
Admission to the College

Student Recruitment

The mission of student recruitment is to help make the general public and prospective students aware of the College's many programs which are available to help each individual meet his or her needs. The College is committed to seeking out members of diverse groups and providing an educational environment where opportunities for successful advancement will be available to those who have historically been underserved.

The College representatives provide information to prospective students by working with community and non-traditional groups, visiting high schools, selected clubs and agencies, minority groups, retirees and other citizens in the College service area.

Contact recruitment personnel to arrange for campus tours or visits to area high schools or other community events: Shoals 256.331.5333, Phil Campbell 256.331.6261 or the College's Recruitment Manager, Lindsey Oliver at 256.331.6239.

Admission Process

Northwest-Shoals Community College has an open-door admissions policy for all U.S. Citizens and eligible Non-Citizens that provides higher education for individuals who meet minimum admission requirements as set forth by the policies of the Alabama Community College system. 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.

Applications for admission may be submitted electronically via the MyNWSCC portal found on the Northwest-Shoals website or mailed to the Admissions Office on either the Muscle Shoals or Phil Campbell Campus. Applicants must also submit an unexpired, government-issued photo ID before an application will be considered. Documents may be presented in person, or a notarized legible copy may be mailed or submitted electronically.

Admission to the College does not mean acceptance or admission to certain health education programs in the College such as Nursing, Practical Nursing, Emergency Medical Services, or Medical Assisting Technology which may have additional standards for admission and progression. Applicants 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 admission requirements are subject to change without prior notice.

Admission Policies – Degree Seeking Students

1. Primary Form of Identification

For admission to an Alabama Community College System institution, an applicant must provide one primary form of identification such as an unexpired state-issued driver license; an unexpired state-issued identification card; an unexpired U.S. passport; an unexpired U.S. permanent resident card. An applicant who fails to satisfy the identification requirement will not be admitted to the College. Applicants should submit the identification referenced above in person, or a notarized legible copy may be mailed or submitted electronically.

2. Non-Citizens of the United States

Northwest-Shoals Community College has an open-door admissions policy for all U.S. citizens and eligible Non-Citizens. Applicants who possess permanent resident status or deferred action status for childhood arrivals will be admitted to the college after completing an admission application and submitting required documentation. Permanent residents should provide an unexpired U.S. permanent resident card. Applicants who have granted deferred action status must present Form I-797 that specifically states that the applicant has been granted deferred action status, along with an unexpired state-issued driver's license or an unexpired state-issued identification card.

First-Time Student

A student who has not previously attended any college after graduation from high school/GED is considered a first-time freshman.

Required Admission Documentation:

- Northwest-Shoals application for admission
- One primary form of ID (unexpired government-issued photo ID)
- Official high school/GED transcript documenting graduation

Transfer Student

A student who has previously attended any college after graduation from high school/GED is considered a transfer student.

Required Admission Documentation:

- Northwest-Shoals application for admission
- One primary form of ID (unexpired government-issued photo ID)
- Official high school/GED transcript documenting graduation
- Official college transcript from all previously attended institutions

*Students who have achieved a minimum of a baccalaureate degree are only required to submit a transcript from the granting institution for admission to the college but may need to submit other transcripts for evaluation of transfer of credit.

Initial Academic Status of a Transfer Student

- **Clear Academic Status:** A transfer student whose cumulative grade point average at the transfer college(s) is 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale will be admitted on CLEAR academic status.
- **Academic Probation:** A transfer student whose cumulative grade point average at the transfer college(s) is less than 2.0 on a 4.0 scale will be admitted only on ACADEMIC PROBATION. The applicant's transcript will read ADMITTED ON ACADEMIC PROBATION.
- **Suspension:** An applicant who has been academically suspended at another accredited postsecondary college may be admitted as a transfer student only upon appeal to the Admissions Committee of the College. A student admitted upon appeal will enter 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 be accepted only 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. Credit may be extended based on a comprehensive evaluation of demonstrated and documented competencies and previous formal training.
6. 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.

Returning Northwest-Shoals Student (Readmission)

A student who has previously attended Northwest-Shoals as a credit student (after high school/GED) and is returning to Northwest-Shoals after a break in continuous enrollment is considered a returning (readmit) student excluding the summer semester. Students who only attended Northwest-Shoals as a dual enrollment student should apply as a first-time freshman if he or she plans to attend Northwest-Shoals after high school graduation.

Required Admission Documentation:

- Northwest-Shoals application for admission
- One primary form of ID (unexpired government-issued photo ID)
- Official high school/GED transcript documenting graduation
- Official college transcripts from all previously attended institutions after last attending Northwest-Shoals

*Students who have achieved a minimum of a baccalaureate degree are only required to submit a transcript from the granting institution for admission to the college but may need to submit other transcripts for evaluation of transfer of credit.

Transient Student

An applicant who is currently enrolled at another postsecondary college and seeks credit that will transfer back to his/her primary college is classified as a transient student.

Required Admission Documentation:

- Northwest-Shoals application for admission
- One primary form of ID (unexpired government-issued photo ID)
- Transient letter from primary college listing approved courses

*Transient students are considered non-degree seeking and are not eligible for federal financial aid.

High School Accelerated (Early Admission) Student

This program is available to qualified high school students who have completed required high school prerequisites. Accelerated students receive college credit but not high school credit. High school approval is required.

Minimum requirements:

- The student has successfully completed the 10th grade
- The high school principal or his/her designee certifies the student has a minimum cumulative "B" average and recommends the student be admitted.
- The student enrolls only in postsecondary courses for which high school prerequisites have been completed.

Required Admission Documentation:

- Northwest-Shoals application for admission
- One primary form of ID (unexpired government-issued photo ID)
- Accelerated Recommendation Form signed by the high school principal or designee

*Accelerated high school students are admitted on a "conditional" status. The conditional status remains in effect and an official college transcript cannot be released until Northwest-Shoals Community College receives an official transcript documenting proof of high school graduation. Transcripts released prior to receiving the final high school transcript will be stamped CONDITIONAL CREDIT.

*Accelerated high school students are not eligible for federal financial aid or institutional scholarships.

High School Dual Enrollment Student

Dual Enrollment for Dual Credit is an enrichment opportunity allowing eligible high school students to earn high school and college credits for courses taken through an Alabama Community College System (ACCS) institution while still enrolled in high school.

Minimum requirements:

- The student must be in grade 10, 11, or 12. An exception may be granted by the Chancellor for students documented as gifted and talented in accordance with Alabama Administrative Code § 290-8-9.12.
- The student seeking enrollment in Dual Enrollment for Dual Credit coursework must have a minimum cumulative (unweighted) high school grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for initial admission in completed high school courses.
- To maintain continuous eligibility, student must earn a “C” or better in all attempted college courses. Students who fail to meet this minimum GPA or withdraw from a course will be suspended from the program for a minimum one term. The one-term suspension may not be served during the summer.
- The student must have written approval of the appropriate principal or career and technical education program representative (if applicable) and counselor. Dual enrollment for Dual Credit eligibility for students enrolled in private, home school/private tutor, parochial, or church/religious secondary educational entities must be documented in writing by an appropriate school official.
- Placement and Pre-Requisites. - All dually enrolled students must take a state-approved college placement test, where minimum placement is required. See Dual Enrollment for Dual Credit Handbook for more details.

Required Admission Documentation:

- Northwest-Shoals application for admission
- One primary form of ID (unexpired government-issued photo ID)
- Copy of current high school transcript documenting the required grade point average

Audit Student

An audit student is an applicant who wishes to enroll for classes only on an audit basis. The applicant must comply with the college admissions requirements by submitting an application for admission, one primary form of identification, an official high school transcript verifying date of graduation or GED certificate, official transcripts from all colleges attended. A student with a baccalaureate degree will need to submit only the transcript from the college awarding the degree. Audit students must abide by class attendance policy and all standard course requirements, excluding the completion of course examinations. The cost of auditing a course is the same as enrolling for credit.

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. A graduate of an accredited U.S. high school or completion of ENG 101 at an accredited college will be exempt from the TOEFL. 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. **Translations must be completed by an organization affiliated with the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services.**
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 \$20,000.00. The 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 and a valid driver’s license 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 9-10 class days. **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 class 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.

It is extremely important that a non immigrant maintain their status (F1) while in the United States.

F1 status can be properly maintained by registering as a full-time student each semester, maintaining a good GPA, and following the correct transfer policies. Failure to maintain F1 status will result in reinstatement procedures as directed in SEVIS.

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

Admission of Students to Special Programs, Continuing Education, and Community Services Students

Applicants to customized training for business and industry programs, continuing education, community services 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 17 years of age. Admission requirements are established appropriate to the the nature of the particular course. Students may request Special Enrollment status for these programs. Applicants not meeting the minimum admission requirements may be admitted only to non-credit programs. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Director of Training for Existing Business and Industry at 256.331.5289.

Admission of Distance Education Students

Students interested in taking distance education courses should follow the regular admissions and financial aid processes. Students may contact these offices by phone, email or in-person for assistance. New or returning students who have never taken a distance education course at the College should complete the distance education orientation, Operation Early Launch, by the first day of class. This orientation gives students valuable information about the learning management system (Moodle), technology requirements, student services, learning resources, and how to be a successful online student. After completing the orientation, students may work with their assigned advisor or advising center via the college website, email or phone for assistance with advising or registration. Additional information on technical support, student services, and a variety of other resources for distance education students is available to all current students through a Student Help Site in Moodle.

Students will be provided with a secure login to access Moodle and myNW-SCC. Distance education courses are not self-paced; assignment deadlines are given throughout the semester. Different states require that the College seek authorization or exemption to offer distance education courses to students in those states. Students residing in states other than Alabama should verify via the College website that the College has authorization to offer courses in their state of residency. Students pursuing certification or licensure for a program in a state other than Alabama should also verify the

acceptance of course work in their state of residency.

For further information, visit the College website at nwsc.edu or contact the Distance Education Office at 256.331.5395 or cookson@nwsc.edu.

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 have been denied admission to a particular program;
4. Students requesting readmission to the College after being placed on academic suspension from the College;
5. Students who have been suspended from a particular program.

Students or prospective students seeking an appeal must submit their request in writing to the Assistant Dean of Recruitment, Admissions and Financial Aid no later than 3 days prior to the start of the term (see College Catalog or Semester Course Schedules for dates).

A student seeking admission may have his/her case presented before the Committee in absentia or in person. The meeting of the Admissions Committee shall not be considered a due process hearing, but rather a petition for admission/readmission. For further information, please contact the Assistant Dean of Recruitment, Admissions and Financial Aid.

Admission Policies – Non-Degree Seeking Students

Non-degree seeking students must submit the following documents for admission to the College:

- Northwest-Shoals application for admission
- One primary form of ID (unexpired government-issued photo ID)
- Official high school transcript (if attended)
- Official transcript – All other colleges (if attended)

*Students who have achieved a minimum of a Baccalaureate degree are only required to submit a transcript from the granting institution.

Conditional Admission

First-time freshmen, transfer students, and returning (readmit) students may be conditionally admitted to Northwest-Shoals Community College for one semester if official high school and/or college transcripts are pending receipt. No student shall be allowed to enroll for a second semester unless all required admission documents have been received by the College prior to the start of the student's second semester. Likewise, official NW-SCC transcripts will not be released until all required admission documents have been received by the College. It is the student's responsibility to contact the appropriate high school and/or agencies and to have the official required documents mailed directly to the College. Students who are conditionally admitted to the College are ineligible to receive federal financial aid benefits.