my participation is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the project at any time with no complications. I wish to participate in this research endeavor now.

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Name (Print or Type)

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Telephone Number

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Signature

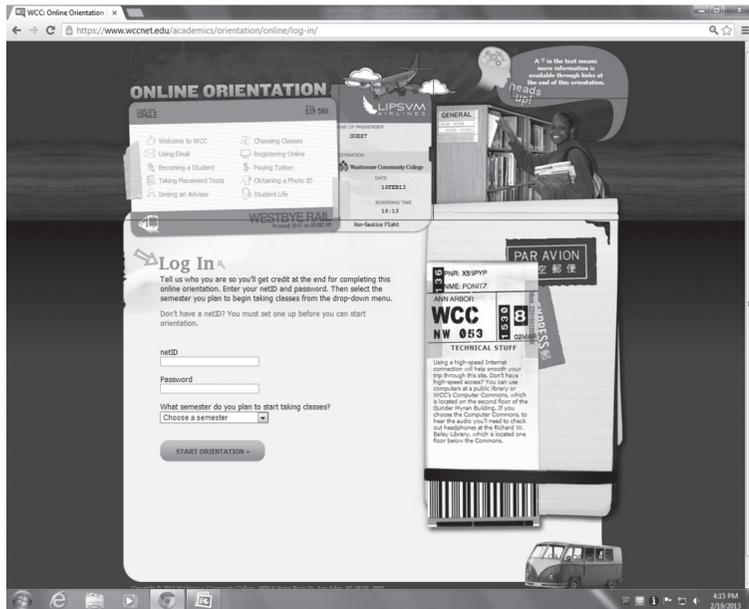
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Date

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## Appendix D

# Screen Shots from Washtenaw Community College's Online Orientation



WCC Online Orientation - x  
 https://www.wccnet.edu/academics/orientation/online/welcome-to-wcc/

## ONLINE ORIENTATION

- Welcome to WCC
- Using Email
- Becoming a Student
- Taking Placement Tests
- Seeing an Advisor
- Choosing Classes
- Registering Online
- Paying Tuition
- Obtaining a Photo ID
- Student Life

**WESTBYE HALL**  
 1000 S. 10th St. in SUCC-01

**Non-Schedule Flight**

**LIPSVM**  
 1000 S. 10th St. in SUCC-01

**ORIENT**

**LOCATION**  
 Washington Community College

**DATE**  
 1/28/2013

**BOOKING TIME**  
 1:14:44

A if in the best course more information is available through links at the end of this orientation.

**heads up!**



### Why WCC?

You made a great decision when you chose WCC for college because we offer

- excellent academic classes
- strong occupational training
- state-of-the-art facilities
- affordable tuition
- dedicated instructors
- small class sizes
- convenient class schedules
- easy transfers to four-year schools

We're big enough to provide opportunities galore, but small enough that you get personal attention. And we're a place where you'll feel comfortable, no matter what your background may be. Be sure to watch the video on the right and hear from students why they chose WCC.

[← BACK](#)
[NEXT →](#)

### Student Voices

Hear why students chose WCC—and why they're glad they did!



**Shabbis quiz?**  
 Does your Advisor ever let you say "NO YOU KNOW?" in Spanish? WCC is "one of the top schools in college in the country," according to the April 2008 issue of "Practical" magazine. "WCC" is a verb. Its teachers and students actually teach English and customers, fast-food, and music can from the ground up. Its clients include General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler."

6:48 PM 2/9/2013

Firefox - x  
 https://www.wccnet.edu/academics/orientation/online/becoming-a-student/quiz/

## ONLINE ORIENTATION

- Welcome to WCC
- Using Email
- Becoming a Student**
- Taking Placement Tests
- Seeing an Advisor
- Choosing Classes
- Registering Online
- Paying Tuition
- Obtaining a Photo ID
- Student Life

**WESTBYE HALL**  
 1000 S. 10th St. in SUCC-01

**Non-Schedule Flight**

**LIPSVM**  
 1000 S. 10th St. in SUCC-01

**ORIENTATION: WCC-TEST**

**LOCATION**  
 Washington Community College

**DATE**  
 1/28/2013

**BOOKING TIME**  
 1:13:34

A if in the best course more information is available through links at the end of this orientation.

**heads up!**



### Becoming a Student Quiz

Answer the questions and then click **SUBMIT MY ANSWERS**. If you get everything right, you'll be taken to the next section, Taking Placement Tests. If not, you'll stay on this page and the incorrect answers will be marked. Correct the answers and then click **SUBMIT MY ANSWERS** again.

- Susie applied for admission, completed both online and in-person orientation, and took the COMPASS. What should Susie do next?
  - Pay tuition and fees
  - Meet with an Advisor/Counselor
  - Obtain WCC photo ID
  - Apply for an elevator pass
- Some steps in the enrollment process take place online; others require coming to campus. Which of the following steps must be done on campus?
  - Applying for admission
  - Creating a student account for MYWCC
  - Paying tuition and fees
  - Obtaining WCC photo ID
- You must have your identity and residency verified before you can register for classes.
  - Yes
  - No

**SUBMIT MY ANSWERS →**

### Quiz Help

If you don't know the answer to a question, you can click the "Becoming a Student" section of orientation. Then come back and finish the quiz.

3:51 PM 2/9/2013

## ONLINE ORIENTATION

WELCOME TO WCC

- Choosing Classes
- Living Email
- Registering
- Becoming a Student
- Paying Tuition
- Taking Placement Tests
- Obtaining a Photo ID
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WESTBYE RAIL

## How to Do Your Best on COMPASS

To get the best scores possible on COMPASS, you need to prepare. In advance of the tests, we recommend that you review practice questions, tutorials, and other information available on the Testing Center's website. On the night before the tests, make sure you get a good sleep. This is definitely not the night to party until dawn. On testing day, try to relax and clear your head of distractions so you can give COMPASS your full attention. Take deep breaths, listen to your favorite music, go for a walk, or do whatever else helps you relax and focus before you come to the Testing Center. When you arrive at the Testing Center, you must supply two things:

- A photo ID, such as a Michigan driver's license
- Your WCC student ID number, which you'll find on your admissions letter

You'll be directed to a computer. Once you finish taking COMPASS, your scores will print out immediately. The score report will show the academic level you achieved on each of the three tests and list classes that WCC requires or recommends based on your scores. The test manager will review the report with you.

[BACK](#) [NEXT](#)



### Table a Dessert Before COMPASS

Between breaks are not allowed while you're taking COMPASS. It's a good idea to stop in a restaurant on the first floor of the Student Center Building before going to the Testing Center.

#### Strategies for Success

Here are a few tips for taking COMPASS:

- Pay close attention to the volume that plays on your computer during each COMPASS test.
- Make sure you understand the screen layout.
- Stay calm, and don't forget to breathe.
- Read everything at least twice. It's highly likely that you will miss something with one read, so read it again.
- Take your time. Remember COMPASS is not timed.

# OR

## ONLINE ORIENTATION

WELCOME TO WCC

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WESTBYE RAIL

## You Get To Bypass Placement Testing

We've checked your application information, and you don't have to take COMPASS because you either:

- scored at Academic Level 6 in reading and writing on a placement test you took
- proved your academic skills through previous college classes

Since you don't have to take COMPASS, you'll automatically skip to the section about seeing an advisor.

[BACK](#) [NEXT](#)



### A 10 by Zephyrus!

WCC provides COMPASS practice nearly 24/7. The online practice about two-thirds of the time is an advanced-level practice.

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