



Going Back to School

What do I need to know?

GETTING STARTED



Getting Started

- **Personal Assessment: Define Your Educational Goals.**
 - Why do you want to go back to school?
Is your goal to change careers, grow professionally, or finish a degree program started years ago?



Getting Started

- **Once you've decided what your goals are, then ask yourself what kind of degree plan is right for me?**
 - Full time day
 - Part-time evenings
 - Traditional classroom
 - Online
 - Mix of traditional classroom and online

Getting Started

- **What degree program best suits my interests and abilities?**
 - Take a personal assessment
 - Look at job trends in the area as well as nationally
 - What are my natural strengths, what are my weaknesses?

Career Options and Trends

Occupational Outlook Handbook and Career Trends

- <http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>
- www.careervoyages.gov



2006 Occupational Wage Estimates - Greenville

- Select Areas with Mean Annual Wage and Number Employed

– Management	\$80,530	14,100
– Computer	\$60,320	5,800
– Community & Social Service	\$34,050	2,590
– Education	\$38,610	15,740
– Healthcare	\$58,950	13,740

2006-2016 Occupational Growth Projections -- Greenville

- Computer & math science – 22%
- Healthcare practitioners – 26%
- Healthcare support – 29%
- Education, training & library – 18%
- Management – 16%
- Sales – 18%
- Construction & extraction – 23%
- Farming, fishing & forestry – 23%



Getting Started

- **What institution is the best fit for me?**
 - Structure of the academic program
 - Accessibility of course offerings
 - Length of time needed to complete the program
 - Transfer credits and policies
 - Tuition Costs

Getting Started

- **Complete any Testing and Admissions Requirements**
 - Once you have identified the schools offering programs of interest, visit their web site or contact the admissions office for a course catalog and admissions application.



Getting Started

- **Requesting Transcripts**

- If you've taken classes at other colleges, contact their registrar's office to find out how to request transcripts that should accompany your application for admission.

- **Complete Financial Aid Applications**

- Request any financial aid applications from the financial aid office.
- Fill out the FASFA (*Free Application for Federal Student Aid*) at www.fasfa.org



Types of Financial Aid

- Grants
- Scholarships
- VA Benefits
- Loans
- Employment
- Tuition Assistance Programs
- Employer Tuition Reimbursement

Financial Aid – General Requirements for All Students

- Must demonstrate financial need
- Be enrolled in eligible program of study
- HS diploma, GED, or Ability to Benefit test
- US citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Be registered with Selective Service (male)
- Not in default on a Title IV Loan
- Not owe repayment to Title IV Program
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Provide valid SSN



Getting Admitted

- Complete and submit the application form (may be online)
- Request and submit transcripts
- Request and submit letters of support
- Secure financial aid
- Complete any required tests
- Participate in interview (if required)
- Receive and accept admission



AFTER ADMISSION



Now What?

- Meet with adviser to determine plan of study
- Register for courses (may be online)
- Pay fees (bill may be online)
- Buy textbooks (bookstore or online)
- Attend classes

Strategies for Success

- Buy the textbooks and do the readings
- Attend class and participate in discussions
- Get to know your classmates and teachers
- Become familiar with the library and other resources (physical and virtual)
- Allocate time daily/weekly for studying & stay current with assignments
- Celebrate the successes and learn from the failures
- Ask questions



Technology in College

- **Minimum Requirements**
 - Access to E-mail
 - Access to Internet (high speed is best)
 - Microsoft Office or similar software
- **Other**
 - Other software as required by course
 - May need microphone and headset for web conferencing

Where to Get Access to Technology

- Home computer systems
- Work computer systems
- Public computer labs at school
- Libraries
- Community Centers
- Friends and neighbors



Taking a Course Online

- More convenient and flexible but not easier
- Course information is delivered through the Internet
- Assignments are submitted through the Internet
- Interact with teacher and other students through Internet, email, web conference, telephone, text messages, etc

Managing Your Time

- Working adults manage school around home, work, and community obligations
- Allow at least 12-15 hours per 3-credit hour course per week for reading, interactions, assignments, and studying
- Study during every available moment – during lunch, while waiting for children, evenings, weekends, before breakfast

Where to Get More Answers

- Read the catalogs and web pages
- Talk with graduates of the program
- Visit the school and take a tour
- Participate in orientation programs
- Take advantage of advisement from admissions, academic, and career counselors



The Importance of Academic Advisement

- Be sure to take advantage of advisement from admissions and academic counselors! You may:
 - Gain more knowledge about the University.
 - Get up-to-date and accurate information about academic policies and procedures.
 - Have a contact person who can give you answers through the process!



Strategies for Support, Sanity, and Survival

- Build a support network – home, family, friends, community
- Get to know your classmates – exchange contact information and work together
- Collect information on where to get Help before you need it – technical, process, procedures
- Have FUN!!!



QUESTIONS?

