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# Admission to the College

## General Application Procedures

Northwest-Shoals Community College will consider for admission all qualified applicants. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex, disability or national origin. However, the College reserves the right to individually review any applicant for admission based on whether a particular applicant's admission would be prejudicial to the general welfare of the College.

Applicants must submit the following to the Admissions Office:

- Application for admission
- Official transcript from high school or GED Certificate
- Official College Transcripts (if applicable)
- Male students between the ages of 18 and 26 must show proof of registration with the U.S. Selective Service

Admission to the College does not mean acceptance or admission to certain health education programs in the College such as Nursing, Practical Nursing, and Emergency Medical Services, which may have additional standards for admission and progression. Students should refer to the program descriptions in this Catalog and/or contact the specific program director/chairperson for additional information. Any and all elements of admissions requirements are subject to change without prior notice. Please contact either Admissions Office for answers to questions.

### Requirements for Admission

#### I. Admission of First-Time College Students

Applicants who have not previously attended any regionally accredited postsecondary institution will be classified first-time college students or "native" students.

##### A. Admission to Courses Creditable toward an Associate Degree

To be eligible for admission to courses creditable toward an associate degree, first-time college students must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Applicant holds the Alabama High School Diploma (standard or advanced), the high school diploma of another state equivalent to the Alabama High School Diploma, or an equivalent diploma issued by a non-public regionally and/or state accredited high school; or
2. Applicant holds a high school diploma equivalent to the Alabama High School Diploma (standard or advanced) issued by a non-public high school and has passed the Alabama Public High School Graduation Examination; or
3. Applicant holds a high school diploma equivalent to the Alabama High School Diploma (standard or advanced) issued by a non-public high school and has achieved a minimum ACT composite score of 16 or a total of 790 on the SAT; or
4. Applicant holds the Alabama Occupational Diploma, the high school diploma of another state equivalent to the Alabama Occupational Diploma, or an equivalent diploma issued by a non-public high school, and has achieved a minimum ACT composite score of 16 or has a total of 790 on the SAT; or

5. Applicant holds a GED Certificate issued by the appropriate state agency.
6. \* Applicants whose primary language is not English must provide documented English proficiency prior to being admitted to the College. Standard instruments used to demonstrate English proficiency are ACT (minimum score 16), SAT (minimum score 790), GED (average score of 450 and a standard score of at least 410 on each of the five tests) and TOEFL (minimum score 500 or 173 computer-based test).

##### \*Institutional Policy

Applicants who meet one of these criteria shall be classified as "Degree-Eligible" students. The College may establish additional admission requirements for specific courses or occupational degree programs when student enrollment must be limited or to assure ability-to-benefit.

#### B. Admission to Courses Not Creditable toward an Associate Degree

Applicants to courses not creditable toward an associate degree and programs comprised exclusively of courses not creditable to an associate degree may be admitted provided the applicant meets the standard admission criteria or provided the applicant is at least 16 years of age and has not been enrolled in secondary education for at least one calendar year (or upon recommendation by the local superintendent) and have specifically demonstrated ability-to-benefit.

\* Applicants whose primary language is not English must provide documented English proficiency prior to being admitted to the College. Standard instruments used to demonstrate English proficiency are ACT (minimum score 16), SAT (minimum score 790), GED (average score of 450 and a standard score of at least 410 on each of the five tests) and TOEFL (minimum score 500 or 173 computer-based test).

##### \* Institutional Policy

Applicants to these courses or programs shall be classified as "Non-Degree Eligible" students and shall not be allowed to enroll in courses creditable toward an associate degree unless appropriate conditions are met.

The College may establish higher or additional admission requirements for specific programs or services when student enrollment must be limited or to assure ability-to-benefit.

#### Unconditional Admission of First-Time College Students

For Unconditional Admission, applicants must have on file at the College a completed application for admission and at least one of the following:

1. An official transcript showing graduation with the Alabama High School Diploma (standard or advanced), the high school diploma of another state equivalent to the Alabama High School Diploma, or an equivalent diploma issued by a non-public regionally and/or state accredited high school; or
2. An official transcript showing graduation from high school with a high school diploma equivalent to the Alabama Public High School Diploma issued by a non-public high school and proof of passage of the Alabama Public High School Graduation Examination; or

3. An official transcript showing graduation from high school with a high school diploma equivalent to the Alabama High School Diploma issued by a non-public high school and evidence of a minimum ACT composite score of 16 or a total score of 790 on the SAT; or
4. An official transcript showing graduation from high school with the Alabama Occupational Diploma, the high school diploma of another state equivalent to the Alabama Occupational Diploma, or an equivalent diploma issued by a non-public high school, and has achieved a minimum ACT composite of 16 or a total score of 790 on the SAT; or
5. An official GED Certificate.

All male students between the ages of 18 and 26 must show proof of registration with the U.S. Selective Service in accordance with 36-26-15.1 of the Code of Alabama of 1974 (as amended).

For admission to courses not creditable toward an associate degree, applicants with less than a high school diploma or GED must also have on file the documented ability-to-benefit.

### Conditional Admission of First-Time College Students

Provided the applicant meets the admission standards for a first-time college student, a conditional admission may be granted to an applicant who does not have on file at the College at least one of the following (See 1 - 5 above).

No student shall be allowed to enroll for a second semester unless all required admission records have been received by the College prior to registration for the second semester. It is the student's responsibility to contact the appropriate high school and/or agencies and have the official required documents mailed directly to the College.

If all required admissions records have not been received by the College prior to issuance of first semester grades, the grades will be reported on the transcript, but the transcript will read **CONTINUED ENROLLMENT DENIED PENDING RECEIPT OF ADMISSION RECORDS**. This notation will be removed only upon receipt of all required admissions records.

### Student Assessment

All students who enroll in associate degree, diploma, or certificate programs and who enroll for more than four credit hours or eight weekly contact hours per semester will be assessed through the administration of the COMPASS computerized assessment instrument, and placed at the appropriate developmental level as indicated by the assessment results. The following students are exempt from the assessment requirement:

1. any student scoring 480 or above on the SAT I verbal and 480 or above on the SAT I math, and 20 or above on the ACT English and math provided they enroll in a System college within three years of high school graduation;
2. students who have an associate degree or higher;
3. students who transfer degree-creditable college-level English or mathematics courses with a grade of "C" or better;

4. senior citizens, undeclared, and other non-award seeking majors who are taking classes for vocational reasons only;
5. students in certain short certificate programs having no English or mathematics requirements;
6. students who have completed required developmental coursework at another Alabama College System institution within the last three years;
7. students auditing courses;
8. students who can provide documentation of assessment (COMPASS) within the last three years;
9. transient students;
10. dually enrolled high school students in English or math.

Any other exceptions will be determined by the Vice President of Instruction.

## II. Admission of Students Seeking Readmission

1. Students who have not been in attendance for one or more semesters (summer semester excluded) will be required to complete a readmission application.
2. Students who have attended other colleges or universities since his/her last enrollment at the College must request official transcripts from each of those institutions.
3. Returning students are eligible for readmission if they are in good standing for the last term in attendance. Students who are not in good standing or who have not served designated suspension periods may request readmission by appeal to the Admissions Committee. (see section X.)
4. Students who were accepted for enrollment at the College for a particular semester, but who did not enroll, must complete a readmission application if they seek enrollment at a later date.

## III. Admission of Transfer Students

An applicant who has previously attended another regionally accredited postsecondary institution will be considered a transfer student and will be required to furnish official transcripts of all work attempted at all said institutions. Transfer students will also be required to submit the documents required of first-time college students including Selective Service documentation, if applicable.

A transfer student who meets requirements for admission to courses creditable toward an associate degree shall be classified as "Degree-Eligible" students. Transfer students who do not meet these requirements shall be classified as "Non-Degree Eligible" students.

Applicants who have been suspended from another institution for academic or disciplinary reasons will not be considered for admission except upon written appeal to the Admissions Committee. (see section X.)

### Unconditional Admission of Transfer Students

1. For Unconditional Admission, transfer students must have submitted to the College an application for admission, official transcripts from all required sources, and any other documents required for admission.
2. Transfer students who attend another postsecondary institution and who desire to earn credits for transfer to that parent institution may be admitted to the College as **transient** students. The student must submit an application for admission and a transient letter from the institution they have been attending which certifies that the credits they earn will be accepted as a part of their academic program. The transient permission form must be properly signed by the appropriate official at the parent institution and must list the specific College course(s) for which the student has been approved to enroll. Students are not required to submit transcripts since the transient approval letter will serve in lieu of transcripts.
3. Applicants who have completed the baccalaureate degree will be required to submit only the transcript from the institution granting the baccalaureate degree. NOTE: If the student intends to obtain a degree or certificate from the College, transcripts from all institutions must be submitted for evaluation prior to graduation. If the student intends to register for courses requiring prerequisites that have been fulfilled at another institution, transcripts from those institutions must be submitted for evaluation prior to enrolling in those courses at the College.

### Conditional Admission of Transfer Students

1. Transfer students who do not have on file official transcripts from all postsecondary institutions attended and any additional required documents may be granted a Conditional Admission for one semester. No transfer student shall be allowed to enroll for a second semester unless all required admission records have been received by the College prior to registration for the second semester.
2. If all required admission documents are not received by the end of the first semester, continued enrollment will be denied. Grades for the first term will be posted to the transcript and annotated to read **CONTINUED ENROLLMENT DENIED PENDING RECEIPT OF ADMISSION RECORDS**. This notation will be removed only upon receipt and review of all required admission records.

### Initial Academic Status of Transfer Students

A transfer student whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) from the transfer institution(s) is 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale will be admitted on **Clear** academic status.

A transfer student whose cumulative GPA from the transfer institution(s) is less than 2.0 on a 4.0 scale will be admitted on **Academic Probation**. The transcript will read **ADMITTED ON ACADEMIC PROBATION**.

A transfer student who has been academically suspended/dismitted from another regionally accredited postsecondary institution may be admitted as a transfer student only after following the appeal process established for “native” students who have been academically suspended. If the transfer student is admitted upon appeal, the student will enter the College on **Academic Probation**. The transcript will read **ADMITTED UPON APPEAL - ACADEMIC PROBATION**.

### General Principles for Transfer of Credit

1. Coursework transferred or accepted for credit toward an undergraduate program must represent collegiate coursework relevant to the formal award with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies at least equivalent to those of students enrolled in the institution’s own undergraduate formal award programs. In assessing and documenting equivalent learning and qualified faculty, the institution may use recognized guides which aid in the evaluation for credit. Such guides include those published by the American Council on Education, The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and the National Association of Foreign Student Affairs.
2. Courses successfully completed in compliance with required standards at other regionally accredited postsecondary institutions will be accepted for transfer as potentially creditable toward graduation requirements.
3. A transfer student from a collegiate institution not accredited by the appropriate regional association may request an evaluation of transfer credits after completing 15 semester hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above at Northwest-Shoals Community College.
4. A transfer grade of “D” will only be accepted when the transfer student’s cumulative transfer GPA is 2.0 or above. If the student has a cumulative transfer 2.0 or above the grade of “D” will be accepted the same as that for native students.
5. Transfer credit for graduation will be granted based on the applicability of transfer courses to the requirements of the degree pursued. All transfer students must complete at least 25 percent (25%) of degree requirements at the College in order to receive a degree.
6. Credit may be extended based on a comprehensive evaluation of demonstrated and documented competencies and previous formal training.
7. Transfer credit for graduation will be granted based on the applicability of transfer courses to the requirements of the degree pursued. All transfer students must complete at least 25 percent (25%) of degree requirements at the College in order to receive a degree. Students who are admitted to the College on probation must complete 50 percent (50%) of degree requirements at the College in order to receive a degree.

#### IV. Accelerated High School Program

The College offers qualified high school students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. Students are eligible for early admission if they meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have successfully completed the 10th grade;
2. The student must provide certification from the local principal and/or his/her designee certifying that the student has a minimum cumulative "B" average and recommends the student for enrollment;
3. The student may enroll only in postsecondary courses for which the high school prerequisites have been completed (for example: a student may not take English Composition until all required high school English courses have been completed).
4. In addition to items 1, 2, and 3, any student from a non-accredited high school must provide an ACT composite score of 16 or a total of 790 on the SAT for admission to a course creditable toward an associate degree.

Exceptions may be granted by the Chancellor of the Department of Postsecondary Education for a student documented as gifted and talented according to the standards included in the State Plan for Exceptional Children and Youth. Exceptions apply only to requirements 1 and 3 above.

Accelerated high school students who later enroll as regular students at the College will automatically receive credit for hours earned under this accelerated high school program if the credits are applicable toward their degree program. Students attending other colleges, however, must request in writing that official transcripts be mailed to those institutions if they desire to receive credit earned through this program. College credit earned through this program may not substitute for high school credit.

#### V. Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit for High School Students Program

Institutions within the Alabama College System are authorized to establish dual enrollment/dual credit programs with local Boards of Education in the College service area. Qualified students have the opportunity to receive both high school credit and college credit. Courses offered by postsecondary institutions shall be of postsecondary level and enrolled students must pay normal tuition as required by the postsecondary institution or as stipulated in a contract for services between the two levels. Criteria for student eligibility are developed by each individual school system and may be more restrictive than the minimum criteria that follow:

1. The student must meet the entrance requirements established by institutions of postsecondary education;
2. The student must have a "B" average in completed high school courses;
3. The student must have written approval of the appropriate principal and the local superintendent of education;

4. The student must be in grade 10, 11, or 12, or have an exception granted by the participating postsecondary institution upon the recommendation of the student's principal and superintendent and in accordance with Alabama Administrative Code 290-8-9-.17 regarding gifted and talented students.

Students may enroll in occupational/technical courses/programs in accordance with guidelines of the Department of Postsecondary Education. Students who are not attending public school, but who are enrolled in private school or church school pursuant to 16-28-1 of the *Code of Alabama*, or who are receiving instruction from a private tutor pursuant to 16-28-5 of the *Code of Alabama* may also participate in the Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit Program. Student eligibility must be certified by the appropriate official at the private school or church school or by the private tutor. Students enrolled in courses offered during the normal high school day on or off the high school campus shall have prior permission of the students' principal, superintendent and the participating postsecondary institution president.

Parental permission and travel for courses offered off the high school campus during the normal school day will be administered under the auspices of local Boards of Education.

Six semester credit hours at the postsecondary level shall equal one credit at the high school level in the same or related subject. Partial credit agreements shall be developed between the participating postsecondary institution and the local Board of Education.

#### VI. Admission of International Students

Northwest-Shoals Community College must release to SEVIS and DHS officers information concerning the status and periodic reporting of all F1 students. The international student policy may be modified as needed.

In addition to the admission requirements for U.S. citizens, all international students must meet the following admission requirements:

1. All international student applicants, (first-time, transient, or transfer) must submit original copies of their Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) examination scores showing proficiency in both written and spoken English. A minimum score of 500 on the paper-pencil TOEFL test, 173 computer-based test score, or 61 internet based test score is required for admission. The IELTS of 5.5 is acceptable to fulfill the English requirement. The TOEFL score of 500 may be waived for students from the following countries: Australia, Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada (verify from transcript), England, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Scotland, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Belize, Dominica, Malawi, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Nigeria, Tanzania, The Gambia, Tobago and Trinidad and the Virgin Islands. All other waivers must be submitted to the Chancellor for approval with substantial documentation.
2. Official transcripts (high school/college) must be provided in English.
3. Any English composition course completed by international transfer applicants must have been completed with a minimum "C" grade at a regionally accredited institution prior to acceptance at the College.

4. All international student applicants must submit proof that they have a source of income sufficient to pay living expenses at the level established by Federal Grant programs. The Admissions/Records Office must be provided with an AFFIDAVIT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL EXPENSES from the person, organization, or institution who is financially responsible for the international student. The minimum amount required must be equal to \$15,000.00. Letter must be signed and dated within one year of the time the student plans to enroll. Additionally, international student applicants must sign a waiver of financial responsibility for the College.
5. All international student applicants must purchase ACCIDENT AND HEALTH INSURANCE POLICIES which include repatriation expenses (International Association for Foreign Students Basic and Major Medical Expenses Accidental Death Policy). The student must purchase this insurance through NW-SCC each semester.
6. All international students who have their own transportation must have liability insurance. (This is in compliance with state law.) A copy of the insurance policy must be submitted to the Admissions Office.
7. All international students must provide current documentation of Tuberculosis (TB) screening.
8. International student applicants may need to secure private housing since the College has limited campus housing.
9. International students must take the COMPASS before being admitted to the College. International students MUST then register for the appropriate English and math courses.
10. I-20 forms are issued after applications and all required documents are on file in the Admissions Office. **All required documents must be on file in the Admissions Office at least 30 working days prior to the registration dates for fall and summer semesters.** All spring documents must be submitted the last working day in November. No applications from international students will be accepted later than 30 days prior to the beginning of any semester. Applications received after the deadline will be considered for the subsequent semester.\*
11. All international students must report immediately to the International Student Office upon arrival to the College.

\*The College reserves the right to limit the number of international students admitted during any academic year.

## VII. Admission of Audit Students

Auditors are students who register for credit courses on essentially a non-credit basis. Applicants must meet admission standards to be eligible to enroll as an audit student. (See Academic Procedures Section for additional information on auditing a course).

## VIII. Admission of Students to Special Programs

Applicants to customized training for business and industry programs and courses not creditable toward an associate degree may be admitted, provided they complete the application for admission for special programs and provided they are at least 16 years of age. Students may request Special Enrollment status for these programs. Applicants not meeting the minimum admission requirements may be admitted only to non-credit programs.

## IX. Admission of Continuing Education and Community Services Students

The College offers a program of continuing education and community services. Admission requirements are established appropriate to the nature of the particular course. Students who plan to register only for continuing education courses need not apply for regular college admission. Additional information about continuing education courses may be obtained by contacting the Shoals campus at 331-5218.

## X. Admission Appeals

The College Admissions Committee verifies the eligibility of students seeking admission or readmission to the College through the appeals process and to Health Related Programs with special admission criteria. Applicants subject to review upon appeal initiated by the student include:

1. Prospective students who are on academic suspension or dismissal from another postsecondary institution;
2. Any prospective student who has been denied admission to the College;
3. Prospective students who were denied admission to a particular program;
4. Students requesting readmission to the College after being placed on academic suspension from the College; (Students requesting readmission must submit a request in writing for an "appeal for readmission" within five days of receipt of the notice of suspension).
5. Students who were suspended from a particular program.

Students or prospective students seeking an appeal should submit their request in writing to the Director of Admissions at least five working days prior to the Admissions Committee scheduled meeting.

The Admissions Committee will review suspension cases only during the week before final exams and during the first week after classes begin in a new semester. A student seeking admission may have his/her case presented before the Committee in absentia or in person. For further information, please contact the Director of Admissions.