Frequently Asked Questions Going Online due to COVID-19

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) understands that many students have questions/concerns about face-to-face courses that are transitioning to an online format due to campus closures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FAQs below provide resources students can use to address their concerns. *ACCS does not endorse, nor receive any benefit from the companies listed.*

❖ I don't have a computer at home. How can I take online classes?

Devices from Comcast Internet Essentials - If you are, or if you become, a Comcast Internet Essentials customer, you have the option to purchase a laptop or desktop computer for $150.00. Each eligible family may purchase up to five (5) devices.

❖ I don't have internet at home. How can I take online classes?

Comcast Internet Essentials - Public Comcast Wi-Fi hotspots are available for anyone. Comcast is offering 2 months free to new Internet Essentials customers in response to recent and anticipated emergency measures associated with the Coronavirus (COVID-19). To qualify, you must meet one of the requirements below:

- MEDICAID - card or most recent eligibility letter for an adult in your household.
- Public Housing Assistance - documentation such as your lease, housing assistance payment (HAP) contract, or eligibility documentation from HUD.
- SNAP - letter indicating you are approved for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.
- TANF - eligibility letter for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
- SSI - eligibility letter for Supplemental Security Income.
- NSLP/Head Start - copy of a letter indicating current participation in the National School Lunch Program or Head Start, with your child's name, the school name, and the address of where you are requesting service.
- LIHEAP - letter confirming your eligibility for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- WIC - eligibility letter for the Women, Infants, and Children program.
- VA PENSION - veterans pension eligibility determination letter from the Veterans Administration.
- Tribal assistance eligibility letter, including TTANF, FDPIR, etc.

The ACCS recommends that students who are interested act quickly as installation may take up to 7-days.

Spectrum – Spectrum is offering free access to internet and Wi-Fi for 60 days to households with students that don't currently have service. Spectrum Wi-Fi hotspots are now available for public use (map). Spectrum Internet Assist offers high-speed broadband to eligible low-income households.

AT&T – AT&T will provide unlimited AT&T mobile data for the next 60 days. AT&T will not terminate the service of any wireless customer because of their inability to pay their bill due to disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Public AT&T Wi-Fi hotspots will be available for anyone.

T-Mobile / MetroPCS – T-Mobile will provide unlimited data for all customers with data plans for the next 60 days (excluding roaming). T-Mobile customers will receive an additional 20GB of mobile hotspot and tethering service for the next 60 days.

Sprint – Unlimited data for all customers with data plans for the next 60 days at no extra cost beginning 3/19/2020. An additional 20GB of mobile hotspot data per month for 60 days at no extra cost. Customers (with mobile hotspot-capable handsets who don't have mobile hotspot on their plan) will now receive 20GB per month for 60 days (a minimum of two bill cycles) at no extra cost. Sprint will not terminate service if they are unable to pay their Sprint bill because of the coronavirus, and will waive late fees incurred because of economic circumstances related to the pandemic.

College Facilities – Some ACCS Colleges have expanded network access to include some parking lots for drive-up computing. Students will be able to use their device on the college Wi-Fi from their vehicle while maintaining social distancing.

❖ I'm worried about failing/doing poorly if classes are online. Who do I contact?

Stay in contact with your instructor for support, check your online course for resources, and/or reach out to the Academic Success Center via email.

❖ I don't have the textbooks I need at home. What do I do?

VitalSource Helps - This program is designed to support students who may have lost access to course materials due to a college moving to distance learning to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This program is made possible by the leading publishers and campus retailers in US higher education. The program offers free access to tens of thousands of e-books to Spring semester students and instructors at impacted 2- and 4-year non-profit institutions in the US.

❖ Who do I contact if I am having trouble logging in to Blackboard?

Your Blackboard username is your student ID number (A#) and your default password is your 6-digit date of birth in the MMDDYY format with no slashes or dashes. Please contact the distance learning helpdesk by email at DL@snead.edu if you need your password reset. Include your full name, A#, and date of birth in the email.

❖ **Who do I contact if I am having issues with the online course content?**

Contact your instructor through the messages link in the course in Blackboard, or via the email address or phone number provided by the instructor.

❖ **Do I have to login at my scheduled meeting time?**

Please reach out to your instructor. It's up to them how they are handling meetings for the remainder of the semester. Some may choose to hold virtual meetings during the regular class meeting time.

❖ **Am I allowed to come to campus?**

All ACCS college locations are currently closed. Wi-Fi may be accessible in college campus parking lots to allow for computing from a safe social distance. Most student services are available remotely. Please check your college's website for details.