

CONTACT INFORMATION

A successful distance learning experience begins with frequent, **EARLY** communication between the student, counselors and college. Contact your counselor or college **AT LEAST** one semester prior to the desired enrollment date to discuss enrollment in a distance education course.

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To learn more about how VCT

works, visit them online at
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For more information about distance learning courses in east Texas, contact your local college or university. Contact information for **NETnet** member institutions is provided in this publication.

Disclaimer: NETnet does not endorse any of the commercial services referenced in this publication. Any mention of commercial services is for information purposes only.



The Northeast Texas Consortium (NETnet)

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The Northeast
Texas Consortium
(NETnet)

*Distance Ed for
College-Bound
Hispanic Students*

*A four year
investment in
education will
reward students and
their families with a
lifetime of benefits*

THE CHALLENGES:

FINANCIAL & CULTURAL HURDLES

According to the Pew Hispanic Center National Survey of Latinos: Education Report, some 95% of Latino parents believe that a **college education is very important** for their children to succeed in life. However, obstacles sometimes exist that can obscure the pathway to college. Like so many of



the students in the NETnet service area, the Pew study reports that a large majority of Latinos say that the **cost of tuition** and the **need to work** and earn money

are both major reasons why people do not go to college or fail to finish once they have started. Another challenge faced by Hispanic students is how to balance what they see as their responsibility as young adults to **help out at home** and **still go to college**.

Many experts on Hispanic college students believe that their educational attainment would improve, especially in graduate and professional schools, if they were more willing to **travel long distances** to colleges well suited to meet their needs. A cultural emphasis on **close family ties** and the expectation that children will live with their parents until they marry is a characteristic shared by most Hispanics, according to the Pew survey.

Persuading any high-school student to **leave home** can be a challenge, but that may be especially true for Hispanics. Parents are typically **protective of their children**, especially girls, so if their children want to go to college, the parents usually prefer that they **stay close to home**.

MYTHS AND MISPERCEPTIONS

Many Hispanics believe that they cannot go to college without a **Social Security number** or if they are regarded as "**undocumented aliens**." **Neither is true**. In Texas, such persons may be classified as Texas residents for both admissions and **state-funded** financial aid purposes under the provisions of **House Bill 1403**. More information on this topic can be found in the residency information section of the www.collegefortexans.com site.

THE SOLUTIONS:

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance Education students **don't have to travel long distances** to find the courses and degree programs they need. By taking online or interactive videoconferencing (ITV) courses from NETnet member schools, these students can **still live at home, still maintain close family ties, and still help out** with family responsibilities. Moreover, students with a degree will **earn much more money** over their lifetime. NETnet member schools offer hundreds of interactive videoconferencing and online courses, and quite a few entire degree and certification programs via distance learning. View the course and program listings at <http://www.netnet.org/courses.htm>.

For Hispanic students who have distinct educational needs due to frequent **travel or relocation**, taking online courses may be a **perfect solution**. While dual credit online courses are often closely tied to traditional course schedules, other college-level online courses may be self-paced.

DUAL CREDIT

Taking dual credit college courses while still in high school means that students and their families **save a significant amount of money** in student fees, housing, and transportation costs normally incurred while attending college away from home. Students can graduate from high school and already have completed several college courses, which allows them to graduate from college earlier. This experience helps them learn how to study for college and allows them to demonstrate the ability to do college-level work, thus **gaining the confidence needed to succeed in college**.

High school students can **take college classes during the day – often right on their own high school campus**.



This means they may never have to leave their own school, and won't have to drive long distances at night to take college classes. Another option is also available: some NETnet member colleges offer dual credit courses on the college campus, allowing the student to **'test the waters' of college life** while still living at home.

For information on dual credit distance learning, visit <http://www.netnet.org/students/dualcreditcounselors.htm>

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION:

HELPFUL LINKS

Use this minority scholarship search engine to find scholarships, grants, fellowships, internships, etc.

Minority Student Financial Aid Opportunities
<http://coals-calendar.tamu.edu/COALSApps/index.cfm>

Contact the **Texas Financial Aid Information Center** by visiting <http://www.CollegeforTexans.com> or by calling 1-888-311-8881 (toll-free). Bilingual counselors at the Texas Financial Aid Information Center are available from 7:00 a.m. to 6:50 p.m., Monday through Thursday, Central time, and from 7:00 a.m. to 4:50 p.m. on Fridays.

Order a Free Videotape (in Spanish) that explains **How to Apply for FAFSA**
<http://www.adventuresineducation.org/tools/>

Watch the Free Video **How to Apply for FAFSA Online** (in Spanish)
<http://www.adventuresineducation.org/Events/Videoconference2004/04onlineconference-spanish.html>

College Prep PowerPoint Presentations in English and Spanish from College for Texans
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/SAMC/tools/>

Call this toll-free number, 1-866-858-7166, or visit the Sallie Mae Fund **"First in My Family"** initiative page (in Spanish) where the following free information is available to parents and students: [Ayuda Financiera para su Educacion Superior](#), a comprehensive book on financial aid created for Spanish-speaking families, Spanish-speaking representatives to answer student and parents questions about paying for college, the popular 'Paying for College' workshops conducted in Spanish for Hispanic-American families, and scholarship information.
http://www.thesalliemae.org/project_access/first_in_my_family/spanish/01.html

Sources and More Information:

<http://www.netnet.org/students>
<http://www.pewhispanic.org/index.jsp>
<http://chronicle.com/prm/weekly/v50/i14/14a01301.htm>
<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v50/i14/14a00801.htm>
<http://www.collegefortexans.com/residency/>