



Gulf Coast State College

COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions

Last Update: 3/24/20

Information continues to change rapidly as the situation evolves. We ask that GCSC students, faculty, and staff continue to monitor their college email, social media, and the [GCSC COVID-19 website](#) for the most up-to-date information regarding the college.

CURRENT STUDENTS: Please complete the [Accessibility Survey](#) to help us better serve you as we transition to remote learning.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Is the college going to be open?

- ❖ The college will remain operational based on guidelines provided by the Florida Department of Education, and Center for Disease Control (CDC). Beginning March 23, the college facilities will be open to employees only, in order to prepare for the transition to remote learning. It is likely that some delays or inconvenient steps may be involved in the delivery of services. We ask for your patience as we all work together through the challenges of these extraordinary times. **The college is not closing.**

What precautionary measures is the college taking to prevent COVID-19?

- ❖ Late February, the college began taking extra precautionary measures by disinfecting more often (handrails, doorknobs, etc.), installing more hand sanitizers in college facilities, and providing disinfectant-type cleaning wipes for classroom and lab use.
- ❖ The college is moving to remote learning beginning March 30 and will continue to operate under the guidelines provided by the Florida Department of Education and the CDC.

ACADEMICS/STUDENT LIFE

Will the college have an extended Spring Break?

- ❖ Spring Break is extended for students from Saturday, March 21 through Sunday, March 29 (exceptions may be needed and will be communicated by your instructor).

Will classes be canceled?

- ❖ The college is canceling on-campus and online classes for the week of March 21-29 in order to prepare for a full transition to online classes, where possible (exceptions may be needed and will be communicated by your instructor).

Are all classes moving to online?

- ❖ Beginning on March 30, GCSC will move from face-to-face instruction to online instruction and other alternative methods.
- ❖ Field experience courses (clinicals) in the Health Sciences and Public Safety divisions are being reviewed for alternative schedules and teaching methodologies. Students in these types of programs should continue to closely monitor their Canvas account. Your instructor and/or program manager will reach out to you directly for instructions related specifically to your course or program.

How long will online classes last?

- ❖ This transition to online courses **may** extend through the end of the semester, as directed by state officials.

Will the semester be extended?

- ❖ At this time the semester will continue as planned according to the academic calendar, but as this situation evolves changes may become necessary.

How will I complete my dual enrolled courses?

- ❖ All dual enrolled courses will resume via online learning on March 30. Continue to monitor your Canvas account as further information will be forthcoming.

Will other campus services be affected?

- ❖ At this time all campus services will be available remotely or through scheduled appointments following the guidelines provided by the CDC.

What campus facilities will be open to students?

- ❖ The pool and fitness center are closed until further notice.
- ❖ Additional information on library and computer lab access will be forthcoming.
- ❖ Information about advising for summer and fall will be provided by the Office of Student Affairs.
- ❖ Additional information about Trio, Upward Bound, SARS, etc... is under development.

Will scheduled GCSC athletic events move forward?

- ❖ The [NJCAA](#) announced Monday, March 16, that all spring athletic competitions and events would be canceled. This includes the NJCAA men's and women's basketball tournaments. For more information on athletics please visit gathletics.com.

Will the tutoring labs be opened?

- ❖ At this time all tutoring labs will move to virtual tutoring. A link to resources will be distributed prior to classes resuming.

Is the testing center open?

- ❖ The testing center is closed until further notice.

What events have been postponed or canceled?

- ❖ At this time, all campus-based performances have been canceled or postponed. The visual and performing arts division (VPA) will release make-up dates in the near future.
- ❖ All community related events have been canceled.

My campus organization had an event planned. What should we do?

- ❖ At this time all campus organization events have been canceled.

Who do I contact if I have questions about my account?

- ❖ Please contact the business office at BusinessOffice@gulfcoast.edu.

Will Honors Convocation continue to be held on April 24, 2020?

- ❖ Honors Convocation has been canceled. Please know that we are brainstorming ways to celebrate your accomplishments.

Will the Graduation ceremony continue to be held on May 1, 2020?

- ❖ At this time the Graduation ceremony has been postponed, with the goal of rescheduling for late Summer 2020. We understand that this is a significant event, and we will provide appropriate recognition. Students meeting graduation requirements at the end of this term will receive their certificate or diplomas by mail. The Student Affairs office will be sending out further information via student email.

ADMISSIONS/FINANCIAL AID/VA BENEFITS

Will summer or fall registration be affected?

- ❖ Summer and fall registration will open on April 6 (**online only**). Please monitor the college communication channels for registration information.

Who do I contact if I have questions about admissions?

- ❖ Please contact the Admissions office at 850.872.3892 or visit their [website](#).

Who do I contact if I have questions about the impact these changes have on my financial aid?

- ❖ Please review the financial aid FAQ located [here](#).
- ❖ The federal government is working on guidance for us. Please stay tuned.

Will my VA funding be impacted by transition from face-to-face classes to online?

- ❖ No, the Senate and House passed S.3503 and the bill will give the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) the authority to continue GI Bill payments uninterrupted in the event of national emergencies. The new law allows for VA to continue to pay benefits regardless of the fact that the program has changed from resident training to online training. Also, students will continue to receive the same monthly housing allowance payments that they received for resident training until January 1, 2021, or until the school resumes normal operations of resident training.

Who do I contact if I have questions about how any changes affect my Veterans Benefits?

- ❖ The federal government is working on guidance for us. Please stay tuned.
- ❖ Please contact the Veteran Affairs office at 850.913.3291 or visit their [website](#)

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Do you need help with issues pertaining to technology or IT?

- ❖ Please review the student and faculty/staff guides located [here](#).
- ❖ Please contact the Technical Support Desk at 850.913.3303.

What do I do if I do not have reliable access to internet?

- ❖ Information from different internet providers:
 - [Comcast/Xfinity](#): Xfinity WiFi hotspots across the country will be available to anyone who needs them for free – including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers. For a map of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, visit xfinity.com/wifi. Once at a hotspot, consumers should select the “xfinitywifi” network name in the list of available hotspots and then launch a browser.
 - [AT&T](#): AT&T is proud to support our customers by pledging that, for the next 60 days (as of March 13, 2020), we will keep our public WiFi hotspots open for any American who needs them.
 - [T-Mobile](#): T-Mobile and Metro by T-Mobile customers on our current plans with limited data will automatically have unlimited smartphone data for the next 60 days (excluding roaming). No action required.
 - Additional information for providers can be found [here](#).
- ❖ The college is exploring other options to be able to assist students with internet access.

TRAVEL

Did you travel internationally or go on a cruise over Spring Break?

- ❖ Students: You are required to complete the [Student Travel Registry](#) immediately upon your return to the United States in order to determine when, if, or under what circumstances you will be able to return to campus. This is not optional.
 - These students will only be able to access campus services remotely until their mandatory quarantine period has ended.
- ❖ Faculty/Staff: You are required to contact Dr. Holdnak immediately upon your return to the United States in order to determine when, if, or under what circumstances you will be able to return to work. This is not optional.

Is college-sponsored travel affected?

- ❖ All college-sponsored domestic and international travel is canceled until further notice. Any domestic travel previously approved must be reevaluated by your respective supervisor and vice president. Only travel deemed essential by the president will be re-approved. The college strongly recommends that all students, staff, and faculty refrain from personal domestic and international travel except for emergency purposes.

EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

The State of Florida closed K-12 school districts until April 15. What should I do?

- ❖ Like our K-12 colleagues, instructional activities at the college are moving to remote access, to the maximum extent possible, and courses are scheduled to resume in this new modality (for some) on Monday, March 30. All public K-12 districts and universities are under the same mandate. In order to accomplish this incredible task in the required time, everyone at Gulf Coast will need to be focused on that goal. Staff and faculty will report to their regular work location on March 23, unless directed otherwise by their supervisor. Your supervisor will be in touch with you over the weekend to discuss your particular situation and any modification in this requirement that will need to be made. Please continue to check your email and the GCSC website as relevant information becomes available and status updates are made.

Are all employees expected to work remotely?

- ❖ All employees (exempt and non-exempt) will receive communication from their supervisor with specific information about their remote work arrangements. In some cases, employees may be temporarily reassigned to assist the college in critical areas. In limited circumstances, employees may, with approval of their supervisor, work on campus in accordance with current CDC guidelines.

If I am a part-time employee, how will this affect me?

- ❖ All part-time employees are to work with their supervisors concerning their work assignments. In some cases, employees may be temporarily reassigned to assist the college in critical areas.

Will I be paid as a work-study student during the closure?

- ❖ The federal government is working on guidance for us. Please stay tuned.

Will I be required to take leave if I do not return to work on March 23?

- ❖ Category 1: Employees who are sick should **NOT** return to work on March 23. You must notify your supervisor that you are not returning to work for this reason.
- ❖ Category 2: Employees with documented medical conditions impacted by COVID-19 should **NOT** return to work on March 23. You must notify your supervisor that you are not returning to work for this reason. Employees may receive alternative work assignments that can be conducted from home, as applicable.
- ❖ Sick leave will not be assessed, for the week of March 23-March 27, against employees that fall into categories 1 or 2 above.
- ❖ We will immediately implement flexible schedules and work-from-home assignments, to the maximum extent possible, in order to accommodate employees who need time off for other obligations during these unusual circumstances. Employees may receive alternative work assignments, as necessary, to meet the operational needs of the college.
- ❖ The federal government is working on additional information regarding COVID-19 related employee absences. Further information will be provided on the scope of these changes and their implementation dates, when it becomes available.

Will my pay be impacted?

- ❖ Employees working a flexed or remote schedule will continue to be paid as usual, as will employees in Categories 1 and 2 above.
- ❖ If the college is forced to close due to circumstances beyond our control, we remain committed to paying regular, full and part-time employees just as they were paid in the month following Hurricane Michael. Consequently, when we are able to reopen college facilities to students, the expectation is that we will have all hands-on deck to get the college ready for their return.
- ❖ The federal government is working on additional information regarding COVID-19 related employee absences. Further information will be provided on the scope of these changes and their implementation dates, when it becomes available.