

Athens Technical College

Faculty Handbook



ATHENS
TECHNICAL
COLLEGE[®]

1958

ATHENS - ELBERT - GREENE - WALTON

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General Information

Mission

Athens Technical College, a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, provides educational programs and services through traditional and distance education methods to foster lifelong learning, facilitate workplace success, and promote economic development.

Governing Body

The College's governing body is the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), which was established to govern and manage all state-supported postsecondary technical colleges. The State Board consists of one member from each congressional district and five at-large members. The policies of the State Board and our College policies are considered one and the same; they are contained in the TCSG Policy Manual. All faculty members are expected to read and be familiar with the contents of this manual.

Institutional Administration

The administration exists to foster an environment in which all aspects of our mission may be fulfilled. The President is responsible for all activities related to institutional management and administration that are conducted to accomplish our mission. A number of administrative offices, each headed by its own Vice President, have been established to help manage and administer the College, including the following: Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Institutional Effectiveness, Economic Development, and Student Affairs. Organizational charts are available on the ATC Website under the General Information tab.

Board of Directors

Though total authority to operate the state system of technical colleges rests with the State Board, it has elected to delegate a portion of that authority and responsibility to a local Board of Directors at each college. Our Board is composed of representatives from business, industry, and economic development from our region. Responsibilities that have been delegated to the Board of Directors include the following: (1) interpret State Board policies and provide supplemental policies when necessary; (2) provide a conduit for communication between the college and its constituents; (3) recommend new educational programs to the State Board for approval; (4) approve the list of program graduates; (5) approve for submission to the State Board the Performance Accountability System (PAS) document and the annual Local Application for Federal Funds for Improvement of Programs and Services for Special Populations; (6) hear appeals of complaints; and (7) act as a presidential search committee in the event of a vacancy. By maintaining an awareness of local community and industry needs, the Board of Directors provides a vital link to efficient and effective delivery of services.

Regional Accreditation

Athens Technical College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award the associate degree. Questions about the accreditation of Athens Technical College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission of Colleges is the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. The Commission's mission is the enhancement of educational quality throughout the region, and it strives to improve the effectiveness of institutions by ensuring that institutions meet standards established by the higher

education community that address the needs of society and students. It serves as the common denominator of shared values and practices among the diverse institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Latin America and other international sites approved by the Commission on Colleges that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees. The Commission also accepts applications from other international institutions of higher education.

Program Accreditation

In addition to our institutional accreditation, we are committed to obtaining additional accreditation or certification of all programs lending themselves to such status. It is expected that all faculty members will familiarize themselves with the standards of professional accreditation for their respective programs, if applicable. Furthermore, it is expected that all faculty members will participate in the self-study process, whether for institutional or program accreditation purposes. The ATC Catalog contains a list of programs that have achieved accreditation, approval, or certification.

Athens Technical College Foundation

The Athens Technical College Foundation was established in January 1988 as a non-profit entity to assist the College in its endeavors by providing financial support for expanding instructional capabilities and for creating scholarships for deserving students. Specifically, the Foundation strives to promote the cause of higher education at Athens Technical College; to expand educational opportunities; to acquire real estate and funds to support the institution's purposes; to create scholarships and endowments; to assist in the financing of capital improvements; and to promote programs for development by the institution. The Foundation is empowered to accept gifts and contributions; faculty members who would like to make contributions to the Foundation may do so through payroll deduction if they choose. The payroll clerk in the office of administrative services will provide needed assistance. The Foundation Office is located on the first floor of the F building. For more information on the ATC Foundation and giving opportunities, please contact the director of development and public relations at (706) 335-5025.

Institutional Effectiveness

As stated in the *Principles of Accreditation*, institutional effectiveness is a process in which key academic and administrative areas of the College identify expected outcomes, assess the extent to which they achieve these outcomes, and provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results. Faculty members are expected to uphold their responsibilities in ensuring the College's effectiveness by continually planning, evaluating, and using the results to improve all the activities in which they participate.

At Athens Technical College (ATC), the Office of Institutional Effectiveness supports such endeavors in the following ways. The IE Office coordinates SACSCOC accreditation and reaffirmation activities; aids the President's office in implementing ATC's strategic planning processes; offers support to academic departments undergoing programmatic accreditations or reaffirmations; facilitates campus-wide assessments, evaluations, and research projects; provides data analyses for key initiatives and committees; publishes ATC's *Fact Book*; and supports recurring TCSG accountability programs.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

The Technical College System of Georgia and its constituent Technical Colleges do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, disabled veteran, veteran of the Vietnam Era, spouse of military member or citizenship status (except in those special circumstances permitted or mandated by law). This nondiscrimination policy encompasses the operation of all technical college-administered programs, programs financed by the federal government including any Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIOA)

Title I financed programs, educational programs and activities, including admissions, scholarships and loans, student life, and athletics. It also encompasses the recruitment and employment of personnel and contracting for goods and services.

As set forth in the ATC Catalog, Athens Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, veteran status, or citizenship status (except in those special circumstances permitted or mandated by law).

The following person(s) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jessica Felts, Director of Student Support Services, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, Office K-614A, 706/583- 2893, jfelts@athenstech.edu; Sherril Heath, Human Resources; Title VI, Title VII, Title IX Coordinator (Employees), Office K-514, sheath@athenstech.edu , 706/583-2818; and Lenzy Reid, Vice President of Student Affairs, Title IX (Students) Office H-774, 706/355- 5029, lreid@athenstech.edu, 800 U.S. Highway 29 North, Athens, GA 30601. Athens Technical College is committed to creating an accessible online environment. If you have questions about accessibility or would like to request materials in an alternative format, please contact Jessica Felts, jfelts@athenstech.edu or 706-583-2893.

Individuals also may obtain instructions and procedures for informal and formal complaints applicable to any of the above laws from the officials designated above. Laws prohibit retaliation against any complainant. Call 1-800-421-3481 to obtain additional information.

Harassment Policies

TCSG and its technical colleges prohibit sexual harassment and harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, national or ethnic origin, religion, disability, age, or citizenship status. A copy of the TCSG Policy is included in both the full-time and adjunct faculty application packets issued at the time of employment.

Unlawful harassment includes unwelcome verbal, electronic, written or physical conduct that disparages or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of that person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual reference, allusions, "humor," advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, electronic, or physical conduct or interactions of a sexual nature as defined by TCSG policy and procedures related to this subject. Employees shall report to the director of human resources all events of unlawful harassment and unlawful retaliation against themselves or others pursuant to applicable policy and procedures.

TCSG and its technical colleges also prohibit amorous relationships between instructors and the students they teach and strongly discourage amorous relationships between supervisors and their subordinates. For further details, see the Consensual Relationships policy in the TCSG Policy Manual.

Intellectual Property

The College's policy on Intellectual Property Rights supports the policy defined in the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia Policy Manual, Policy 3.2.1. (II.E.), Intellectual Property but is more expansive in its treatment of intellectual property rights insofar as ownership, compensation, copyright, and use of revenue derived is concerned.

To further its goal of making education accessible to as many people as possible, the Technical College System of Georgia owns the intellectual property rights in any and all works produced by or for the System and its member colleges. In order that the technical college system be able to utilize to the best

and fullest extent all works produced for it, and all works provided for its use, anyone producing work for the system and anyone providing work for the system's use, represents and warrants that such works:

- Do not violate any law
- Do not violate or infringe any intellectual property right (including but not limited to copyright, trademark, patent, or right of publicity) of any person or firm; and
- Do not libel, defame, or invade the privacy of any person or firm

ATC Policy: Intellectual Property Rights

Athens Technical College (ATC) encourages innovation and creativity and condones the development of intellectual property, property created by the human mind that is subject to protection by trademark, patent, copyright, or trade secret law. In most instances, intellectual property refers to intangible assets such as literary, dramatic, musical, or artistic works; computer software, multimedia presentations, games, or videos; and designs, discoveries, or inventions. Athens Technical College acknowledges and agrees that all students and faculty or staff members shall have exclusive property rights to any and all intellectual property they create on their own time and without the use of ATC resources. Otherwise, the intellectual property shall be considered to belong to Athens Technical College.

Full rights of ownership, to include compensation, copyright, and use of revenue, thus reside solely with the student or faculty/staff member when the following criteria are met based on the assessment of the President:

- The product or work results solely from individual initiative and not as a result of a college class assignment in the case of students, or a college work assignment in the case of faculty or staff members; AND
- The product or work did not require substantial use of college facilities, equipment, or supplies, and did not emanate from any other college-owned copyright.

Students are specifically prohibited from using college-owned equipment or resources for creation of works for hire; however, both students and employees are permitted to include works they have created, even those resulting from course or college assignments, as items representative of their skills and abilities in a personal portfolio. Details related to the Intellectual Policy can be found in ATC Catalog and the TCSG Policy Manual.

Institutional Grievance Procedures

Faculty members are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their grievances or concerns. This informal procedure is intended to encourage communication between the parties involved, either directly or through an intermediary, in order to facilitate a mutual understanding of what may be different perspectives regarding the complained of act or directive. Absent extraordinary circumstances, the faculty member's immediate supervisor will be responsible for the informal resolution procedure. If the immediate supervisor is the subject of the grievance, the faculty member may file an informal complaint with another person in the administrative chain of command. The director of human resources shall assist faculty in having their informal grievances heard and shall assist in fashioning an informal resolution upon the request of the faculty member, the respondent, or the supervisor.

If the informal process does not result in the satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the faculty member may file a formal written complaint setting forth a statement of the facts, the College or department policy, procedures or law allegedly violated, and the specific remedy sought. If the complaint alleges illegal discrimination, the complaint shall be filed with the College's Director of Human Resources. If the complaint concerns a non-academic student issue, the complaint shall be filed with the Vice President for Student Affairs. All other complaints shall be filed with the Human Resources Director. These individuals or their offices shall continue to monitor and coordinate the complaint's resolution as outlined in Procedure: Resolution in the TCSG Policy Manual.

Budget Process

The budget is controlled by the President and monitored through the Office of Administrative Services. The President assigns each office within the institution the task of completing a budget request for the upcoming fiscal year. The Vice President for Finance and Administration solicits budget requests from Vice Presidents and Academic Deans who, in turn, solicit budget requests from Program Chairs. Once office level budget requests are formulated, they are submitted to the President, who makes a final decision on the institution's budget once all revenue sources have been identified and compared with proposed spending levels. Final approval of the institutional budget is made by the State Board. Budget heads are provided monthly budget reports and each quarter, detailed expenditure reports so that overspending may be avoided. Improvement budgets are submitted annually to the State Board as part of the assessment process. They primarily include requests for equipment, capital outlay projects, and additional personnel.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar is on a three-semester system. The academic year begins with the fall semester and graduation will be held between late April through early May.

- Fall Semester – Late August through mid-December
- Spring Semester – January through Late April or Early May
- Summer Semester – Late May through early August

A copy of the current academic calendar can be found on the ATC website.

Maintenance or Repair Procedures

Please assist us in maintaining our facilities. If you notice something that needs attention, please report it immediately to the Academic Dean, Program Chair, or Division Administrative Assistant. Maintenance requests will then be forwarded to the facilities director via the ATC Intranet.

Academic Information

Faculty

Academic Affairs at Athens Technical College is organized by program and/or division. Each program is under the support of a Program Chair and each division is administered by an Academic Dean. The divisions are Business, Industry, and Technology; Life Sciences and Public Safety; and General Education, Online Learning, and Dual Enrollment. Program and division faculty meetings are held as necessary. Campus-wide faculty/staff meetings are held at least once a year and at other times as called by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the President.

Academic Freedom and Responsibility

The Technical College System of Georgia Policy Manual, Policy 5.1.1p, Academic Freedom states the following:

The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) supports the concept of academic freedom. In the development of knowledge, research endeavors, and creative activities, faculty and students must be free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism. Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject. Although caution must be used not to introduce teaching matters that have no relation to the instructional field, faculty and students must be able to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence and should feel free to participate as responsible citizens in community affairs. The Technical College System of Georgia and its institutions safeguard and protect these rights of academic freedom by providing faculty and students the right to initiate grievance procedures should they have complaints dealing with the infringement of or personal penalization as the result of the exercise of this freedom.

Faculty members must fulfill their responsibilities to society and to their profession by manifesting competence, professional discretion, and good citizenship. The faculty will be free from institutional censorship or discipline, when they speak or write as citizens. As professional educators, faculty members must be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate they are not speaking for the institution.

The principles of academic freedom shall not prevent the institution from making proper efforts to ensure the best possible instruction for all students in accordance with the objectives of the institution.

Instructional Faculty Consortium Committees (IFCCs)

Several regional faculty consortia have been established in the state for the following purposes:

- to serve as a forum for the discussion and consideration of issues of interest to program-specific technical college faculty;
- to serve as an informational resource; and
- to serve as a communication mechanism to carry out specific work concerning state-wide instructional policies and procedures and program-specific standards and program guides.

These committees develop proposed changes for standards if necessary. Each program of study and general education discipline is represented by an IFCC made up of full-time faculty from all state technical colleges. Programs offered at 11 or more colleges meet at least twice annually at the consortium-level. Programs offered by ten or fewer colleges meet at the state-wide level; the IFCC state-wide program group chairperson meets annually with at least one faculty member from each college offering the program.

Committee Service

Full-time faculty members may be asked from time to time to serve on ad hoc committees (such as the Calendar Committee). Such committees are accountable to the College officer who appoints them. Committee participation is expected, appreciated, and encouraged, and allows faculty the opportunity for input on a variety of college concerns.

Warranty of Graduates

As a demonstration of confidence in the quality of the programs of study offered at each technical college in Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia warrants every graduate of technical programs in which students may earn technical certificates of credit, diplomas, or associate degrees. The warranty guarantees that graduates demonstrated the knowledge and skills and can perform each competency as identified in the industry-validated standards established for every program of study. If the institution determines that program graduates lack such competencies, the Technical College System of Georgia will provide retraining in areas of deficiencies at no charge to the employers or graduates.

An employer in conjunction with a graduate, or the graduate alone, may file a claim against the warranty if the individual is unable to perform one or more of the competencies contained in the industry-validated standards, including failure to pass a State of Georgia-required licensing examination.

This warranty is applicable only to graduates of technical certificate, diploma, or associate degree programs who entered the programs subsequent to the mandated standards implementation date. The warranty shall remain in effect for two years immediately following the date of graduation, and any state-governed technical college that offers the programs from which individuals graduated will honor this warranty

Professionalism/Ethics

All faculty members should conduct themselves and should treat students in a professional manner. A neat, well groomed, appropriate, professional appearance is always expected. No faculty member shall use names from class rolls for the purpose of selling any materials, products, or services; nor are names or addresses of students to be provided to anyone for commercial purposes. Faculty should not engage in selling non-profit or for-profit goods on campus unless given permission by the President.

Faculty members should strive to maintain a clean learning environment. All classrooms should be free of food, drink, or tobacco products. Smoking is not permitted on ATC campuses. Finally, each faculty member should consult the TCSG Policy Manual <http://www.tcsg.edu/tcsgpolicy/> for policies addressing drug use, political activity, and other issues of potential concern.

Work Schedule and Teaching Loads

The Faculty Workload policies and procedures for Athens Technical College are consistent with Procedure: 4.1.8p, Instructional Staff Work Assignments as adopted by the State Board of the Technical College System. The regular workday for faculty members shall be determined by the Program Chair or Academic Dean responsible for assigning the class schedule. Full-time instructors shall spend a minimum of 40 hours each week on assigned responsibilities.

Teaching loads for faculty members who teach *lecture-based classes* will typically be based on credit hours with the range being from 18-25 credit hours for Fall/Spring semesters and from 12-15 credit hours for the condensed summer semester. Teaching loads for faculty whose courses are *combinations of lectures and laboratories or are solely laboratory-based* will typically be established based on contact hours with the range being from 20-28 contact hours per week each semester.

Program chairs will typically receive a course release to address administrative duties associated with their program administration; however, they may be asked to teach additional courses in the event of extenuating circumstances.

In determining faculty load, Academic Deans shall take into consideration the following factors: course content and level, the number of class preparations, the expertise of the teacher, student registration load, planned faculty development activities, planned accreditation activities, committee assignments, and other activities which help the College achieve its stated purpose.

Adjunct faculty members are required to meet their respective classes as stated on their letter of agreement (LOA) and to provide access for students before or after class. They should also provide students with their athenstech.edu email address (telephone number is optional) on the addendum to the master course syllabus.

Class Schedule

Classes begin at 7:30AM and continue until 10:00PM each day except Friday (when classes typically end by 4:00PM). Specific times for each class period are referenced in the FacFusion (Banner Reports) on the Intranet. Faculty should strive to begin and end classes on time so students will not be late to subsequent classes.

Office Hours

Faculty are required to post and maintain a schedule of class and office time. Schedules should be posted outside of office locations and within all Blackboard shells. Schedules should be updated each semester to reflect the current class schedule. Instructors should inform their students as to the times before and/or after class that they may be contacted for assistance. All faculty should provide students with their Athens Technical College email address on the addendum to the course syllabus.

Absences and Class Dismissal

If a faculty member must be absent, the appropriate Dean and/or Program Chair's office should be contacted as far in advance as possible but certainly no later than 30 minutes prior to the first class that will be missed. Instructors teaching in the evening hours (past 4:00PM) should contact the administrator on duty at 706-355-5020 (office) if they are unable to contact a representative in the Dean's office. Arrangements should then be made with the program chair or the Dean to cover the class. The faculty member should follow the Continuation of Instruction Plan. As soon as possible, the faculty member should post an announcement in Blackboard regarding the class cancellation. The announcement should include an assignment for students to prevent the loss of instructional time. Instructors teaching in the evening hours (past 4:00PM) should first contact their Dean and/or Program Chair, then contact the campus administrator at their respective off-site location.

If a faculty member cannot avoid being tardy for class, the same individuals cited above should be contacted so that necessary arrangements for temporary class coverage may be made.

If it becomes necessary for faculty members to leave campus during scheduled work hours, they should notify the appropriate Dean and appropriate Program Chair. Classes, and especially laboratories, should never be left unattended. If a class cannot be covered by another faculty member, the instructor should cancel the class.

It may occasionally be necessary to cancel classes due to emergency or hazardous weather conditions (see Campus Safety under General Information on the ATC website). Faculty can expect that an announcement will be made using the ATC Rave Alert system and on area radio stations prior if classes

are to be cancelled for the day. If classes must be dismissed for any reason, instructors are expected to make every reasonable attempt to make up the class time.

Continuation of Instruction Plan

A Continuation of Instruction Plan should be implemented in case of an emergency situations such as which cause short-term campus closure, or in the event faculty members need to cancel classes due to personal illness. This plan includes communication with students and providing access to course materials via the Learning Management System (LMS – Blackboard).

Communication

- a) Communicate to students how you plan to contact them should the College close. This information should be posted in the addendum to the syllabus.
- b) Keep all student contact information in both electronic and paper formats. Information should include ATC student email addresses and phone numbers.
- c) Faculty members should inform students of the best way to contact them in case of emergency.

Instruction

- d) Faculty must describe in the addendum to the course syllabus how they will use the LMS to continue instruction
- e) Faculty should use the LMS to continue instruction.
- f) Instructors and students must communicate using only their Athens Tech email accounts.

Help Resources

- g) Students need to be informed of academic and technical help resources. The information should be readily accessible to students in the LMS or sent to them via Blackboard Announcements.

Next Steps

- h) In the event instruction cannot continue during an emergency, a secondary plan will be put into place when the emergency is over.

Program Advisory Committees

Program advisory committees are organized to promote interaction between degree/diploma/certificate programs and the businesses and industries they serve. The Program Chair, in cooperation with the administration, selects persons in the industry served by the program and persons in the community and employment market who may positively impact the program to serve on the committee. The Program Chair is responsible for scheduling a minimum of two official meetings per year (with three external members present), maintaining minutes of the meetings, and working with the committee to develop an annual program of work.

The program advisory committee is neither administrative nor policymaking in its orientation; its function is to focus on planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating the programs. The committee reviews curriculum content to ensure that courses relate to present and future employment needs; recommends selection and maintenance of equipment; and assists in evaluating program effectiveness, job development, job placement, and program promotion. For additional information, consult the Program Advisory Committee Handbook.

Service Contracts

Faculty members do not have the authority to enter into legal contracts on behalf of the College. Please direct any inquiries about contracts for products or services to your supervising Academic Dean or to the appropriate Vice President.

Informational Resources

The [ATC website](#) contains announcements, press releases, and the Academic Calendar. Faculty members will also find links to vital information by clicking the following from the ATC home page: home page:

- Academics – ATC Catalog
- Resources – link to Blackboard, library, advisement information, BannerWeb link, faculty/staff webmail link, time clock, Team GA, KMS, and more.

ATC Intranet

The College Intranet provides faculty members with useful tools to perform their jobs. New faculty may request an Intranet account by going to the ATC web site, clicking Resources, Faculty & Staff, and then clicking Request Intranet Account. The ATC Intranet site contains the following tools:

- Advising Information – This site contains most of the materials needed to assist students in the development of their educational plans. (ATC Catalog, Advising Procedures and Guidelines, Transferring to Another College, Banner Screen Cheat Sheet, Advisor Code Guidelines, Advisors Top 10 Questions, SAR Report, and degree, diploma, TCC Semester Requirements.
- FacFusion (Banner Reports)– This site contains a number of different applications to access student information, student academic histories, class roster data, advisor/advisee lists, instructor schedules, course offerings, enrollment information, room schedules, etc.
- Faculty/Staff Development – This site contains a listing of available courses, registration capabilities, the faculty member’s faculty development history, a suggestion box, the Add Your Own feature, course documents (online sessions), and instructor trainings.
- Departmental Intranet Sites – There are departmental sites for Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, College Relations, Financial Aid, Human Resources, Institutional Effectiveness, and Registration/Records. There are also institutional sites for safety and security and academic honesty. These sites offer general information, contacts, forms, etc.
- Adjunct Information – This site contains links to Fac Fusion Reports, Banner Web, training videos and presentations, administrative services/human resources forms, safety and security information.
- Requests (Help Desk, Maintenance Requests etc.) – From this site, faculty can select and complete requests for the following: Maintenance Requests (Facilities), State Vehicle Request, Help Desk/Web Requests (Information Technology), Public Relations, Center for Teaching and Learning, First Aid – Item Replacement Request, Telephone Requests, and Human Resources.

ATC Email

All faculty will be issued ATC email accounts and all official communication will be conducted through that email address.

- To access your email on or off campus, go to our homepage at www.athenstech.edu
 - >> RESOURCES>>Faculty & Staff >> Faculty/Staff Webmail.
- At the Outlook Web Access screen:
 - Username: Your complete email address, i.e. jsmith@athenstech.edu
 - Password: Your email password

In accordance with TCSG policy, records of all employee emails are kept for five years. Please also review the internet and email use policies in this handbook. If you need assistance, please submit a help ticket from the ATC Intranet.

All students are issued ATC email accounts and receive all official communication from the College at that email address. Instructors must communicate with students using only their ATC student email addresses.

Mail

Faculty mail is placed in each faculty member's mailbox. Please check your mailbox regularly. Adjunct faculty should check with the Program Chair or Division Administrative Assistant for location of mailboxes. For security purposes, faculty should not ask students to deliver or retrieve items from the mailroom.

Parking

Faculty members are issued a parking permit/hang tag (at no charge) by the Office of Human Resources in room K-514. The permit/hang tag should be displayed on your rear-view mirror. Faculty members are asked to park in designated faculty/staff parking lots.

Library Resources and Services

The library offers many services and resources for faculty and students. The library staff encourages faculty to bring their classes to the library for an orientation. The professional librarians and library staff are eager to provide face-to-face or virtual assistance to both faculty members and students on any campus where classes are held (including career academies and high schools). Library centers are located on the Elbert, Greene, and Walton County campuses.

These orientations provide opportunities for students to learn how to:

- conduct research
- access print and digital resources (via GALILEO and O.W.L.)
- evaluate resources
- cite sources

Tutorials and links to resources are located on the library homepage <https://library.athenstech.edu> and in Blackboard where Library Services is listed in the Organization List.

The library environment in Athens provides the following:

- plug & play furniture
- group study rooms
- study nooks
- white boards
- anatomy models
- computers/printers/copier/laptops/tablets/fax machine

Library Services provided include the following:

- TechShare (a new service to fulfill patron requests for library books from other TCSG libraries through the ATC library portal -Primo)
- 24/7 chat/text
- online library guides for programs and courses
- course reserves
- interlibrary loan
- photocopying services (Athens Campus)

Resources include the following:

- 400,000+ e-books
- 30,000+ streaming educational videos
- 30,000+ physical resources on the shelves.

The Technology Nest inside the library is a lab and development space with software and equipment supporting 3D printing, multimedia design, mobile and game development, coding/programming, electronics, and other technology. The “Nest” provides current students, faculty, and staff a space to learn and explore these technologies. The purpose of the Nest is to support and enhance learning by sparking interest in emerging technologies. The Elbert County Campus and Walton County Campus also have a 3-D printer and some additional technologies.

Computer and Internet Use Policy

Athens Technical College computers, network, Internet and email systems are the property of Athens Technical College and the State of Georgia. Employee email and Internet (computer) accounts are designated for, and should only be used for, college/business purposes and are not considered private. The College reserves the right to monitor every aspect of Internet/computer use and to view employees’ email and documents both on email servers and on employee computers.

Athens Technical College and the State of Georgia monitor and log all off-campus locations accessed by the Internet (including web traffic). Files downloaded (programs, pictures, documents, etc.) from the Internet can contain viruses, so downloading should be done with caution (only from known, reliable sources). The downloading of such files is allowed only for official business or educational purposes. The downloading of unlicensed/copyrighted software or files is strictly forbidden (including but not limited to software, pictures, music, graphics, text, or documents). Per state policy, Athens Technical College operates under the direction of the State Board Policy Manual and State Procedures. Employees must follow and abide by TCSG’s Acceptable Computer and Internet Use

Computer Resources and Services

Computers are available in the Athens library for student and faculty use during normal library hours. Adjunct faculty may also use computers located in adjunct workrooms located in the B building, J building, and in the K building. Faculty may also check out laptops through their respective division for instructional needs. In some cases, laptops are available for checkout for students to use in the classroom.

Elbert and Walton campus faculty and students may use computers located in the library during normal operating hours. Walton campus faculty members also have access to computers, and students have access to a computer near the admissions office. Faculty and students on the Greene campus have access to a computer lab during normal operating hours, except when an instructor has reserved the lab for a class.

The Office of Information Technology provides support and direction for all campus computing and network activities. Services include PC hardware and software maintenance and support, network services, server and systems maintenance, Email system support, maintenance of the campus web site, and network security. To request technical support, go to the *Requests (Helpdesk Main., etc.)* site on the Intranet and click *Helpdesk Request (Computer Services)* to access the form. The status of a work order may be tracked using the requests system.

Instructional Technology and Distance Education

ATC offers on-campus, hybrid, blended, and online instruction to accommodate students' various scheduling needs. Blended and online classes are distance education courses. On-campus (OC) classes are taught primarily in the classroom or lab with 50 percent or less of instruction online. On campus courses may include lectures, labs, internships, clinicals and other in-person instructional modalities. Blended (BL) courses are distance learning courses with the majority of the course content, activities and interactions occurring online (>50% but <100% online) but may require students to come on campus for specific labs, assignments, activities, or events. Online classes are held 100% online and can be synchronous or asynchronous. Online Synchronous (OS) classes are courses taught fully online synchronously with course content, activities and interactions occurring entirely online. This delivery method requires students to be online at specific dates/times during the term. Online Asynchronous (OA) courses are taught fully online asynchronously with course content, activities and interactions occurring entirely online. This delivery method does not require students to be online at specific dates/times, and students may participate in class activities and complete course assignments at will. Flex courses that allow students the option of coming on campus, taking the course online synchronously, or taking it online asynchronously are considered online asynchronous classes, provided that the student is not required to be online or on campus at specific dates or times during the term. Campus (ECP) classes are courses taught fully online with course content, activities, and interaction occurring online. eCampus is a cooperative academic arrangement among all TCSG Colleges which allows students enrolled at Athens Technical College to complete courses offered by another participating college. eCampus courses may be scheduled either asynchronous or synchronous. At least one proctored activity is required for all online courses. Currently, ATC uses Blackboard as its learning management system.

Blackboard Availability for Faculty: Blackboard courses become available to faculty as soon as the instructor is added in Banner. Instructors can access the Blackboard course prior to the beginning of each semester to begin preparation for the course. Faculty will have continued access to the course until the end of the next semester. Instructors that do not see their courses listed in Blackboard should enter a Helpdesk Support Request from the dashboard page of Blackboard.

Blackboard Availability for Students: Blackboard courses are available to registered students and will open for student access on the first day of class as listed in Banner. Due to federal financial aid restrictions, Blackboard courses cannot be opened for student access before the first day of class. Enrolled students will have continued access to the course until one week after the date that grades are due for the course. Students who have a grade of Incomplete on file with the Office of Registration and Records will have access to the course until the end of the following semester. Blackboard access to a course is removed when a student is no longer enrolled in the course due to removal or withdrawal. Students that do not see their courses listed in Blackboard should enter a Helpdesk Support Request from the dashboard page of Blackboard.

Minimum use of Blackboard for all course types: All ATC courses have an associated Blackboard course shell, regardless of course type. Faculty are required to use Blackboard gradebook, ILP Grade Push, announcements, and publish course orientation documents in all courses. Faculty members must maintain their gradebook in Blackboard for all classes.

- The Blackboard gradebook should be updated throughout the semester, so students are aware of their progress.
- At the end of each semester, instructors will use the ILP Grade Push process to submit final grades to the Office of Registration and Records before the published deadline.

- Minimum use for announcements includes class cancellation notices and Continuation of Instruction assignments. Announcements used to communicate important dates and deadlines is encouraged.
- All courses must include course orientation documents such as a link to the master course syllabus, your course syllabus addendum, the course calendar, faculty contact information, and a link to publisher content sites (if applicable).

Distance education courses require more extensive use of Blackboard. In addition to the minimum required use of Blackboard, Blended (BL), Online (OA and OS), and eCampus (ECP) courses must also include a Lessons folder with course content organized by week, unit, or module; discussion boards and virtual meeting rooms; quizzes, tests, and assessments; and assignments. Instructors teaching On Campus (CA) courses are encouraged, but not required, to also include these sections in Blackboard.

Professional development and support using this technology are provided to faculty through the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Information Technology.

Faculty/Staff Support: The Center for Teaching and Learning provides faculty and staff support for instructional technology and distance education at ATC. To request technical assistance, faculty should log into their ATC Intranet account, select Requests, and submit a help request ticket to the Center for Teaching and Learning. The Center for Teaching and Learning is located in building J on the Athens Campus.

Student Support: ATC provides student support for distance education. The Blackboard login page has an online resources tab found on ATC's homepage, which provides students with comprehensive and up-to-date information regarding distance education at ATC. For additional technical support, students may submit a support request from the Blackboard login page by clicking *Helpdesk Request Form* under the Help and Resources.

Distance Education Proctored Activity Policy

Federal guidelines include expectations that colleges offering online courses verify that individuals who enroll in these courses are, in fact, the ones who are actually participating in and receiving college credit for these courses. To meet this requirement, all ATC students taking distance education courses are required to have reliable internet access, access to a web camera, and are issued a unique username and secure password to access the Learning Management System. Each student's credentials are confidential and are not allowed to be shared, doing so may be subject to violation of the ATC Student Code of Conduct and the Academic Honesty Policy. As an additional verification measure, Athens Technical College requires at least one proctored activity in each online course. A proctored activity is a required learning event for which students must appear in person and present photo identification (such as a driving license or ATC student ID). The proctored event cannot be a grade that is dropped by the instructor, and the event must count no less than a major assessment in the course.

A proctored activity must be one that is accomplished on campus or through the LMS (Blackboard Learn) using proctoring software, as directed by the instructor. Respondus LockDown Browser is made available by TCSG to use for proctoring assessments in Blackboard. Professional development and support using this technology is provided to faculty through the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Instructors will provide information in the course addendum identifying the mandatory proctored learning activity. Instructors will provide information to the class about the date, time and location in a timely manner. Please reference the Proctor Policy and Procedure for Distance Education Courses for more detailed information.

Safety, Security, and Emergency Procedures

Faculty members have the responsibility to familiarize themselves with the safety plan as it pertains not only to general campus safety, but classroom safety in particular. In general, faculty are to conscientiously perform their jobs in the classroom or laboratory in a safe manner; follow job safety instructions; and report to their Academic Dean in a timely manner any accidents, injuries, unsafe acts, or unsafe working conditions.

Security officers provide services in the evenings on the Elbert County campus. Off-duty Walton County police officers provide security in the evenings on the Walton County campus. Security officers provide security on the Greene County campus. Any incidents (whether of a safety or security nature) must be submitted electronically via the Intranet >> Departmental Intranet Sites >> Safety and Security>> Electronic Incident Report Form.

It is each faculty member's responsibility to become familiar with ATC's emergency procedures, emergency action plans, fire alarms, exits, fire extinguishers, physical layout of assigned areas, evacuation routes, and the requirements of the Emergency Action Program outlined in the Athens Technical College Safety Manual available on the Intranet Departmental Intranet Sites>Safety & Security-forms/Procedures/Documents>ATC Safety Manual).

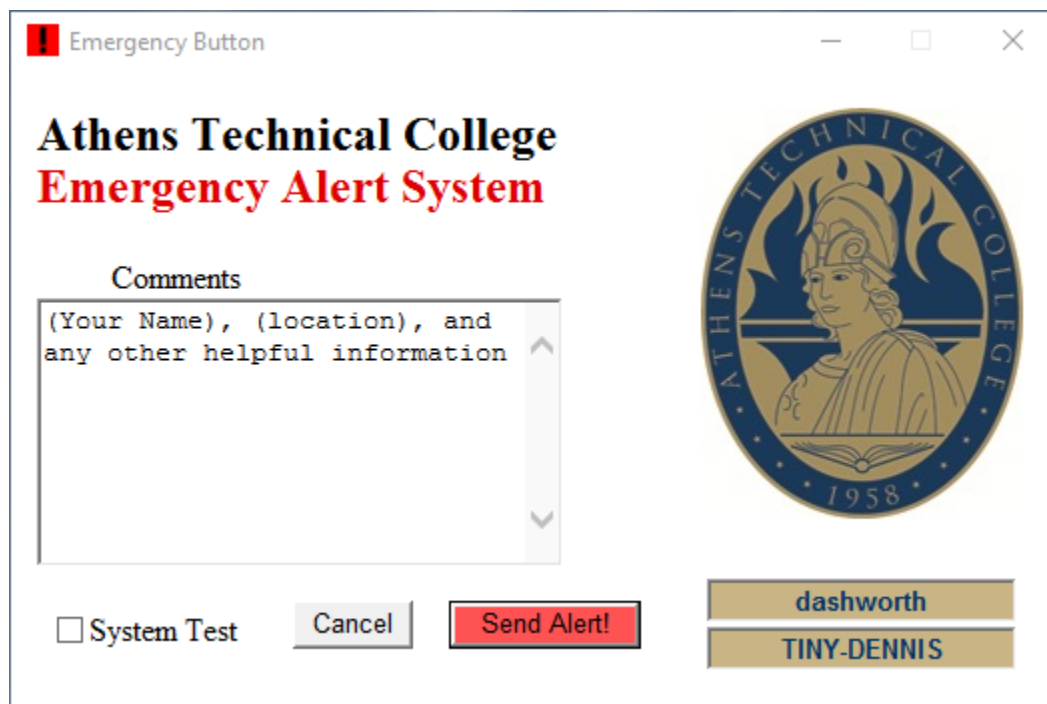
In the event of an emergency, all faculty members must follow the specific emergency procedure as described in the Emergency Action Plan included on the Safety and Security link on the ATC website. Phone usage during an emergency should be limited to official use only. Faculty members are responsible for taking precautions to ensure their safety, to follow all emergency procedures, and provide direction and assistance to students. All faculty members should participate in emergency drills. All classrooms and labs have a posted emergency action plan for fire or hazardous evacuation instruction in case of emergency. The emergency action plan should be reviewed with students on the first day of each semester. Faculty members teaching evening classes should contact the administrator on duty (770.355.5020) or the security office (770.355.5039) in the event of an emergency.

ATC Panic Button

In the event of an emergency, faculty/staff have the option of quickly alerting key campus personnel using an emergency alert system – the “ATC Panic Button.” This system does not replace existing emergency procedures (in the ATC Catalog or emergency action plans); rather it provides an additional method to request help in the event of an emergency. This software, once installed on faculty/staff office computers and classroom instructor computers (not student computers), creates a red icon on the desktop called the “ATC Panic Button.”



To send an emergency alert, double click the “ATC Panic Button” icon on your desktop. A popup box will appear. The software will pull your computer and login name to help identify your location, but it is highly recommended that you enter your name and location in the Comments box. Click the “Send Alert!” button to send the emergency notification to campus administrators or press “Cancel” to cancel the operation.



Rave Alert (Emergency Notification System)

Federal law requires that all colleges and universities implement early alert systems to use when emergency situations arise that threaten the safety and security of the institution, its facilities; and its students, faculty, and staff. The Rave Alert system sends voice messages to land lines and cell phones, text messages to cell phones, and email messages to email accounts. While your college-provided email address and your college-provided telephone number are already registered, you are also strongly urged to register to receive text messages on your cell phone and voice messages on your home and cell phone numbers.

Children and Pets on Campus

Neither faculty nor students are to bring children or pets to class or to leave children or pets unsupervised on campus while attending class. If a student does not follow this policy, you should ask the student to leave your class and to make provisions for his or her child or pet. (Guide/service animals are, of course, permitted on campus.) If the student refuses to comply, contact your program chair, learning community leader, the evening support services coordinator, Academic Dean or the closest administrator. Under no circumstances are you to allow children to stay in your classroom.

Non-Smoking Campus

In an effort to establish a healthier, cleaner educational environment, Athens Technical College is a tobacco-free/smoke-free/vape-free campus. The use of tobacco products in any form is banned from all campuses of Athens Technical College. This ban extends to all outdoor areas including parking lots. Smoking is permitted only inside personal vehicles.

Mandatory Reporters

Because of Georgia's law governing the mandatory reporting of child abuse, staff and volunteers of technical colleges and the TCSG system office who have reasonable cause to believe a child (under the age of 18) has been abused must report or request a report of that abuse to be made to a child welfare

agency. In the absence of such an agency, the report must be made to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Staff members are expected to make the report orally no later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. If requested by the agency or other authority, the oral report must be followed by a written report. Staff members who are required to report child abuse because he or she attends to a child pursuant to their duties at the institution must immediately notify the College President or express designee who is then required to report or cause a report to be made within the 24-hour period.

Because Georgia law provides that individuals mandated to report child abuse may be charged criminally if they fail to report within the 24-hour period, it is recommended that you document the reported child abuse and include the date and time of the report, as well as the name of the individual to whom the report is made.

First Aid

Since Athens Technical College is a nonresidential institution, students and faculty normally secure medical services through their family physicians. The following are recommended courses of action to take after an illness/injury:

In non-critical situations:

- a. Administer first aid to the extent possible.
- b. Notify security by calling the security officer (706-621-9817)
- c. During the evening, notify the evening administrator (706-355-5020).
- d. Complete an incident report. Incident report forms must be submitted electronically via the Intranet. Intranet>>departmental intranet sites>>safety and security>>Electronic Incident Report Form.

In a critical situation:

- a. Call 911 and administer first aid to the extent possible.
- b. Notify security personnel by calling the security officer (706-621-9817) during the day and the evening administrator (706-355-5020) in the evening.
- c. Limit activity in the vicinity of the affected student or staff member.
- d. Complete an incident report. Incident report forms must be submitted electronically via the Intranet. Intranet>>departmental intranet sites>>safety and security>>Electronic Incident Report Form.

First aid kits are available in each department. Instructor should see their Program Chair or Academic Dean for locations of first aid kits and AED units.

Adjunct Faculty Workrooms

There are many locations available for adjunct faculty to work and to have private meetings with students.

Athens Campus

A-Building

- A-200 adjunct faculty workspace with tables/chairs, copier, Scantron machine; close proximity to Dean of Life Sciences division and staff
- A-112, A218, A235—private office spaces with desk, chairs, computer, printer, telephone; available for meetings with students

B-Building

- B-2230—double office/workspaces with desk, chairs, computer, printer, telephone; close proximity to Dean of Business, Industry, and Technology division and staff
- B-1110—scantron machine available

J-Building

- J-303—Center for Teaching and Learning & faculty workspace with computers, printers, copier, and a Scantron machine.

K-Building

- K-515—computers, printer, tables/chairs, copier, Scantron machine, mailboxes

Athens Community Career Academy

- Room 104 – faculty workspace with copier, tables, chairs, Scantron machine
- Room 214 – faculty workspace with copier, table
- Room 113 – office space with desk/chairs, telephone for private meetings with students
- Room 7 – office space with desk/chairs, telephone for private meetings with students

Elbert County Campus

- Room 110 – faculty workspace with tables/chairs, copier, Scantron machine, mailboxes
- Room 312 – private office space with desk, chairs, computer, printer, telephone; available for private meetings

Greene County Campus

- Room 102 – adjunct faculty workspace with tables/chairs, computer, color printer, copier, mailboxes. Doors can be closed to create private space for meeting with students.

Walton County Campus

- A conference room in the administrative suite is also available for private meetings with students

Supplies

Instructional supplies and materials must be ordered using the Team Georgia Marketplace link on the Intranet (Departmental Intranet Sites » Administrative Services>>Miscellaneous Forms). Most office supplies (such as paper and toner) are ordered from Staples at state contract prices, but other catalogs (for various instructional supplies) are also available on the Team Georgia Marketplace. Please see your divisional area for specific purchasing procedures.

Purchasing cards can also be used to make authorized purchases. The State of Georgia Purchasing Card must be used only for state business purposes. Cardholders must attend extensive annual training sessions on the policies and procedures of the State Purchasing Card Program.

Classroom Changes

Faculty members are not authorized to change the room in which a class is scheduled without approval from the division Academic Dean. Room changes must be entered in the Banner system by the Division Administrative Assistant. If class is to meet in another location (i.e., the ATC library, a computer lab, etc.), instructors should post a sign on the classroom door and in Blackboard Learn in case there is an emergency and to redirect students. Instructors are responsible for returning furniture to the original configuration of the classroom. Instructors should erase the boards and have students place trash in receptacles at the end of the class period.

Curriculum Revisions

Requests for changes to an individual course or a program's curriculum generally come from faculty and their program advisory committees. Recommendations for curriculum and/or program change must be circulated to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for consideration by the Curriculum Committee. After committee approval, the Institutional Effectiveness Office will review the proposed change to evaluate compliance for SACSCOC Substantive Change per policy. If needed, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness will submit changes to Local Board of Directors and TCSG Board of Directors for approval.

In addition, state and consortium level IFCCs review the suggestions/recommendations and communicate their recommendations to the appropriate curriculum program specialist at the TCSG central office for a final decision. These proposed changes will also be reviewed by the local Curriculum Committee.

Any resulting changes to course content or program structure must be reflected in the ATC Catalog. Program chairs are responsible to their division Academic Dean and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness for ensuring that the ATC Catalog reflects current, accurate course information.

No Show Reporting

All instructors are required to report whether they have any students who are no shows at the end of the first full week of class. Students who would be considered a no-show:

- Students taking on-campus and blended courses must attend one class session during the first five days of the semester. Otherwise, instructors must report those students as no shows.
- Students taking distance education (online and eCampus) courses must log onto the LMS (Blackboard Learn) within the first five days of the start of the academic term and complete the specified academic assignment as directed by the course instructor. Otherwise, instructors will report students as no shows.
- Students taking self-directed/individualized instruction courses must meet with their instructors during the first five days of the academic term to finalize class schedules. Otherwise, instructors must report those students as no shows.

The Office of Registration and Records will remove from your class any student you submit as a no show. Students removed from classes as a no show will receive a full refund of their tuition and fees. Students who have been submitted on the no show report are not allowed to begin attending classes during the second or subsequent weeks of the academic term. Before submitting a no-show report, instructors must attempt to contact all students that will be included on the report. The attempted contact will be recorded in the no show report.

A no show report must be submitted by all instructors for all classes even if all students have attended class during the first week of the semester. There is an indicator on the no show report stating that there are no no-show students to report.

Directions for Submitting No Shows:

1. Go to www.athenstech.edu and click on Resources.
2. Click on Faculty and Staff.
3. Click on Intranet (faculty/staff only).
4. Enter your user ID and password.
5. Click on Departmental Intranet Sites.
6. Click on Registration and Records.
7. Under Faculty, click on No Show Reporting Page.

8. Enter Term and Course CRN.
9. Enter no-shows for your roster by clicking yes or no to confirm they attended or not.
10. If you check no, a communication box will display a method of contact (required) and comments (optional). Hit close to save information.
11. Once yes or no has been checked for all students, click submit no shows.
12. If all students have attended, check mark all attended and click submit no shows.

If you need to make a correction, please resubmit your no-shows using the instructions above. If you submitted a student in error, please contact registration@athenstech.edu. If a student would like to be added back to the course, they will need to complete the add form and receive your signature.

Intervention for Students on Probation

The College provides support for enrolled students who are on academic probation. At the beginning of each term, an Academic Advisement Coordinator corresponds with enrolled probation students to remind them of their academic obligations while on probation, the consequences of failing to meet those obligations, and the resources available at ATC to support their success. A Coordinator also sends faculty the list of academic probation students, sorted by instructor. Instructors are asked to review the list and provide feedback on students who are showing “high-risk” characteristics such as low averages, poor attendance, missed assignments/tests, etc. so that appropriate interventions can be put in place.

Grading

The grading scale is detailed in the ATC Catalog. All faculty members are obligated to follow this scale when assigning grades to reflect a given student’s performance in the classroom.

Notification of grades via email outside of Athens Technical College is in violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). The public posting of grades by the student’s name, student number, or social security number without the student’s written permission is also a violation of FERPA. This includes the posting of grades to a class/institutional website and applies to any public posting of grades in hallways and in departmental offices for all students including those taking online courses.

Grade Books

Each faculty member must maintain a grade book for all classes. The gradebook must be maintained electronically using Blackboard Learn Grade Center. Grades should be posted promptly to allow students to keep up with their progress in the course. The gradebook should reflect a record of the student’s course progress as set out in the course syllabus, including the final grade achieved.

Change of Grade

If it becomes necessary to change a grade after it has been submitted to the Office of Registration and Records (removal of an incomplete or correction of a factual error, for example), instructors must obtain copies of the Change of Grade Form from the ATC Intranet under the Registration and Records menu. Submit the completed form to the Office of Registration and Records, and provide a copy to your Program Chair or Academic Dean.

Withdrawal from a Class

- ***Withdrawing from classes before 61% of the semester***
Students may withdraw from classes via their Banner Student Web accounts through 61% of the semester. Please review your rosters periodically to maintain an updated list of students currently

enrolled in your class. Please note that students wishing to withdraw from every class on their schedule will need to contact the Office of Registration and Records for assistance.

Dropping or withdrawing from a class affects financial aid status. Please suggest to your students that they contact the Financial Aid Office at (706) 355-5009 *prior to* dropping or withdrawing from a class.

- ***Withdrawing from classes after 61% of the semester***

In order to withdraw from classes after 61% of the semester, students must come to the Office of Registration and Records and obtain a withdrawal form. Students must take the withdrawal form to their instructors to obtain their signatures and a grade of WP (withdrawal passing) or WF (withdrawal failing). The form must then be returned before the last day of class to the Office of Registration and Records.

- To withdraw from **online classes** after **61% of the semester**, students must email their instructors through their ATC email to notify instructors that they want to withdraw. Instructors will assign grades of either WP or WF and notify the student of the assigned grade by replying to the student's email and forwarding the students' original emails requesting the withdrawal and a grade of WP or WF to registration@athenstech.edu. EMAILS from faculty concerning withdrawals MUST be sent from faculty members' Athens Technical College email accounts.

- Note: Students who are taking both face-to-face and online courses must contact the Office of Registration and Records and complete a withdrawal form. Dropping or withdrawing from a class affects financial aid status. Please suggest to your students that they contact the Financial Aid Office at (706) 355-5009 *prior to* dropping or withdrawing from a class. Withdrawal forms/emails will not be accepted by the Office of Registration and Records after designated deadlines.

Final Grade Reporting

Steps to Enter Final Grades from Blackboard

1. Access the course in Blackboard
2. Open Course Tools from the left-side menu
3. Select ILP Integration
4. Select Final Grades from top menu
5. Select the column to populate
6. Select Final Grade
7. Grades will auto-populate in the Final Grade column
8. Select Submit Grades
9. Check BannerWeb to ensure the grades submitted
10. From our Website, choose Resources > Faculty & Staff
11. Select *BannerWeb/Degree Works* in the left-side menu
12. Click *Faculty Services > Final Grades*
13. Select the current term and enter the course CRN

If an error occurs, or the grades do not appear in BannerWeb, submit a CTL Support Request for further assistance.

The deadline for submitting grades is listed on the Academic Calendar, and the deadline will be emailed to faculty by the Office of Registration and Records. It is imperative that final grades be submitted via Blackboard Grade Push before the deadline. If a grade of F is entered, faculty must also enter the *last date*

of academic activity (LDA). There are two recommended methods to determine the last date of academic activity.

- Attendance if taken in an in-person class
- The submission date of the last graded activity documented in the Blackboard Grade Center.

Grades of W, WP, and WF must be initiated by the student through the Office of Registration and Records. These grades cannot be entered into Banner Gradebook at the end of the term. It is the student's responsibility to complete withdrawal forms with the Office of Registration and Records. Grades of W, WP, and WF will appear on the final grade roster if students have followed proper procedures for withdrawals. Students who stop attending classes without formally withdrawing from the course are to be assigned "0" for all of the work missed and the final average should be calculated according to the percentages on the course syllabus.

Grades of incomplete (I) must be submitted to the Academic Dean for approval before being forwarded to the Registrar's office. All incomplete grades must be resolved before the end of the following semester. Refer to the ATC Catalog for more information.

Course Syllabus and Textbook

Each course specified in the ATC Catalog will have a course syllabus. The course syllabus must have the following sections: course description, course competencies, student learning outcomes, required textbook(s) and materials, grading scale, other relevant policies, and course schedule.

Students will be given the course syllabus for every class in which they are enrolled, and faculty will provide explanation of the syllabus on the first day of class. It is also appropriate for faculty members to explain safety and emergency action/evacuation procedures pertaining to the classroom or laboratory.

Student Right to Grade Appeal

A student who wishes to contest a final course grade must first institute an informal appeal request through the instructor who awarded the grade or made the decision. A student must make every effort to resolve the appeal through initially contacting the instructor by phone, email, or personal visit before filing a formal appeal.

If consultation with the instructor does not resolve the appeal, the student may appeal to the Academic Dean of the division in which the course was taught by filing a written request for review. (Forms for the appeal may be requested from the Office of Academic Affairs, the Academic Dean, or downloaded from the college website.) The written appeal must state the class in which the grade was received, corresponding semester, grade received, the instructor of the class, response from corresponding with the instructor, the reason for the appeal, the action requested based on the appeal, and student contact information. This request must be filed with the Academic Dean no later than the midpoint of the following semester.

The Academic Dean will respond to the student within two weeks of receiving the written request. If the student is not satisfied with the Dean's decision, the student may appeal in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs within two weeks of receiving the Dean's decision. The Vice President will respond to the student's request within 10 working days. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be final. The College assures that a student will not face retaliation for filing a grade appeal.

The above appeal procedures do not apply to Student Code of Conduct alleged offenses or equity issues (i.e. race, age, national origin, or gender discrimination.) See the Non-Discrimination Policy and

Grievance Procedure section in the ATC Catalog for an explanation of other grievance procedures or the Student Handbook for Code of Conduct procedures.

Your role in this process is to follow the master course syllabus, keep detailed coursework records, keep students apprised of grades throughout the term so that there are no surprises, maintain your class gradebook, and treat all students equally and fairly. If you are teaching a blended, eCampus, or online class, you should make sure that all information in the Blackboard course is accurate and up to date.

Field Trips

Participation in field trip activities is optional. Students who cannot or choose not to participate in a field trip must be given the option of completing an alternative, supervised activity in lieu of the field trip. Students are responsible for informing instructors whose classes they may miss of their participation in a field trip. Students are to schedule makeup work at the discretion of, and at the convenience of, the affected instructor.

College vehicles may be used for officially sanctioned field trips, assuming availability of the vehicle. Vans are also available through the Cashier's Office but should only be requested once the trip has been approved. Only previously approved employees of the College may drive college vehicles. Instructors and advisors are discouraged from providing transportation for students in their personal vehicles (or organizing carpools), though students may choose to provide their own transportation to the field trip site.

Student field trip participants must be accompanied by an instructor, organization advisor, or other official representative of the College during any field trip activities. All field trips, whether academic (conducted as a complement to classroom instruction) or non-academic (co-curricular activity conducted under the auspices of a sanctioned college organization), require completion of a request and prior approval.

Academic Honesty Policy

The Academic Honesty Policy is detailed in the ATC Catalog. As is noted in the policy, instructors have the primary responsibility of ensuring that academic honesty is maintained in the courses they teach. Students share this responsibility by refraining from acts of academic dishonesty and by notifying instructors of observed or known incidents of academic dishonesty committed by others. Students who fail to report incidents of academic dishonesty are subject to being charged with violating the policy.

Students who are found, after due process as described below is accorded, to have violated the Academic Honesty Policy for the first time will receive a grade of zero for all or part of the assignment and will be placed on disciplinary probation for the remainder of their tenure as students at Athens Technical College. Students who are found to have violated the policy a second time may be permanently dismissed from the college, and the dismissal will be noted on transcripts and all other permanent academic records. The full text of the Academic Honesty Policy, along with the Violation of Academic Honesty Policy notification form, is available on the College Intranet site. (Departmental Intranet Sites>>Academic Honesty).

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA was written specifically for students and guarantees them the right to inspect and review their education records, the right to seek to amend education records, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from those education records.

In accordance with FERPA, Athens Technical College accords all rights under the law to students who are declared independent. The Office of Registration and Records maintains and safeguards student academic records. Students 18 years of age and older are considered adults. Instructors are NOT to discuss a student's grades, performance, or class attendance with a third party, including parents, spouses, and other family members, without the written permission of the student. See the ATC website for further details (Current Students>Registration and Records).

Bookstore

Athens Technical College contracts with Follett Higher Education Group to provide textbooks, school and lab supplies, and other miscellaneous items for students. The hours of operation are posted at the bookstore entrance. Hours of operation are extended at the beginning of each semester for the convenience of students and the faculty.

It is the responsibility of program chairs to ensure that book orders are appropriately filed with the bookstore manager well in advance of the upcoming semester. Ordering information includes the name of the textbook, its current edition, the ISBN number, and the number of copies needed.

Instructors experiencing problems with the bookstore must work with the bookstore personnel to resolve issues. If issues are not handled satisfactorily, matters should be referred to the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

Students have several options for purchasing textbooks. The bookstore offers new and used textbooks as well as digital format textbooks through cafescribe.com. Using the digital format, students can network and share ideas and notes with students using the same course materials at other colleges. Additionally, students may order textbooks online from Follett via the Bookstore webpage on the ATC website. Textbook rental is also an option at the campus bookstore.

Student Conduct, Relations, and Rights

Instructors are to ensure student compliance with the conduct code and to be familiar with the section on "Student Code of Conduct" in the ATC Catalog. Rules and policies such as the following are to be enforced at all times in a friendly, fair, yet firm manner.

- Student Code of Conduct
- Weapons
- Drug-Free Campus Policy
- Children and Pets on Campus
- Use of Personal Electronic Devices
- Use of Tobacco Products
- Disability Services
- Confidentiality of Student Records
- Academic Honesty Policy

Instructors should resolve their own discipline problems whenever possible, realizing that the inability to do so will adversely affect their position of leadership in the classroom or lab. Any serious disciplinary problems should be brought to the attention of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the division Academic Dean. Only in cases where the student's presence represents a disruption to the learning process or immediate danger to others will an instructor order a student out of class; however, no instructor is to use physical force in removing a student from a classroom or lab. If a student refuses to leave the class or lab when ordered, the President, Vice President for Student Affairs, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Academic Dean is to be notified immediately. Any student ordered out should not be

allowed back in class until a conference has been held with the Vice President for Student Affairs and/or the President.

Attendance

Athens Technical College strongly encourages regular and punctual class attendance. Research shows a strong correlation between class attendance and grades earned. Absences prevent students from receiving full course benefits, disrupt orderly course progress, and diminish the quality of group interaction in class. The College considers both tardiness and early departure from class as forms of absenteeism. Students who stop attending class, but do not formally withdraw, may receive grades of F and face financial aid repercussions in future semesters.

The student is responsible for knowing the course attendance requirements and adhering to them. Students anticipating an absence or tardiness should contact the instructor and provide notification as soon as possible. Students absent from class for any reason are still responsible for all work missed. Final grades may be affected by excessive absence and tardiness. Failure to attend class the first week may result in students being reported as no-shows and dropped from the course.

Athens Technical College is a non-attendance taking institution. However, instructors may develop reasonable attendance requirements appropriate to the type, level, delivery method, and frequency of class meetings for their courses in accordance with the rules of respective licensure boards and/or accrediting agencies. Instructors must communicate the requirements to students clearly via their syllabi and apply the requirements fairly and consistently to all enrolled students. Instructors are responsible for determining whether work missed may be made up or rescheduled; if any make-up work is allowed, it is scheduled at the discretion of instructors. Policies for make-up work are detailed in the course syllabus. The syllabus should clearly describe the consequences of missed classes.

In the event of class cancellation or college closure due to severe weather or other emergencies, students are expected to continue participating in learning activities via Blackboard. Instructors will provide information on their continuation of instruction plans in their syllabus.

Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) students and students in programs sponsored by the Department of Labor will submit an Attendance/Travel Reimbursement form for the instructor's signature verifying attendance in class or college biweekly. Please sign forms as appropriate.

Work Ethics

To fulfill the responsibility to teach essential workplace ethics, Athens Technical College provides students instruction in, and evaluates students on, the following ten work ethics traits: attendance, character, teamwork, appearance, attitude, productivity, organizational skills, communication, cooperation, and respect. To best equip students for successful workplace experiences in their chosen profession, instruction and evaluation takes place in the context of their program of study.

In many programs of study, the ten work ethics traits are introduced as components of preliminary courses whose purpose is to provide students with foundational knowledge of the skills, behaviors and attitudes that lead to successful careers in their chosen field. These traits are reinforced throughout the program of study during individual course assignments, collaborative work, laboratory and field exercises, and are consistently modeled by program faculty. The assessment of students' work ethics takes place throughout each program of study and in a variety of contexts during regular classroom assignments, interim and final examinations, as well as during practicum, intern- and externship experiences.

Advisement and Registration

Student advisement and registration are the responsibility of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Some initial advising is carried out by student affairs staff members; responsibility is then delegated to program chairs/faculty members as described below:

- Associate degree and diploma level students, both provisional and regularly admitted, are advised by faculty members in their selected program of study.
- Developmentally accepted associate degree and diploma students are advised through the general education division for advisement. Technical Specialist TCC students are also advised by general education faculty.
- Undeclared major (special admitted) students are advised by the advisement office in student affairs.
- Dual enrollment students are advised by the High School Coordinator.

Each Program Chair is responsible for naming individual advisors to students. Faculty advisors should plan to meet with advisees on (at minimum) a semester basis to plan the next semester's schedule. The role of the advisor is to assist students in making sound decisions regarding their programs of study. The advisor may offer opinions and suggestions, but the student must accept responsibility for final decisions. It is therefore vital that the advisor provides sufficient relevant information and, to the extent possible, understands their advisees' goals and lifestyles to be able to offer appropriate guidance. During the advisement process, the need for referral to other offices or agencies for personal, financial, or other types of counseling services may become apparent. Contact the Advisement Office in Student Affairs for further assistance in such instances.

Academic Support

Athens Technical College has an Academic Support Center to assist students in achieving their maximum level of performance in all subjects offered by the college. Peer tutors are available during various hours to assist students individually or in a small group setting. In addition, the center offers content specific reference materials. Walk-ins are welcomed or appointments can be made at the Academic Support Center's webpage. Study groups and review sessions are held on various subjects. When it becomes evident that a student could benefit from supplemental instruction outside the classroom, faculty should encourage students to visit the center's support services. Faculty are also welcome to visit the Athens Center at any time to speak with Jessica Felts, Director of Student Support Services, (706-583-2893 jfelts@athenstech.edu). The Academic Support Center is located in F-131 on the Athens Campus.

The Academic Support at other campus locations is available remotely and by appointment. Please contact the Academic Support Center to assist with support on off-campus locations.

Students with Disabilities

Instructors are asked to note that each master syllabus for any course taught at Athens Technical College contains a statement on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It specifically addresses our intent to provide equal opportunities for education to all students. To ensure that our students are fully aware of the assistance available to them through the Office of Disability Services, we respectfully request that instructors read the ADA section of their syllabus aloud to each class so that students with disabilities will know how to apply for help.

Any student with a documented disability is eligible to receive reasonable academic adjustments and auxiliary aids in the classroom and/or for testing at Athens Technical College, as long as appropriate documentation of the disability has been submitted to the Disability Services Office in a timely manner. Students can access the application packet on our website through Disability Services.

By definition, a disability that qualifies a student for accommodations in college is a physical, psychological, or cognitive impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. As a post-secondary institution, Athens Technical College cannot use IEPs or 504 Plans from high school to support the provision of academic adjustments.

Some illnesses may meet the definition of a disability; however, only if the illness is determined to be a disability should accommodations be made. As an instructor, you are not expected to determine and should not try to determine whether an illness is a disability. If a student is requesting accommodations (alternate assignments, make-up work, etc.) due to an illness, refer the student to *Disability Services* to determine whether accommodations should be allowed and if so, what those accommodations should be. Once a student has presented documentation to the Disability Services Office in Student Support Services and requested assistance with academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, the Coordinator of Disability Services will review that documentation to confirm that it meets the required guidelines. The Coordinator will then furnish that student with an electronic or hard copy of an *Accommodations Request Form* which the student should present to each instructor immediately after requesting services for the current academic term.

The Accommodations Request will outline specific academic adjustments or auxiliary aids which the student is eligible to receive. Each instructor is required to sign and return to the Coordinator of Disability Services an attached statement, indicating that the Accommodations Request has been received and understood. This will confirm that the instructor will be providing the student with the services described in the request.

The Office of Disability Services will gladly assist any faculty member in providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of each instructor to ensure that the requested academic adjustments and auxiliary aids are being offered in an appropriate manner to any student presenting a formal Accommodations Request. If a student does not provide a formal request but instead discloses information about a disability to you, please instruct that student to contact the Disability Services Coordinator at 706-355-5010 for assistance. Please do not offer academic adjustments to a student without confirmation from the Office of Disability Services that those adjustments are warranted.

The Student Support Services Office does not expect faculty to change course guidelines or standards for any student, regardless of their disability status. The purpose of academic adjustments and auxiliary aids is to ensure equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to meet with faculty as soon as possible to discuss specific needs and the provision of listed accommodations in a manner appropriate to your classroom setting.

Students approved for testing accommodations may utilize the testing center in Disability Services. However, due to an increase in the number of students served and limited resources available, we strongly encourage students and instructors to arrange testing accommodations within the classroom whenever possible. If you choose to have an eligible student test with the Disability Services Office, the student must notify Disability Services 48 hours in advance to schedule the test, and the Coordinator of Disability Services must receive the test from you at least 24 hours in advance of your scheduled test date. Detailed instructions are included in the Accommodations Request form that will be presented to you by your student.

If you would like further assistance or have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Coordinator of Disability Services at 706-355-5006 or the Director of Student Support Services at 706-355-5081. Both are located in K-614 on the Athens Campus.

Faculty Employment

Faculty Qualifications

It is the responsibility of Athens Technical College to justify and document the qualifications of the faculty to the accrediting agency.

In general, full-time faculty members teaching in associate degree programs must possess at least a master's degree in the field or a master's degree in a related field and at least 18 graduate semester hours (30 graduate quarter hours) in the field in which they are teaching. The same requirements hold true for adjunct faculty.

Members of the faculty who teach in diploma-level programs must possess as a minimum requirement a credential at or above the level at which they teach, plus have relevant work experience (usually at least two years in the field). The requirements are the same for full-time or adjunct faculty.

Athens Technical College also accepts faculty based on *equivalency* of academic credentials, with *equivalency* defined as preparation at least equal to those who possess the minimum qualifications defined for respective courses being taught in the discipline. This category includes those whose professional experience has provided them with knowledge that is equivalent to that gained from a formal course of study. In exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the teaching discipline may be presented in lieu of formal academic preparation for faculty members teaching both transfer and non-transfer courses.

As a condition of employment, faculty are required to provide the Office of Human Resources with official copies of transcripts from all educational institutions attended, as well as copies of certificates, licenses, or other credentials that qualify the individual for employment. *Official* transcripts are issued from the college or university directly to the ATC Office of Human Resources. It is also the responsibility of faculty to maintain the currency of those documents in the Office of Human Resources.

Applicants who have earned degrees outside of the U.S. and its territories must have their academic degrees validated as equivalent to the baccalaureate or master's degree conferred by a regionally accredited college or university in the United States.

Selection and Hiring

Full-time faculty members are selected according to the Recruiting and Hiring procedures set forth in the TCSG Policy Manual. A list of qualifications is developed, and a position announcement is prepared and published as appropriate. Applicants must complete and submit an online application to initiate the hiring process. Requirements include the submission of a resume, copies of official transcripts from higher educational institutions attended, letters of recommendation (or at minimum, names/addresses/phone numbers of references), and verification of previous employment.

A committee reviews the applications received and determines who is eligible for an interview by virtue of their qualifications. Candidates may be asked to do a teaching demonstration and/or to demonstrate their proficiency in oral and written communication in the language in which the course(s) is being taught. The committee interviews selected applicants and rates them on their responses. The committee then ranks the applicants and sends its recommendation(s) to the President or her designee who makes the final decision and extends an offer of employment.

A need for adjunct faculty members is created when course enrollment exceeds expectations or if course competencies are outside the realm of expertise of full-time faculty. Hiring is often required on short

notice; therefore, we maintain a pool of qualified applicants. If hiring needs cannot be met through the pool of applicants, additional applications are sought from the local community. A position announcement may be placed on the web site, in the local newspaper, or via other recruiting websites.

Academic Rank and Tenure

Faculty members are not assigned rank for the instructional positions they hold. The title assigned to all faculty members is "Instructor," unless a faculty member also holds an administrative position or has been named Academic Dean or Program Chair.

According to State Board policy, the concept of tenure does not apply except to those faculty members who were employed and tenured at the time of conversion to state governance. All employees are entitled to due process in personnel matters.

Drug-Free Workplace

To comply with the provisions of the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226), we distribute to each employee upon hiring and to each student upon admission a statement that outlines the health risks, legal problems, and sanctions associated with drug use and alcohol abuse. Our student conduct code explicitly prohibits the possession, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs by students or student groups (see ATC Catalog). As a condition of employment, all employees agree to abide by the terms of the TCSG Drug Free Workplace Policy in the TCSG Policy Manual.

Professional Growth and Development

All employees are encouraged to develop and improve their skills and knowledge through approved professional development activities. In order to maintain and improve faculty effectiveness, full-time faculty members are required to complete a minimum of 40 professional development hours before the annual performance evaluation each year. Adjunct faculty are required to only complete the annual training classes assigned by our HR Department and attend the annual college-wide meeting for adjunct instructors. Continued employment for all employees is contingent in part upon the successful completion of appropriate professional development activities.

The College schedules periodic on-campus workshops and seminars and online offerings to provide training and professional growth opportunities for faculty and staff. While most offerings are optional, mandatory annual training is assigned by our HR Department each year. Most activities are planned around regular College events and instructional times.

Any activity that improves the job-related skills, knowledge, and performance of an employee and will be beneficial to the College can be considered professional development. Always check with your academic dean or program chairperson to ensure the activity will count toward the minimum required hours before participation. Some activities that count toward professional development include:

- College-wide meetings
- Division and program meetings
- Peer group and committee meetings
- The required annual training classes assigned by Human Resources
- College offered professional development sessions
- State, local, or industry workshops and seminars pertaining to your job responsibilities
- Conferences
- Professional readings and research
- Online programs
- College courses pertaining to your job responsibilities

- Other activities as approved by the academic dean or program chairperson

The Faculty Development site on the Intranet (Faculty/Staff Development) includes the faculty development policy and a list of scheduled on-campus workshops and seminars. Faculty are encouraged to register online for each session they plan to attend so that attendance will appear in their faculty development history. Unless specific activities are prescribed by their supervisor/evaluator for purposes of remediation of a defined deficiency, faculty members may choose from activities listed on the site or may select other activities from which they would benefit (such as seminars, college coursework, or independent projects agreed to by the Dean). The Intranet Faculty/Staff Development site contains an Add Your Own feature which allows you to document individualized activities. When using this feature, you must complete all blanks so that details of the activity will appear in your faculty development history.

Program chairs will identify program level professional development needs, such as remaining current with program related technology and theory and determine how to best meet those needs (attending conferences, receiving training, reading articles, etc.). In addition, participation in professional organizations enables faculty members to stay informed of trends and developments in their field of expertise. Instructors are therefore encouraged to participate in professional organizations.

Professional/Travel - With the approval of the Academic Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, faculty members may take leave to attend, for example, in-service activities, conventions, or meetings of professional organizations. Travel forms can be found on the [Intranet](#) (Departmental Intranet Sites>>Administrative Services>>Travel Forms). A Request for Authority to Travel form must be completed and submitted for approval before the activity takes place. No annual leave or personal leave will be charged for such an approved absence. Out-of-state travel requires prior approval by the President which must be documented on the Out-of-State Request to Travel form. Upon completion of the approved travel, faculty members must submit a travel expense statement to their Academic Dean to be reimbursed for any travel-related expenses that received prior approval. Travel expenses must be claimed in accordance with the published Statewide Travel Regulations.

Faculty Evaluation

Formal annual evaluation of full-time faculty performance is conducted each spring by Academic Deans. The components of the yearly evaluation typically include the following:

1. determination of successful completion of any required, recommended, or suggested faculty development activities;
2. an annual performance evaluation;
3. a mid-year performance evaluation;
4. evaluations by students;
5. classroom observations;
6. input from others (faculty members or administrators) as necessary or appropriate

If needs are identified during the evaluation process, full-time faculty may be assigned professional development requirements to complete. If no needs are identified, professional development may not be prescribed, but faculty members are still expected to participate and to complete 40 hours of activities prior to the next annual evaluation.

Adjunct faculty are evaluated by Academic Deans or Program Chairs based on student evaluations, classroom observations, and input from the supervising faculty member, other experienced faculty members, or administrators as necessary or appropriate. Satisfactory evaluation and observation results enable adjunct faculty to be eligible for future employment as courses become available to teach.

Positive Discipline

The Technical College System of Georgia has adopted the Positive Discipline method as the formal disciplinary process in the technical colleges. Positive Discipline encourages communication, provides for recognition of good performance, and is not punitive in nature. It provides a way of solving employee performance and conduct issues by focusing on an adult-to-adult relationship and by requiring employees to take responsibility for their own behavior. The goal of positive discipline is commitment, and it adheres to the following steps:

Informal Discipline

- Positive contacts (recognition)
- Performance Improvement Discussions (coaching)

Formal Discipline*

- Reminder 1
- Reminder 2
- Decision Making Leave (This is a one-day disciplinary suspension with pay, and it is the final step in Positive Discipline. On the decision day, an employee must decide to a) **SOLVE** the immediate problem and **COMMIT** to maintaining acceptable performance standards or b) **RESIGN** and find more satisfying work elsewhere.
- Termination

* These steps are followed progressively and may be verbal or written in nature and are undertaken and completed with the collaboration of Human Resources.

Pandemic Response Plan

To protect the life, health, and safety of employees and students, the College has an Infectious Disease Pandemic Response Plan. In the event of a pandemic, the plan provides guidance to the President and Senior Leadership Team. Response plans for each campus can be found on the College's Intranet>>Departmental Intranet Sites>>Safety and Security- forms/Procedures/Documents>>Infectious Disease Pandemic Response Plan.

Faculty Benefits

The Office of Human Resources can provide full details and information regarding faculty employment at Athens Technical College. The below section is just a portion of essential components to state employment. Please consult with HR for full documentation.

Remuneration

Full-time faculty members are paid on the last working day of the month. Adjunct faculty members are paid on a per course basis on the last working day of the month. All new employees must complete the [Direct Deposit Form](#).

Holidays, Leave, and Travel

Full-time faculty and staff are awarded Holidays and non-workdays with pay when so proclaimed by the Governor. The dates of observance of the twelve state-approved holidays are included in the annual calendar, published on the web and in the ATC Catalog.

All full-time faculty members earn and may claim annual and sick leave in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Personnel Board, as stated in the Leave section of the TCSG Policy Manual. All leave accrues as of the last day of a given month and may not be taken before it is accrued. Faculty members should submit requests using the Electronic Leave Management System to their respective Academic Dean for approval in advance. Annual leave may be taken only at times that do not conflict with classes being taught, unless special permission is given by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. When requesting leave between terms, faculty should refer to the Academic Calendar which specifies both required workdays and annual leave eligible workdays.

Faculty may accrue sick leave for absence due to personal illness or disability; absence necessitated by exposure to contagious disease if that exposure would endanger the health of others; absence for dental or medical care; and absence due to illness, accident, or death in the immediate family.

The maximum number of hours of annual leave that may accrue is 360. The maximum number of hours of sick leave that may accrue is 720; however, any forfeited sick or annual leave may be restored in cases of illness or disability. Forfeited and unused sick leave may be credited toward retirement in TRS; employees are paid for unused annual leave. Forfeited and unused sick and annual leave may be credited toward retirement in ERS.

Once each year, faculty and staff members who have accrued 120 hours or more of sick leave by November 30 may convert 24 hours of sick leave in excess of 120 hours to personal leave. Personal leave must be used in the following year or forfeited. The use of personal leave must be approved in the same manner as annual leave.

Descriptions of the following miscellaneous leave types can be found in the TCSG Policy Manual:

- Court Leave
- Disaster Volunteer Leave
- Grievance Preparation Time
- Leave for Blood Donation
- Leave of Absence for Kidney Donation
- Voting Time
- Administrative Leave

Dual Employment

Anyone who is employed elsewhere must make special arrangements to Athens Technical College. Please direct any questions to your supervising Dean or the Director of Human Resources.

Status as Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Exempt Employees

Faculty members are exempt from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and are not entitled to compensation for hours worked over 40 during any regular workweek.

Retirement Options

All full-time employees participate in one of the state retirement programs--Teachers Retirement System (TRS) or Employees' Retirement System (ERS) for full-time faculty, and the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan for adjunct faculty. Full-time faculty members must commit to either TRS or ERS when employed; once a plan is selected, no changes may be made. Faculty members are also subject to a Social Security deduction from their payroll check, but only for Medicare/Medicaid (currently 1.45 percent of gross pay). Contact the office of administrative services for additional information. Information pertaining to retirement options can be found at Human Resources.

Family Medical Leave Act

Under federal law, employees are entitled up to 12-weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for certain family and medical reasons, and up to 26-weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to care for a family member of the armed services. Employees are eligible for FMLA leave if they have worked for a covered employer for one (1) year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees within 75 miles.

Unpaid leave must be granted for any of the following reasons:

- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care; or
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of the employee's job; or
- To use for any "qualifying exigency" arising out of the fact that a National Guard or Reserves member is on federal active duty or called to federal active duty in support of a contingency operation; or
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, parent, or "next of kin" with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty on active duty.

Military Family Leave: Eligible employees are entitled up to 26 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty. A covered service member is defined as an employee's spouse, son or daughter, parent, or "next of kin" on federal active duty in the Regular Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves.

Qualifying Exigency: Eligible employees are entitled to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to use for any "qualifying exigency" when a National Guard or Reserves member is called to federal active duty. A qualifying exigency is defined as (a) short-notice deployment; (b) military events and related activities; (c) childcare and school activities; (d) financial and legal arrangements; (e) counseling; (f) rest and recuperation; (g) post-deployment activities; and (h) additional activities not encompassed in the other categories but agreed to by the employer and employee.

Advance Notice and Certification: The employee may be required to provide advance notice and medical certification. Leave may be denied if all requirements are not met by the employee. The

employee must provide 30 days advance notice or soon as possible when a leave is “foreseeable.” If a 30-day advance notice is not provided, the delay may result in time not counted towards FMLA leave. Also, Athens Technical College may require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition and may require a second or third opinion (at ATC’s expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work. Contact Human Resources to request leave information.

Job Benefits and Protection: For the duration of the FMLA leave, the employee’s health coverage under any group health plan will be maintained as long as the employee contributions are being made. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee’s leave.

Unpaid Leave: FMLA leave shall be unpaid except where an employee chooses to use available annual or sick leave and/or short-term disability benefits, which shall be included in the FMLA leave period.

Length of Leave: Eligible employees may take up to twelve (12) weeks of FMLA leave in a twelve (12) month period. Athens Technical College measures the twelve (12) weeks using a “rolling” twelve months measured backwards from the date you use any leave under FMLA.

Return from Leave: When an employee has been cleared by his/her physician to return to work from medical leave, he/she must notify Human Resources within one (1) working day. Additionally, a fitness for duty certification must be provided prior to your return to work.