



## ARRL Continuing Education Program Mentor Guide

### ***Introduction***

Evaluations received from students of our Continuing Education courses indicate the tremendous value that mentor interactions add to our courses. Students who entered courses with some knowledge of the subject matter often comment that their mentor opened up new perspectives on the material, or offered an explanation that made concepts make a lot more sense. Likewise, when students receive no feedback or nothing more than cursory acknowledgements to their work or their questions, their evaluations reflect their disappointment. We tell you this so that you will know you can have a very significant impact in your role as a CEP mentor. To many new hams, you also represent a first exposure to the amateur radio community. Your attitudes and demeanor often form the basis of a first and lasting impression. It's a big responsibility!

### ***How the CEP On-line Course System Works***

ARRL's Continuing Education Program courses are hosted on a server at Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC). The courses are run on a platform called WebMentor. The CTDLC Help Desk at [support@ctdlc.org](mailto:support@ctdlc.org) is responsible for setting up course sections on the WebMentor platform and for providing administrative access to students and mentors. CTDLC also provides support for issues concerning the functionality of the course platform and help students resolve access problems that may be due to Internet filters and communication issues.

A separate database, called the CCE<sup>1</sup> database is maintained on the ARRL website to track student enrollments, student contact information, course completions, mentor information and mentor history. The CEP Administrator, who can be reached at [cce@arrl.org](mailto:cce@arrl.org), is responsible for student enrollments, registration, withdrawals, refunds, creating rosters for course sessions, mentor assignments and dealing with all administrative problems other than log-in IDs and passwords.

### ***Course Access-IDs, Passwords and Email Communication***

When you are added to the roster of instructors with the Continuing Education Program you will be issued an Instructor ID and Password by CTDLC to provide access to the WebMentor

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<sup>1</sup> Note that ARRL Continuing Education Program was formerly known as the CCE program, and some systems still use the old acronym.

platform on the CTDLC server. This ID and password will be used to access any course you mentor. You may change your password using a utility in the WebMentor platform.

When you are assigned to students for a particular course section, you will receive instructor access to the course during the period that particular class is active. When your class session ends, in approximately 8, 12 or 16 weeks, depending upon the length of the particular course, your access ends as well. When you are assigned to another group of students in another course section (i.e. class), you will again receive access to that course but your instructor ID and password will remain the same. "Section" and "class" are used interchangeably to describe the specific group of students enrolled in the course for a specific session.

You will be assigned an email address by the CCE administrative system. This address will include your system assigned instructor number and it will be in the form: INST####@arrl.net. This service is a forwarding (or "alias") service only. No messages will be stored on our servers. E-mail sent to this alias address will be forwarded to the personal email address you have provided the Continuing Education Program Administrator. The alias address is the address that will be given to your students. Using this system-assigned address will protect the privacy of your personal address. It is up to you whether you choose to use this address in correspondence with your students or whether you direct them to use your personal address. You will need to be sure that your email filters will accept mail from arrl.net, arrl.org, ctdlc.org and of course, be sure that you can accept mail from your students!

### ***Correspondence with CTDLC***

We ask that neither mentors nor students contact CTDLC directly except for questions to the Help Desk about access to the class section or Web problems. CTDLC is responsible solely for delivering the course and they know nothing about the course process, about the technical content, nor about the ARRL procedures for course administration. The ARRL CEP Administrator handles all administrative questions concerning enrollment, withdrawals, problems contacting mentors, etc.

### ***Course Opening Process***

Before the course session goes live, the process starts at the ARRL like this:

1. Approximately two weeks before a course section opens, a request for volunteer mentors is sent by the administrator in the Continuing Education Program office.
2. Mentors are usually assigned no more than 3 students in any single course section.
3. Approximately three days before the course section opens, the CEP Administrator will send student rosters to the assigned mentors. Rosters are also sent to CTDLC to set up the course section and access for mentors and students. Access ends when the class is over and the section is shut down by CTDLC.
4. One to two days before the class section opens, the CEP Administrator sends a welcome message to each student in the class that includes the name and email address of his or her assigned mentor.
5. CTDLC issues log-in IDs and passwords 1-2 days before the class section opens.

## ***Navigating the CTDLC Host Platform***

ARRL courses are developed in the WebMentor platform and are hosted by CTDLC on their server. Your access to the courses is at the URL: <http://wm.ctdlc.org>. (You'll want to bookmark this address in your browser.) You should have no difficulty logging in there using your Instructor ID and Password. Be very careful with the URL since it is an uncommon one for most people ('wm.' instead of 'www.'). CTDLC has other URLs that look similar, but will not get you to the ARRL course material.

Once logged into the instructor menu, you can follow your student's progress. You can also see the learning units exactly as your students see them. This can be particularly valuable when a student seems to be responding to a different activity than you remember. You may find a course change has gone into effect that you missed.

There is nothing that you need to update or post to the CTDLC site.

## ***The CCE Database***

Student records are maintained in the separate CCE database located on the ARRL website. You have direct access to this database through the Mentor/Instructor page on the ARRL website at <http://www.arrl.org/members-only/cce/mentor.html>. (You should bookmark this URL too!). To access this page you must be an ARRL member and you must register on the ARRL website with a log-in ID and password. You may register at <http://www.arrl.org/member/> if you have not already done so.

## ***Introducing Yourself***

Once you receive your students' names and contact information, you are expected to initiate contact with them directly, **within a day or two of the start of the course**. It is very important to establish a relationship with your students immediately, to engage your students in the course and to set the tone for your interaction. Long experience has shown that a standard letter of introduction works well to start the contact process. A [successful letter of introduction](#) (included at the end of this document) is unique to each mentor, but this example is a good starting point, covering the most important information you will want to include in your own message.

Use the model letter as a start, but modify it to suit your own style. One way to do it is to format the letter in a Word Processor, but send it as a TEXT email since that is the only format you can be sure the student will be able to receive. It's best not to use fancy formatting or attachments. When you want to emphasize something, use CAPS. But take care to use emphasis judiciously—you don't want to scream your point.

It is very useful to add a note at the beginning of your letter telling the student that it's important to READ this letter. Many students don't bother unless you emphasize the importance. Also, you may want to end the letter with a bullet point summary of the important points. It is important to emphasize that completing the activities and submitting them to you is an integral part of completing the course.

We recommend that you get a phone number from each student because there will be times when there is no other way to make contact. Students have dropped out of contact for major illnesses, extended deployments for emergencies such as 9/11 or Hurricane Katrina, or family problems severe enough to distract them from completing the course. Students have paid to take the course, so we want to help them however we can to maximize their chances of completing it successfully. A phone number helps you get in contact in unusual circumstances.

### ***Building Rapport***

Mentoring is about helping people to learn. You need to find ways to communicate effectively with your students. If you can't talk to them, you can't help them. This means that your writing skills have to be top-notch. Take care with what you write and constantly watch for ways to improve.

Nothing speeds learning like a student's confidence in his or her instructor/mentor. If you trust the person who is teaching or mentoring you, you will learn much better than you would otherwise. As a mentor, you need to put your effort into developing this rapport with your students. **IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, NOT THEIRS!** Be approachable, and available. When you are critical of a student's response, make sure your criticism is **POSITIVE**, not negative.

Essential to building a rapport is to be responsive and timely in your response. We ask that you set a standard of responding to your students within 3 business days. If you are going to be away and unable to respond in the usual fashion, let your students know what to expect.

The students who take the online courses are smart and knowledgeable. As a general rule, they can pick up the material easily and don't need a lot of help to understand it. Sometimes though there are unexpected roadblocks. In one case, a student sent a note to a mentor not understanding what to do on a particular emergency communications activity involving a snow emergency because they'd never seen snow in their life. That student had lived in the Virgin Islands his whole life. One of the major reasons mentors are involved in the courses is because situations like this, beyond the expectations of the course designers, do come up. Someone needs to determine what to do. In this particular case, the mentor assigned an alternate, but equivalent activity and the student completed successfully.

As mentors, we need to be sensitive to the student's point of view. We need to see the course through their eyes and be aware that they may see things quite differently than we do. Students vary widely in their experience and we don't always know where a student stands on that scale. We've had students who are newly licensed hams who've never worked with any of the material in the courses while others are highly qualified engineers or professional first responders who have a very deep background for the course material. As mentors, we can't assume a student's background until we learn something about them.

One of the great benefits of being a mentor is working with different students from different places and seeing the different perspectives that they have. A student with different experiences will often bring up things you may never have thought of. The differences however can also be a

potential source of conflict. The most frequent cause of complaints about mentors comes about when a mentor, thinking that their student is learning the information for the first time, adds some extra guidance beyond what the student is asking for but finds that the student's experience causes them to resent what they consider to be "lecturing."

The most common student problem is being unaware that completing the activities and submitting them to the mentor for evaluation and approval is an integral part of completing the course. Usually just clarifying the rules for completion is enough, but sometimes a student feels their experience makes it unnecessary for them to bother with the activities. As their mentor, you are in the best position to determine what should be done, and if you're satisfied that a student knows the material, you can choose to allow variations. However, if you're not sure or you're uncomfortable, or the student is getting pushy, you can fall back on the advice of other mentors, the mentor coordinators, or the CEP Administrator.

We encourage students to catch problems and suggest improvements in the courses. We want to continue to improve the course, but no changes are accepted at face value without review by the editorial team. Once a change is approved, it will be added directly to the online material if it's minor. When a change requires a larger revision, it will be passed on for the next major revision of the course. These revisions are done periodically to keep the material as up-to-date as possible.

Emergency Communications courses have a particular issue that requires mentor sensitivity. The issue exists because emergency management is a localized practice and what is done in one region may be handled differently in another. This issue gets more comments from students than anything else. Some students will disagree with the course material, but you need to point out that the course tries to highlight key principles everyone should understand and that specific examples will always be specific to a particular area. The editorial committee makes every effort to get recommendations from across the country about what the underlying principles are, but there will always be some differences between the courses and emergency communications as practiced by a specific ARES/RACES group. Students should discuss differences with their local ARES/RACES coordinators to determine how best to handle differences in training between their local group and the courses.

Sometimes a student will focus on a particular test question or test answer and doggedly keep coming back to it over and over again. In a situation like this, try to help the student see that the questions and answers cannot cover every situation in depth and there are always exceptions that simply don't fit with the multiple choice format of the questions or the essay format of the activities. We're asking the student to make their best judgment when answering questions or activities. The quizzes provide immediate feedback about whether they chose correctly and you as a mentor provide feedback about their activity answers. You need to remember that some questions and answers may be in the process of correction because others have raised the issue.

Whenever you have a difficulty, your best resource is other mentors. A private mentor discussion group is available to you as a mentor. It is maintained on Yahoo Groups by our Mentor Coordinators (Terry Dettmann WX7S and Stan Kaplan WB9RQR). Questions posted there are seen by hundreds of mentors going all the way back to the beginning of the program. Other mentors are happy to respond with their advice and suggestions. If you're not already a member of the group, contact the CEP Administrator at [cee@arrl.org](mailto:cee@arrl.org) to request a membership invitation.

## ***Getting Organized***

The key to being an effective mentor isn't just technical competence, but also preparation and organization.

First, make sure your computer system and your workspace are ready. A comfortable chair, properly positioned for your keyboard/mouse along with an easy to read screen are important for your comfort. You should have space around your computer for reference materials, the class roster, student activity summary, and your reference book (described below). Your Internet connection should be reliable since you will be checking your mail and sending responses often. Your computer system should have ample free space available to accommodate the storage of the messages you receive and send. You might also want to have a spreadsheet program such as Excel to record student progress. You will need to have a word processing system like Word since students will submit some of the activities as attachments in a word processing format.

Do take measures to protect your computer and your files since WE as a community don't want to lose you. This means virus protection, but it also means things like backups. Don't let yourself get caught without a fall back position. Back up your files in some way, whether it is to paper or to a separate disc or drive.

You will want to be very familiar with your e-mail program. One way to go is to create a folder with the class number, e.g. EC-001-192, under which you create a folder for each student, e.g. Greg - K3GJ where all correspondence, incoming and outgoing is stored. Using the student's first name and call sign allows you to quickly cross-reference the e-mail to the proper folder. Place copies of the registration notification, your letter of introduction, and any other correspondence with your student in this folder.

It is very useful to print out the lessons, questions, and student activities for each Learning Unit. This information can be placed in a ring binder that has a set of numbered dividers. Each number corresponds with a Learning Unit. This makes it much easier to get to a particular LU for reference. This is a handy place to also store unique and/or creative responses you receive.

## ***Tracking Student Progress***

As we've stated, organization is very important to successful mentoring. You need to have an organized way to track each student and respond quickly and efficiently. Learning to use your email program well is an important step to making yourself efficient. For example, most mentors use folders and rules to automatically keep all student communications together in one place. Thunderbird, Outlook, and Outlook Express are three examples of programs that have this capability. Some online email systems such as Gmail have ways to do something similar. Learn about how you can use whatever program you use to work efficiently. You'll be glad you did.

A very handy trick is to have a collection of standard phrases and responses you can use just by cutting and pasting into an email. You can keep these in a WORD document so you can spell and grammar-check them easily. When you need something, just copy it from the collection and paste it into the reply.

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Some mentors keep a folder for each course section they teach, others keep a folder for each student. Other mentors simply print out the email messages and keep them in physical folders to make it easy to read things off line. You need to work out a system that makes it easy for you.

Even with only 2 or 3 students in a section, keeping track of student activities can be complicated. Most mentors keep a checklist of the activities each student has submitted so they can see what the student has yet to do. Some mentors keep a paper checklist in a notebook or day planner, or an Excel spreadsheet like the template below, and others simply rely on sorting the email messages in a folder by sender to check what assignments have been submitted and which haven't. Students don't always follow directions about putting the lesson information in the subject line, so the last option doesn't always work, but again, if it works for you, then do it.

Develop a way (some use Excel) to keep track of what the students are sending you. Since there are activities that require the student to send something to the mentor, you should check these off as they come in. Also record their final assessment results. Some mentors include the following in a spreadsheet for each person:

- Name and Call Sign
- Email Address
- Phone Number
- Check for sending the letter of introduction (record the date it was sent)
- Check for each required activity (record the date received)
- Space for the student's final assessment score
- Check for updating the student's final status in the CCE database through the ARRL Mentor page

If you'd like to use the sample Excel template we've prepared, download it at <http://www.arrl.org/cep/mentor/studenttracking.xls> and place the names of each student across the top. You can do the same with a piece of paper if you like. List the Learning Units that have activities that you need to review down the left side of the paper or spreadsheet. You can write the date you received a satisfactory activity for each one. Don't forget a row for the final assessment score, and the date you updated the student's record at the end of the session.

You don't need to use Excel ... all you need is a way to organize what you're doing. You can keep your records on paper, in an application like a word processor, or any other way that you can assure yourself that you know where each student is and can confirm that they've completed all requirements for graduation.

Allocate some time every day to check email and respond to students. Expect to get 1-2 messages per day per class for most courses. Respond the same day or the next day if at all possible. If you're dealing with a question that will take some time to respond to, or if you just don't have time to send a full reply, it's best to send a reply which says "I'll have to get back to you," than to wait until you know the answer. Warn students if you're going to be gone and you know ahead of time. If you can't, and something unexpected happens, let them know as soon as possible and apologize. They deserve your best efforts. That's what we're here for.

### ***Monitoring Progress/ Time Management***

You can follow your student's progress online at CTDL to confirm that he/she can finish the course within the scheduled class time. The indications can be misleading though. For example, if a student visits each lesson on the 1<sup>st</sup> day, the record will show a star by each lesson that could be taken for progress even though they intend to come back and actually read the lesson and do the exercises much later. Quiz results are not recorded, so your only real indication of progress is activities submitted for review. The only grade available to you is the final assessment score. You can see the average of all attempts as well as the score on each attempt. Any single attempt with a score >80% is acceptable for graduation (as long as all required student activities have also been completed to your satisfaction).

It helps to send reminder notes throughout the class such as the halfway point, when there are 2 weeks left, and again when only 1 week remains before the end of the class. Encourage students to continue, remind them that it's a self-paced course, and offer your help if they have any problems or concerns. One of the persistent problems with all online courses is getting people to finish the course. Thirty to 50 percent of students don't finish any given course. An encouraging note may help to get a student back on track or to elicit an explanation to explain any problems the student is confronting in finishing the course. The ARRL is hoping that mentors will use the phone number for a student who is not responding to make contact early if needed. Your honorarium for mentoring should cover your telephone expenses.

If a student notifies you (a week or more prior to the "official" closing date) that he or she is unable to complete all the requirements by that time and requests an extension of a few days, you may accommodate them if your schedule permits, up to a maximum of one week. If a situation occurs that requires more than a week, then contact the CEP Administrator for guidance.

At the end of the course session, go to your Mentor page at <http://www.arrl.org/members-only/cce/mentor.html> in the CCE database to record the results for each student.

### ***Student Conduct and Ethics Policy***

We've developed some very basic rules for student conduct and expectations for ethical conduct. You can review these policies on the Student page of our CEP website at: [www.arrl.org/cep/student](http://www.arrl.org/cep/student). These policies are also put in front of students when they register for our courses.

There is no problem with collaboration among students enrolled in a course at the same time, whether a husband and wife, father/son, etc. We think it is healthy for a team to read a lesson and talk together about the subsequent exercise, and even to discuss in detail their approach to their answers. However, each member of the team is enrolled as a student and will pass (or not pass) the course by submitting their own response to the assigned activity. We expect different answers from each student. That means answers should not be identical. We expect each student to put their own independent words down in response to an exercise, even if those words point in a similar direction. But, other than that, they should feel free to collaborate as any two hams might collaborate. If you are receiving responses that are identical to another student's or that clearly plagiarize someone else's work, you can call the student on the issue and request that the

exercise be reworked and resubmitted, or you can contact the CEP Administrator to advise us of the situation.

### **Course Completion Requirements**

Depending on the specific course you are mentoring, the requirements for completion of activities may vary. In order to complete the course successfully a student must

1. Complete satisfactorily any activities which are required to be submitted to the mentor
2. Achieve a score of 80% or greater on any single attempt to take the final assessment

Be sure that you check the activities for each learning unit to see which activities require your review. This varies from course to course. A few courses have no requirements for specific activities to be shared with the mentor. In this case you are to assist the student with any questions they have as they study the material.

### **Maintaining Student Records in the CCE Database**

A list of all students you are mentoring or have mentored is on your personal mentor page in the CCE database, which is located on the ARRL website at <http://www.arrl.org/members-only/cce/mentor.html>. When a new class section opens, the student's status is listed as "Incomplete." When one (or more) of the students meet all of the completion requirements to your satisfaction, check the "Change to Passed" box next to his or her name, and then click on the "Update Student Records" button to record the completion. This tells the CEP Administrator that the student has successfully completed the course.

It is important that you stay in contact with your students as they near completion of the course so you will know when they have completed the final assessment. You can then verify their assessment score on the WebMentor platform. If the student has not completed all assignments to your satisfaction, you need to notify the student what work remains to be completed. If the student has completed all course requirements, please update the student's record in the CCE database promptly. As you can imagine, students are anxious to know that they have successfully completed a course.

When you "pass" the student in the CCE database, the CEP Administrator will send the student a graduation email with a copy to you. The graduation note directs students who are ARRL members to complete a course evaluation in order to get their downloadable course completion certificate. Students who are ARRL members can log in to their personal student page in the CCE database if they have registered on the ARRL website with a log-in ID and password. Course completion certificates are routinely mailed every 4-6 weeks by the CEP Administrator to all students, members and non-members, who have successfully completed courses.

If you determine that a student has not completed the course by the course deadline, mark the "Change to Inactive" box and click the "Update Student Records" button. Don't do this for a student to whom you've granted an extension. Marking a student as "Inactive" cannot be changed except by the CEP Administrator. Just leave the record unchanged until the extension has passed. Then you can mark the student as "Passed" or "Inactive."

## ***Staying Current with Course Content***

It's important for mentors to be current on course content since corrections and updates are made to the course material on a regular basis. Each course has a regular review and update scheduled where major changes are made. In addition, minor corrections are often made as problems are found in course operation. If you are working from your notes from an older version of the course, you might find that students are working from different material than you are.

Some cases where you should take the time to review the course include:

1. It has been a while (a few months or more) since you have mentored the course. Changes or updates might change the way that students respond to activities leading to a disconnect between you and the student.
2. You've been mentoring one course of a set (EmComm Level 1), but are starting to mentor another course in the sequence (EmComm Level 2).

Even if you're mentoring the course on a regular basis, it makes it easier and faster for you to provide good feedback if you've recently reviewed the course material. Particularly with the technical courses such as Radio Frequency Propagation or Antenna Modeling, reviewing the material regularly is important to be able to provide good answers when students have questions. The Continuing Education Program has no formal requirements for review—you don't have to pass an examination or retake the course. We rely on you to keep your own knowledge current. When mentors don't keep current on the material, it usually results in reports from students about the problem, which could result in your being dropped from the mentor program.

To refresh your knowledge, we recommend as a minimum:

1. Review the latest version of the material. Look especially for any differences from the last time you mentored. One way is to review the course online at CTDL from the instructor menu. This assures that you are seeing exactly what students are seeing when they take the course.
2. Review each Learning Unit's activities. After all, these are what your students will submit to you and you need to know what to expect. Don't get caught criticizing a student's work for something left out when it has actually been deleted from the online course, or not recognizing an important element that may have been added, and could show up as part of an activity.
3. Take the final exam or at least all of the unit quizzes (those five multiple choice questions at the end of each LU). The unit quizzes are probably more valuable since you get instant feedback from your answer choices, allowing you to quickly confirm that you know the answer.

If you have not been mentoring students for a while and would like to refresh your knowledge of course material prior to taking student assignments, contact the CEP Administrator at

[cce@arrl.org](mailto:cce@arrl.org) to request a temporary ID and password to access the course so that you can review the material.

### **Contact Information**

Please be sure to keep your contact information current with the Continuing Education Program. Unfortunately, all of the databases for membership, online registration and other applications within the ARRL organization are not linked. We can't contact you with important information about our courses, or invite you to mentor students if we don't have the right contact information.

### **Stipends**

We currently offer a small stipend to offset any out of pocket costs you may incur for phone calls or supplies in the performance of your duties as a mentor. Stipends are paid twice annually based on the number of students assigned to you during the January thru June and July thru December period. If you want to decline stipends, please contact the CEP Administrator at [cce@arrl.org](mailto:cce@arrl.org).

We are grateful for your generous donation of your time and expertise to assist others who want to learn more about amateur radio or prepare to be of service to their communities in the event of an emergency.

### **Mentor Guide Improvements**

This Guide is intended to outline your responsibilities as an ARRL CEP Mentor and to help you get organized to be as efficient and effective as possible. If you have any comments or suggestions, send them by e-mail to [cce@arrl.org](mailto:cce@arrl.org). Thanks for all your efforts to make this program a success!

## **Sample Letter of Introduction**

Dear [student name and call sign],

Welcome to the [course name] online course. I'm your Mentor, [your name], [your call sign]. I hope you'll take the time to read this letter in its entirety so you'll know what to expect from me, and you'll understand the process we'll be using to communicate during this course.

[Add some description of yourself here. This is a good place to say something about your experience and why you are a mentor for this course.]

To help me understand your interest, I'd appreciate receiving your response to the following questions:

1. How long have you been a licensed ham and what are your main interests in amateur radio?
2. What is your objective in taking this course?

Mentors are assigned to students to review and approve student assignments, offer guidance if needed, keep an eye on student progress, and answer any questions you might have. You must complete all of the assigned activities in the course to my satisfaction and pass the final assessment with a score of 80% or better to receive a course completion certificate. I will be keeping track of your progress and will advise ARRL when you have satisfactorily met all of the course requirements. (Please be aware that we do not record a status on your activities in the course in the online course platform "Student Progress Report" utility. This feature of the course platform is not used for our courses.)

My email address is [INSXXX@arrl.net]. I can also be reached by phone at [xxx xxx-xxxx]. Please feel free to call or write (*provide details on preferred times*). As a rule I'll get back to you within [3 business days]. If you don't hear from me, don't hesitate to follow up to make sure that your message wasn't overlooked. If you have not done so already, please send me your telephone number in the event that I must contact you quickly for some reason.

When you send email, use your regular email program. We will not be using the conferencing and email tools built into the online course platform. Throughout the course you will have to email assignments to me for review. Each activity that needs my review will tell you directly to "Discuss it with your mentor," or something similar. When you email activities, please put your call sign and the activity in the subject line of your message. You aren't my only student, so this will help me keep everything straight and help me respond quicker. A typical subject line might be "[EmComm, Level 1, activity 2-14]" when you are submitting activity 14 from Learning Unit 2. If you send your work as an attachment, please add the same subject line information inside the attachment so I can see it when I have it open for review.

From time to time you may find questions or answers that are confusing or that you disagree with. Please make a note of these, because we're glad to hear about them. The course is being updated and revised periodically to reflect input from students and mentors. Don't send these comments to me as you take the course. You will have a chance to include them in the course evaluation form at the end of the course.

This course affords you the opportunity to try some things you may never have done before. Have fun with it, jump into the activities with a sense of adventure and don't worry if something doesn't work for you the first time. I hope you enjoy the course, and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Very best,  
[your name and call sign]