**General Information for Distance Learning Faculty**

1. Your class will remain accessible to you [not students] on the Blackboard system for a couple additional terms. This will enable you to move your own content from semester to semester. However, this availability could change at any time due to space limitations, but you will be notified before old classes are removed from the server.

2. We make permanent backups of all classes at the end of the semester. However, it is a best practice for you to download your gradebook and any other student work you wish to keep to your own computer storage area.

3. Friday nights from 6 - 10 PM are set aside for maintenance on the college computer systems, including My NWACC Connection. Because many students use MNC to access Blackboard, **please do not schedule required work inside your online classes on Friday nights.**

4. My NWACC Connection [MNC] times-out after 1 hour. If your students enter Blackboard via My NWACC Connection and work on anything for more than an hour, they can be 'kicked out' of MNC without knowing it. This will cause problems when they try to save or post anything to the Blackboard system. So Please:

- tell students that if they plan a long session inside Blackboard to log in directly to nwacc.blackboard.com **This would include tests longer than 1 hour.**
- ask students to create long discussion postings in a Word document first, and then cut and paste into the discussion message. This allows them to spell-check more easily [☺] and save a copy to their computer in case it is needed later.

5. If you encounter students who plan to take an online class for the first time at NWACC, please direct them to our online pre-test at: http://www.nwacc.edu/disted/Online_Learning_Pre_test.htm If a student does not do well on the pre-test, he/she is not prevented from enrolling in online courses, but rather warned about the rigors of online classes and given advice about technical requirements.

6. Resources for students are located at http://www.nwacc.edu/disted/nwdewctt.php This includes information about student tech support, training, tutorials, and other important items. **PLEASE PUT A LINK TO THIS STUDENT RESOURCE PAGE ON THE HOMEPAGE OF ALL YOUR ONLINE COURSES.**

7. Everyone should be aware that we now have many online students from coast-to-coast, and some in international locations. Therefore, **any location-specific requirements in fully online classes must accommodate these distant learners and options must be clearly communicated to the students immediately at the start of the semester [informing them before then would be ideal].** You should also be aware of time-zone issues – the Blackboard server is set to UNITED STATES CENTRAL TIME.

8. Faculty Resources are located here: http://www.nwacc.edu/disted/FacultyBlackboardTutorials.php Note the instructions on **Adjusting Class Availability Dates** -- Blackboard is set to open all classes on the first day of class, but can be overridden by following these instructions.

9. If you use Blackboard to supplement your traditional classroom courses, remember that your students did not sign-up for an online class. The focus of your activities should remain in the classroom, not online. For example: You may extend classroom discussion online, but it should not replace face-to-face interactions in the classroom.