

College Continues Service, Protocols During COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues into 2021, the College has maintained its commitment to continuity for students, and expanded means of communication and health precautions.

In recent months, the College has been placing greater emphasis on temperature scan technology that provides feedback in greater numbers and with greater speed. Walk-up temperature kiosks have been added to the Powell Allied Health Building and to the Dillingham Center. Additional walk-up kiosks in the Main Building and Advanced Applied Technology Center (AATC) are being added this semester.

Additionally, the College scheduled a second nasal swab testing session in late January open to employees and students. This was done in conjunction with the Alamance County Health Department.

Communication channels include Zoom conference calls with interested staff and faculty, Q&A forums meant to answer questions from employees, clarify protocols and processes, and mitigate anxiety and concerns.

Since March 2020, the College has implemented dozens of protocols to create a bubble and mitigate viral spread. These include:

- Mandatory mask-wearing;
- More than two dozen PPE stations across both campuses, dispensing gloves, masks and disinfectant;
- Nearly a dozen self-temperature checks across the campuses;
- ACC Safe app for classroom entry, which confirms that a student is healthy;
- The SlowCovidNC app for exposure detection, which detects if a nearby individual has registered as COVID-positive;
- Majority of instruction delivered online;



ACC President Dr. Algie Gatewood (center) conducts the January faculty-staff meeting via Zoom, in which more than 225 employees participated.

- Continued deep cleanings across campuses, particularly in high interaction areas;
- Cancellation of outside groups on campus;
- Hiring a Health Educator to provide counseling and facilitate access to resources;
- Staggered work schedules for staff;
- Online or telephone delivery of student services;
- Employment of virtual meetings wherever possible;
- Efforts to secure 15-minute self-testing kits in the coming months.
- Weekly online updates on the pandemic for employees and students by ACC President Dr. Algie Gatewood.

Biotechnology Center of Excellence to Begin Rising in 2021

College leadership looks forward this spring to the start of construction of the \$17.6 million Biotechnology Center of Excellence that is slated to be completed by May 2022—in time for fall semester that year.

The freestanding, three-story, 30,000 square foot structure is a mix of labs and classroom space serving the Biotechnology, Medical Laboratory Technology, Histotechnology and Agricultural-Biotechnology programs. The center is also designed to include space for start-up and early stage biopharma companies. The building's highly visible location along I-85/40 will also provide indoor/outdoor learning spaces that align with the needs of students, faculty, and industry partners.



Architectural renderings of the Center of Excellence capital project scheduled to begin construction on the ACC campus this spring. (Provided by Clark Nexsen Architects).

College Moves Forward in 2021 on Capital Projects



The Culinary Arts department expansion for a new prep kitchen and dining area has been underway since December.

The coming year promises to deliver progress on several capital construction projects at the main college campus.

Student Services Center:

- Construction and expansion will house Admissions, Financial Aid, Counseling, Veterans Services, and more at the front of the College adjacent to main pedestrian entrance.
- Construction is scheduled to begin Summer 2021 and ready for occupation by Fall 2022.

Backfill Project:

- Phase One of this project began in October 2020 with the expansion and renovation of the Old Shop building, which previously housed two industrial programs now located in the Advanced Applied Technology Center.



- This renovation will transform the building into new homes for Animal Care Technology and an expansion of Horticulture Technology. It is expected to be completed by May 2021.
- Phase Two is expected to begin in Spring 2021 with the relocation of the ABSS Early College to the campus B-Building. Food Services and the Student Commons area will be dramatically expanded and renovated in the main building in the coming year. This phase is expected to be completed by November 2021.

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Culinary Expansion Project:

- Construction on new prep kitchen and dining area began in December 2020 and is expected to be completed in June 2021.

The Student Services Center is funded by the bond project approved by voters in November 2018. ACC's Backfill Project and Culinary Expansion are financed by the College's \$6.1 million portion of the voter-approved NC Connect Bond, a state provision to all NC community colleges.

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The College's Biotechnology Center of Excellence leverages a particular area of expertise of which ACC has played a leading role for decades. The College has the longest running 2-year biotechnology program in the nation and one of the state's oldest Medical Laboratory Technology programs. Both programs are critical to local and regional bioscience industries.



The College lies at the epicenter of the busiest bioscience corridors on the east coast. Additionally, Burlington is the #1 Small Metropolitan Area in the nation for health diagnostics and testing. Further, biosciences job growth is expected to grow exponentially over the next decade.

ACC Names Elon University 2020 Business Partner of the Year

ACC named Elon University as its 2020 Business Partner of the Year in recognition of the outstanding support the university has consistently provided to ACC students and graduates.

Said ACC President Dr. Algie Gatewood: “We at ACC have long cherished the close and productive partnership with our friends at Elon University. President Book is a great partner and I look forward to more fruitful partnerships to benefit our students in the coming years.”

Said Elon University President Connie Book: “This is a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish when we work together.”

Here are the reasons for Elon’s selection:

- Since 2016, Elon University has guaranteed that qualified ACC students can seamlessly transfer up to 65 credits to achieve full status as juniors at Elon. The partnership provides local students with a strong incentive to advance their educational careers at ACC and continue their pursuit of a bachelor’s degree at Elon.
- The Elon Transfer Scholarship grants \$22,500 annually for up to three years to a selected ACC graduate toward the cost of tuition, fees, room and board.
- ACC and Elon University are working together to develop a specialized 2-plus-2 teacher transfer agreement that would benefit local high school students.
- Many local high school students participating in Elon Academy attend ACC as Career and College Promise students, earning free college credit in ACC classes. Elon Academy prepares students with a financial need and/or no family history of college to pursue a degree through summer residential programming and mentoring.
- Elon University contributes 20 to 30 student learning interns per semester through the Kernodle Center for Civic Engagement to ACC’s Academic and Career Readiness (adult literacy) students.



Making the presentation of ACC’s Business Partner of the Year Award on the Elon campus were (from left): Charles Canaday, President of the ACC Foundation Board of Directors; Dr. Jean Rattigan Rohr, Elon Vice President for Access and Success and Professor of Education; Dr. Aswani Voley, Elon Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Elon University President Dr. Connie Book; ACC President Dr. Algie Gatewood; Jennifer Mock, ACC Director of Academic and Career Readiness; Dr. Roslyn Crisp, Chair of the ACC Board of Trustees; and Mary Morrison, Director of the Kernodle Center for Service Learning and Community Engagement at Elon.

- The Elon Buddies program pairs 20 to 30 university volunteers with ACC Career College students who have intellectual or developmental and physical disabilities. Elon Buddies was honored with the Governor’s Medallion Award for Volunteer Service in 2019.
- Elon University consults with ACC’s Academic and Career Readiness staff to improve instructional delivery in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. Elon also recruits student volunteers for this program.
- Elon University and the Oak Foundation, under the leadership of Dr. Jean Rattigan Rohr, and the Village Project provided ACC with grant funds and support totaling \$75,000 over five years for the provision of childcare during ACC’s ESOL classes at local churches.

Federal TRIO Grant Augments Student Support Services

ACC is using its first-ever federal TRIO grant from the U.S. Department of Education to implement the Student Support Services (SSS) Program. The total award over a five-year period is approximately \$1.3 million.

Eligible individuals for SSS are low-income students, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities. ACC has nearly 2,000 curriculum students who meet this eligibility criteria, reported Dr. Carol Disque, Vice President of Student Success.

The grant period began last September and will continue for five years.

“We are especially grateful for the timing and multi-year focus of the TRIO grant since the COVID-19 epidemic has highlighted systemic inequities, and worsened college access for first-generation, low-income, and disabled individuals,” said Dr. Disque.

The College reported on its grant application that 11.8% of students with poor academic standing and 37% of first-generation college students do not regularly utilize ACC’s academic advisement services. These eligible students have a lower retention rate, and significantly lower graduation rate than students who do not fit the criteria.

ACC’s Student Support Services Program will assist eligible students by providing academic support and tutoring in developmental and gateway courses, top priority course registration each semester, intensive academic advising, success coaching, career planning services, coaching for transfer to four-year colleges, financial literacy and financial aid counseling, cultural enrichment opportunities, and student leadership opportunities.



ACC Graduates Offered Guaranteed Admission to Lees-McRae College

ACC graduates are now guaranteed enrollment at Lees-McRae College if they first earn an associate's degree and maintain at least a 2.5 GPA while at ACC.

The Guaranteed Admission Program is open to all ACC students who meet certain academic requirements to transfer and complete a bachelor's degree at Lees-McRae College. ACC graduates must meet certain admission criteria for some Lees-McRae programs. The new articulation agreement, signed by both institutions this month, began with the spring 2021 semester.

Lees-McRae Transfer Merit Scholarship

ACC students admitted to Lees-McRae College will also receive academic merit scholarships that range in amounts up to and including 60% off Lees-McRae annual tuition.

New Horizon Transfer Scholarships

ACC transfer students will automatically receive academic scholarships awarded only to full-time students. These range from \$2,000 per academic year for Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) members, and from \$10,000 to \$14,000 per academic year depending on the student's grade point average.

The Guaranteed Admission Program with Lees-McRae is the latest transfer agreement that ACC has offered to its students through partnerships with other North Carolina institutions of higher learning. Other agreements of recent years include those with Elon University, UNC-Wilmington, NC State, NC Central, and UNC-Greensboro.



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ACC Early Childhood Program to Benefit from \$750,000 Federal Grant

ACC is one of only three two-year schools in North Carolina whose Early Childhood Education program was invited to participate in a national project to better prepare early childhood education professionals.

The project, supported by a \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, will focus resources on helping early childhood professionals with associate degrees to better meet the needs of young children, including children with diverse cultures, languages, and abilities.

The Child Development Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill will provide experts to work with ACC Early Childhood faculty on the program titled SCRIPT-NC (Supporting Change and Reform In Preservice Teaching in North Carolina).

"We are really excited to work with SCRIPT-NC to enhance our coursework and practical experiences to offer a more diverse and inclusive program," said Kristina Ketcham, Department Head of the Early Childhood Education program. "This will support, enrich, and help mold our future leaders in education. This project will help us ensure we are preparing our graduates with the most up to date crucial knowledge and tools needed to successfully meet the needs of all children, families, and their communities."

Grant Will Bridge Gap Between Telemedicine and Education

The College received a \$644,911 U.S. Department of Agriculture grant to create a network link between the campus and local Emergency Medical Service (EMS) stations that will bridge the gap between telemedicine and higher education.

The College will utilize the existing WE-HELP Initiative (**Web Enhanced Healthcare Education Linking rural communities Program**) to leverage video-conferencing technology to create a virtual network among 20 Alamance County first-responder bases such as fire departments and EMS stations. The result is the delivery of educational programming to over 600 first responders and essential healthcare workers and students.

ACC's own Nursing and EMS instructors will deliver the instruction from the network hub located on the college campus and administered by the Distance Learning department.

The network will include virtual meeting and classroom technology at 20 EMS stations across Alamance County. Firefighters, for example, will learn how to manage patient overdoses as demonstrated on robotic mannequins by nursing instructors at ACC.