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# Academic Reorganization and New Programs

The Department of Psychology and Counseling and the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy have combined, and Dr. Kate Warner will serve as the department head.

# Location Changes

* The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice is now located in Nevins Hall Suite 1004
* The IT Hub is now located in Parking Deck #1
* While the University Center is being renovated, the advisors in Centralized Advising is currently located on the first floor of Pine Hall

# Revised or Updated Policies, Procedures, and Courses

* **No more exam preparation day, “Dead Day”:** As part of the Faculty Senate’s approved academic calendar for 2015-2016, “dead day” has been eliminated from the calendar. Exams will commence directly on the Tuesday after classes end on Monday, following the exam schedule listed <https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/documents/fall-2015-final-exam-schedule1.pdf>. Also, following this same calendar, **VSU has shortened its Thanksgiving break and added a fall break.**
* **Academic Renewal:** The Academic Renewal Policy allows Valdosta State University degree-seeking undergraduate students who have experienced academic difficulty to have one opportunity to make a fresh start at Valdosta State University after an absence of three (changed from five) consecutive calendar years. If a student does not request Academic Renewal status at the time of re-enrollment, the student may do so within two academic semesters of re-enrollment or one calendar year, whichever comes first. All previously attempted coursework continues to be recorded on the student’s official transcript. A complete statement of the policy and the form, Application for Academic Renewal, are available in the Office of the Registrar or <https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/documents/academic-renewal-form1.pdf>
* **Academic Probation and Suspension:** To align with the Academic Renewal policy, students on a third suspension from the university now must sit out three years rather than five.
* **Extended Withdrawal Period:** Beginning in Fall 2015, the Registrar’s Office will separate the official midterm from the last date students may withdraw. At the same time, the Registrar’s Office will move the date for entry of in-progress grades a bit later; as a result, faculty should be able to provide more graded assignments before the official midterm, and then students will have the opportunity to make a more informed decision about whether or not they need to withdraw.
* **Attendance Verification:** In Fall 2015, proofrolls become “Attendance Verification.” As usual, during the second week of a regular term, faculty members are asked to verify if students are attending or have never attended the class. Faculty members will no longer have to note if a student has “stopped attending.” This change should help make the process simpler for faculty members. The most important information needed for dispersal of financial aid is to know whether or not students are attending. Faculty teaching online classes should assure that they are also able to verify attendance.
* **Foreign Language Requirement and WebCAPE Placement Exam:** For most students taking a foreign language at VSU, FL 1002 should be the typical entry class, particularly if they took foreign language in high school. However, any student may now choose to enter a foreign language (FL) at the 1001-level, and those with a language requirement prescribed in their major may use FL 1001 to satisfy that sequence. To help place students in the appropriate foreign language class, a new online test (the WebCAPE) is now available. This test is currently available for Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. More information is available at <http://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/arts-sciences/modern-classical-languages/webcape.php>.
* **CPC Requirements** : **Beginning in Fall 2015, students may fulfill CPC (College Preparatory Curriculum) deficiencies by taking a collegiate level course that will both address the CPC deficiency from high school AND count for college credit. In the past, students had to take separate courses to address both the CPC and college requirements. Students admitted before Fall 2015 will have a % symbol on their BANNER transcript by the course that was used to fulfill the CPC deficiency. To use this course for college credit, students should consult with their advisors.**
* **Changes in Transfer, Readmission, and Transient Processes:** The Registrar’s Office will begin processing transfer credit for all enrolled students. Admissions will continue to process transfer credit for all new incoming transfer students. With this change, the Admissions Office will no longer be involved in the Transient or Readmission process. All transients and readmits for spring 2016 (including transfer credit) will be processed by the Registrar’s Office.
* **30 hour credit limit removed:** Beginning in Fall 2015, the previous 30 hour limit for credit earned by CLEP, AP, PLA, etc. has been removed. Students must still meet other residency requirements.
* **Learning Support Courses and Requirements:** The USG has changed learning support courses and policy. Please check VSU’s catalog for further information.
* **Late Withdrawal Appeals:** If students have a medical or hardship situation after midterm and feel that they need to withdraw from all courses, please have them contact Marsha Walden in Centralized Advising (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/advising/withdrawal-policy.php>).

# Information Technology and eLearning Updates

* **Wireless Network Upgrade:** From June 2015 – April 2016, the entire wireless network will be upgraded. The new network will provide coverage to all buildings, including large classrooms and auditoriums. Over 3 million square feet of space, including some outdoor areas will have coverage. Academic buildings will start the upgrades in August. Bailey Science Building, Education Center, and Odum Library will be the first buildings upgraded.
* **Cloud Strategies**: Information Technology will leverage cloud computing to improve services and reduce downtime due to upgrades. This change will allow email, BlazeVIEW D2L and the VSU main webpage to remain online when the local network is unavailable due to outages or planned maintenance.
* **New Mobile App:** VSU will be working with DubLabs to deploy a new mobile application. The new app will allow functionality such as registering for classes, viewing holds, single sign on, and other features. The app is scheduled to be released between August – September.
* **Online Orientation:**  The Center for eLearning successfully launched the Online Orientation. The Online Orientation was designed to assist entering online learners as they transition from applicant to student in the enrollment process. The Orientation is available to VSU students via the MyVSU portal and covers critical topics including financial aid, registration, how to get support, advising, and much more. The Online Orientation also completed another phase in its launch, creating a module for on campus undergraduate students. The “Ignite your future” module was developed to aid the incoming students before attending the mandatory on campus orientation, delivering preparatory information before the on campus orientation.
* **Online Student Support Team:** The Online Student Support Team has continued to provide support to prospective. The OSST is designed to help support VSU learners at a distance as they navigate administrative or technical questions by serving as an on-going point of contact and resource. The OOST has been able to create working procedures for handling students in an efficient manner that aids in creating a smooth transition into, or back into, the University. Over the next year, additional infrastructure and support services will be added to more effectively serve our online learning population.
* **BlazeVIEW and GoVIEW Upgrade:** D2L’s Brightspace Integrated Learning Platform powers BlazeVIEW and GoVIEW, and both systems are currently on version 10.3. The USG’s Information Technology Services, in conjunction with our administrators, plans to facilitate upgrades to versions 10.4 and 10.5 in mid-late December 2015. The Center for eLearning plans to be trained by the USG and/or D2L representatives in mid-fall and will provide additional information and workshops on new and updated features after an upgraded test environment is available.
* **State Authorization:** The Center for eLearning has been able to achieve state authorization for fully online course delivery in Iowa. State Authorization in Florida and Alabama are still in process but should be completed by the end of 2015, after which the state authorization focus will be set to a new group of states to receive online course delivery approvals.

# Announcements and Information

* **Updated Academic Affairs Faculty Resources Page: see** <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/faculty-resources.php>
* **Recommended Four Year Programs of Study for full-time students are now posted for all undergraduate programs. Check departmental websites.**
* **Online Catalog:** The new online catalog will be available very soon. Watch for the announcement.
* **SACSCOC Fifth-Year Interim Report.** As part of membership and recognition by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Valdosta State University must meet high levels of quality to maintain our regional accreditation. The accreditation process involves all areas of the campus and both internal and external stakeholders. Although complying with accreditation standards requires daily attention, it is twice per decade that VSU is called upon to prepare a detailed self-study to demonstrate compliance with the SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation. A committee is developing responses for this report which is due in March 2016. More information is posted at <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/sacs/fifth-year-interim-report.php>
* **Student Health Center:** Will be open to students starting on August 10th and will remain open until December 11th. Keep your eyes open for announcements about the availability of this year’s flu vaccine for faculty and staff.
* **Bookstore Transition:** Valdosta State University has selected Follett to manage its campus store operations effective July 10, 2015. As part of the transition, our online bookstore will join the eFollett network. eFollett.com connects all Follett campus stores, its distribution center and a range of vendors to streamline access to needed materials on any device. Through this system, most required texts should be available at competitive prices. Follett’s Faculty Discover tool, accessed via D2L, supports efficient exploration, evaluation and adoption of traditional and non-traditional content. Of course, faculty and staff are also welcome to visit or contact the bookstore with adoption information. Lee Ann Johnson ([leeajohnson@valdosta.edu](mailto:leeajohnson@valdosta.edu))

is the store manager.

# ****Blazer Creed:** For the past two years, all new students have signed VSU’s Blazer Creed, which promotes civility, integrity, and citizenship. If you wish to discuss the creed with your students, it is available at** <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/the-blazer-creed.php>**.**

* **Grades First:** Valdosta State Athletics takes seriously the academic well-being of their student athletes, and coaches and staff track the performance of our student-athletes in the classroom through the use of Grades First, a program that enables faculty to submit feedback regarding student-athlete academic performance and behavior. Grades First is designed to be user-friendly so that faculty may input the requested data quickly and with a minimum of difficulty. All student athletes sign FERPA release documents that permit faculty to share academic data with the appropriate coaches and administrators.
* **AlcoholEdu and Haven training** **now required for all students:** All undergraduate students must complete these online courses to help them develop the critical skills to make more thoughtful and educated choices outside the classroom. The programming is provided by EverFi (<http://www.everfi.com/substance-abuse-prevention>).
* **The IDEA Center** (102 Georgia Avenue) will be busy this fall:
  + --10 groups/circles will begin in September (descriptions can be found here: <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/idea-center/our-services.php>) and the registration for the groups/circles is via this webpage (<https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/idea-center/forms/register.php>).
  + --It will host 10 workshops throughout the semester (descriptions for all of them are here: <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/idea-center/documents/fall-2015-idea-center-workshops.pdf>). Register for these workshops at the Employee Training website linked off of MyVSU.
  + Stay tuned for a teaching blog which will go live soon. It is called “Schooling Ourselves.”
  + Want to reserve a room at The IDEA Center? That’s easy to do with this online form: <https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/idea-center/forms/room-request.php>
  + Magna Commons—a series of online videos addressing a variety of teaching and administrative topics—is available to all VSU faculty. Directions for accessing these materials are available at <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/idea-center/documents/accessing-magna-commons.pdf>.

Please use the IDEA Center – to grade, to take a break from grading, to write, etc. Your faculty ID card should open the back door. The first floor is accessible and the back door is near the accessible parking spot and ramp. Coffee and tea are waiting. We would appreciate if you always signed in; there is a book near the back door where you can do that. Thank you!

* **SOI Timeline for Fall 2015** is available at <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/documents/soi-timeline-fall-2015.pdf>.
* **Textbook Sales:** Remember that USG policy does not permit faculty to sell complimentary copies of texts.
* **STEM Center:** Look for an announcement later this fall about the grand opening of the Center for Excellence in STEM Education, located in the recently renovated Martin Hall.
* **Records Retention:** As offices relocate, we recommend you review the USG Records Retention Schedules at <http://www.usg.edu/records_management/schedules>.
* **Program Review:** Forty-nine (49) programs are scheduled for academic program review during 2015-16 (see list at <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/university-assessment-committee/documents/cprcycle.pdf>). An orientation session will be held in early September for these programs.
* **Round 4 of the Affordable Learning Georgia (ALG) Textbook Transformation Grants is now open for applications:**

<http://affordablelearninggeorgia.org/about/grants_rfp_rounds345>. Round 4: September 7, 2015; Round 5: December 15, 2015. Find out more about the current projects at <http://libguides.valdosta.edu/c.php?g=7984&p=2402226>.

# Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

* August 11, 1:30-3:00: Core Curriculum Meeting, UC Cypress Room.
* Week of Welcome website for new students at <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/emc/centralized-advising/week-of-welcome.php.php>
  + August 13, 2015: First Year Student Convocation, PE Complex. Guest speaker Adam Braun, author of *Pencils of Promise* and the founder of the organization of the same name, will address our new students about the importance of education as well as ways that students can help improve communities around the world. Faculty members are also invited; if you can, please wear your robes—let’s give students a glimpse of what graduation will look like.
  + August 14, 2015: College Orientations for New First-Year Students, 9-11 am, multiple locations.
* February 17-19, 2016: The Second Annual TIES Conference (the conference on Instructional Technologies, Innovations, and Educational Strategies (TIES) is coming soon—watch the website for further information: <https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/elearning/ties/welcome.php>
* April 2016: Undergraduate Research Symposium
* April 2016: Graduate Research Symposium

# Important Dates Fall 2015

**August 17, 2015:** Fall 2015 first class day

**August 17-September 7, 2015:** Upload course syllabi into Digital Measures (<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/sacs/faculty-credentials.php>)

**August 26, 2015:** Faculty submit P and T dossiers to departmental promotion and tenure committees (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/documents/tenure-promotion-timeline.pdf>)

**September 7, 2015:** Labor Day Holiday; university closed

**September 9, 2015:** Departmental P and T Committees submit report to Department Heads

**September 25-26, 2015**: Parents’ Weekend

**September 30, 2015:** IERs and IEPs due to college/division assessment committees (<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/university-assessment-committee/welcome.php>)

**October 1-8, 2015**: Faculty enter in-progress grades

**October 8, 2015:** In-progress grades available andMidterm

**October 7, 2015:** Department Heads provide p and t recommendations to College P and T Committees

**October 12-13, 2015:** Fall Break

**October 15, 2015:** Last date for students to withdraw from classes

**October 17, 2015:** VSU Open House for Prospective Students and Families (January 30 and April 2, 2016)

**October 28, 2015:** College P and T Committees provide recommendations to Dean

**November 30, 2015:** Deans forward P and T recommendations to Academic Affairs

**October 31, 2015:** IERs and IEPs due to University Assessment Committee

**November 2, 2015:** Early registration for Spring 2016 opens

**November 13-14, 2015:** Homecoming

**November 25-27, 2015:** Thanksgiving Holiday; no classes meet

**December 7, 2015:** Last class day

**December 8-11, 2015:** Final Exams

**December 11-12, 2015:** Fall Commencement ceremonies

**December 14, 2015:** Final Grade entry

**December 22, 2015-January 4, 2016:** University closed

**January 11, 2016**: Spring 2016 first class day

***New Faculty and Administrators***

* VSU welcomes over 30 new full-time faculty members to campus; see the complete list at <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/vp-office/welcome-new-faculty.php>
* VSU welcomes the following new academic administrators:
  + - * Dr. Cecil Staton: Interim President
      * Dr. Brian Gerber, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
      * Dr. Anthony Scheffler, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
      * Dr. Lynn Minor, Interim Dean, Dewar College of Education and Human Services
      * Dr. Charles Backes, Interim Department Head, Adult and Career Education while Dr. Martinez is on exchange abroad.
      * Dr. Robert Harding: Department Head, Political Science
      * Dr. Linda Most, Department Head, Library and Information Science
      * Dr. Janet Foster, Interim Head, Early Childhood
      * Dr. Chris Meyers: Interim Department Head, History