College of Arts and Sciences

Distance Learning Information
Print Version

Welcome to the College of Arts and Sciences at Athens State University. This website has been developed to assist you in the successful completion of your chosen major. It should be especially helpful if you are taking your degree online.

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Distance Learning Delivery Methods

Blended Courses

Blended classes are a combination of Internet and classroom learning. Students will complete some of the required work online and some in a classroom setting. If you are interested in enrolling in a blended class, please contact the academic department to inquire about course requirements.

Internet Courses

Athens State offers credit courses that are available on Blackboard via the University's web site: www.athens.edu. An Athens State University faculty member serves as the instructor for the course, and upon completion of the course, the student receives credit equivalent to an on-campus course.

To take advantage of an on-line course, each student must have access to a computer with an Internet account. The courses are delivered over the Internet and you communicate with your instructor via email and telephone. The content of the course and the workload are no different from that of regular on-campus courses. The classes meet in "cyberspace" via your computer and your Internet connection.

Minimum hardware and software requirements are as follows:

> ➢ Software: Internet Explorer 6 or higher or Fire Fox 2 or higher as required by the course (MS Word, PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, JavaScript, etc.)
> ➢ Hardware: Pentium PC or Mac OS 9 with 64 MB RAM or higher and 56 Kbps or faster Internet connection.
> ➢ JavaScript must be enabled. Cookies must be enabled. Java must be enabled for chat.

Register for these courses as you would any Athens State University course.

Important Information for Distance Education Students:

> ➢ Some blended classes meet on campus for orientation, exams, labs, and/or presentations. Students must obtain a parking decal from campus security in order to park on campus. Campus security is located on the first floor of Founders Hall.
> ➢ Computer labs are available on campus for student use in Chasteen Hall. Some computers are also available for student use in the University Library and Undergrounds Coffee Shop.

Blackboard® *Learning System Release 6.1*

Blackboard is a course management system used at Athens State University to provide online access to course materials for every course we offer, including traditional, distance, and blended

courses. It provides online tools such as class email, chat, discussion boards, quizzes, etc., that instructors can use to facilitate Internet courses or enhance classroom courses. All active students have already been assigned a Blackboard account. To access your account, please use your full Webmail address and your 6-digit PIN from your ASU Online account to log into Blackboard.

Upon enrolling in an Internet class, all students should immediately visit http://www.athens.edu/blackboard/ for:

- Login instructions,
- Account information,
- Browser requirements.

Students who have never taken an Internet (online) class are strongly encouraged to:

- Take the "Should I Take a Distance Learning Course?" quiz,
- Review the Blackboard Basics online tutorial to familiarize themselves with the system, and
- Print out a copy of the Getting Started document for use in the class orientation session.

Student access to course work posted on Blackboard begins on the first day of the term as published in the printed schedule on a *per-course* basis (weekend and half-term courses have different start dates than full-term courses). Early entrance to your courses is not possible. User accounts for students who add an Internet class during late registration on or after the first day of classes may not reflect the schedule change until the following business day after the course has been added.

Blackboard Technical Support Center

Telephone support is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week by calling 1-888-7-ATHENS.

Online Registration

You may view the current course catalog and class schedule online at www.athens.edu. To access the online catalog, click Academics on the ASU web page, then online catalog. There is a direct link to the most current class schedule on the web page. To access online registration, go to the University's home page at www.athens.edu and click on the ASU Online icon. Your user name and password will be sent to you in the mail after you have been admitted to Athens State University. Your user name is your social security number. Your password is your birthday in the mmddyy format. You may change your password the first time you log in.

- From the Athens State Home Page, click on the ASU Online icon located on the bottom left side of the screen.
- Follow Login instructions.
- After logging in, go to Student Services and Financial Aid.
- Click Registration.
- Select the desired term.

- ➢ Click Register/Drop/Add Classes for registration. Follow the on-screen instructions to add or drop classes, then Submit when you are finished.
- ➢ Click Account Summary for payment with a credit card (MasterCard or VISA). If payment is not made on time, you will be automatically dropped from the courses for which you have registered. To pay with cash or check, go to the Business Office window in Founders Hall by 4:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday or mail to Business Office, Athens State University, 300 North Beaty Street, Athens, AL 35611. Payment must be received in the Business Office by the payment deadline.
- ➢ Click Student Schedule for a copy of your schedule.
- ➢ Click Exit to close your file.

Student Schedule

- ➢ Click ASU Online from the university's home page www.athens.edu.
- ➢ Enter your user name (social security number) and password (6 digit PIN).
- ➢ Click Student Services and Financial Aid.
- ➢ Select the desired Term.
- ➢ Click Student Schedule.
- ➢ View your schedule.

Check Grades

- ➢ Click ASU Online from the university's home page www.athens.edu.
- ➢ Enter your user name (social security number) and password (6 digit PIN).
- ➢ Click Student Services and Financial Aid.
- ➢ Click Student Records.
- ➢ Click Final Grades.
- ➢ Select the desired Term.
- ➢ View your grades.

Forms

- ➢ Click Admissions on the university's home page www.athens.edu.
- ➢ Click Forms to view the types of forms that are available.
- ➢ Click and print the forms you need.

Institutional Transcript

- ➢ Click ASU Online from the university's home page www.athens.edu.
- ➢ Enter your user name (social security number) and password (6-digit PIN).
- ➢ Click Student Services and Financial Aid.
- ➢ Click Student Records.
- ➢ Click Academic Transcript.
- ➢ View an unofficial copy of your Athens State University academic transcript.
- ➢ Print an unofficial transcript if desired.

Email

Athens State University provides all currently enrolled students with a personal webmail account. You can find your account information and additional instructions at the View E-mail Address(es) link under the Personal Information section of your Web for Students account (where you go to register and check grades).

Athens State University departments and instructors will send all official communication to this email account only. **It is your responsibility to check this account on a regular basis to receive all official communication from the institution.**

➢ Click the Athens State Webmail icon on the university's home page www.athens.edu.
➢ Enter your email address and current PIN used for accessing ASU Online. If you just changed your PIN, it may take up to an hour to synchronize the new PIN with the email server.

Degree Evaluation (for students that applied and started attending Athens State after the Spring 2005 semester)

➢ Click ASU Online from the university's home page www.athens.edu.
➢ Enter your user name (social security number) and password (6-digit PIN).
➢ Click Student Services and Financial Aid.
➢ Click Student Records.
➢ Degree Evaluation.

STARS Guide

➢ Click Academics on the university's home page www.athens.edu.
➢ Click Transfer Assistance (STARS).
➢ Click STARS (AGSC Approved Transfer Guides) from the STARS homepage.
➢ First time users must register with the STARS system by clicking Here to Create Your User ID & Password on the Transfer Guide Request Page. Return to the Transfer Guide Request Page to enter your User ID, Password and your current junior or community college.
➢ Select the major from the options listed in the box and click Compile Guide.
➢ Print a copy of your AGSC Transfer Guide.
➢ Print the Area V page for the desired major and institution.

Online Advising

The Transfer Advising Center is located in the Sandridge Student Center. The Advising Center serves students planning to transfer to finish their junior and senior years. You may see the advisors in the Transfer Advising Center for your initial advising contact with the University. You will receive a Program of Study for your chosen curriculum and be assigned an official advisor. Your official advisor at Athens State University will be a faculty member whose teaching discipline is in the area in which you are majoring. The quality of advising you receive will

depend on accurate information provided by you as well as your advisor. Schedule periodic meetings, email or call your advisor and be prepared to discuss any plans you are considering for college and career. Your advisor can aid in selecting the proper courses. If you are taking courses at a distance, you can contact an advisor in the Transfer Advising Center via the telephone at 256-233-8277 or via email at Barry.Devine@athens.edu.

Career Services

The Career Services Office is located on the second floor of the Sandridge Student Center. It focuses on career development and employment. Register with the center to take advantage of the opportunities to assist you in seeking employment. The Counseling & Career Services Web Site offers assistance with resumes and interviews and provides a listing of job fairs and helpful links. To access the Career Services online, go to the ASU web page at www.athens.edu. Click on Career Services.

Tutoring

Athens State University provides tutoring in the areas of math and English through labs located in Founders Hall. You may contact the Math Lab at 256-216-3315 and the Writing Center at 256-233-8177 for hours and assistance.

Student Special Accommodations Request

Athens State University will provide reasonable accommodations for documented disabilities. If you are a student with a disability who will require academic accommodations, schedule an appointment to see the ADA/504 Coordinator, Janice Owen, prior to the start of your first semester at Athens State. An interview will be scheduled to determine the nature of your accommodations. The types of academic accommodation provided by the university will be discussed in detail with you at that time. Information is handled with your confidentiality in mind. Call or email Janice.Owen@athens.edu at 256-233-8285 (voice) or
1-800-522-0272, ext. 285.

Graduation

Students must start the graduation process during the expected semester of graduation. Applications for graduation are available in the Records Office of the Sandridge Student Center. Students will be informed by the Vice President of Student Affairs in writing of their academic status in regards to graduation. Students seeking a degree must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 60 semester hours of senior college credit (courses numbered 300 level or above) in an approved program of study (degree plan).

Purchasing Books

Books may be purchased online from the University Bookstore. Go to the Athens State web page, www.athens.edu, and click on Students at the top right corner. Then click on Bookstore. You may also purchase texts from the Athens Off Campus Bookstore (256-233-0888) or from other online sources.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

If I'm taking an online course, will I have to travel to the main campus?
If a course is listed in the schedule as an Internet class, there will not be any travel necessary. If a course is listed as Blended, there may be some times when onsite visits are required.

How do you take tests in an Internet class?
Most exams are given through a method called SecureExam on Blackboard. The instructor will provide you with specific guidelines for taking all exams, including the exam's availability. Some Internet classes may require proctored exams. The instructor will provide details as to how the student may find an appropriate person to give the exam for Athens State students.

Is there a limit to the number of classes I can take on the Internet?
You may take no more courses in a semester than allowed for a traditional class load. The class hour load for a full-time student is twelve to nineteen semester hours per term including Summer Term. Approvals must be obtained to take more than nineteen hours. No student may take more than twenty-four semester hours per term.

Can I start an Internet class at any time?
Internet classes follow the same semester schedule as other classes. There are designated enrollment periods each semester that are posted in a published schedule or online at www.athens.edu.

When do I need to register for classes?
You must register during the allotted registration period. If you miss the regular registration, you may register during late registration and will be subject to additional fees.

Are your programs accredited?
Athens State University is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

Where do I begin?
Fill out an online application by going to www.athens.edu/admissions/ and selecting the Forms link. Contact Mr. Barry Devine, Counselor for the College of Arts and Sciences at 256-233-8277 or Barry.Devine@athens.edu.