

ACADEMIC SERVICES

Student Academic Success supports the mission of the University by developing, implementing, and assessing initiatives and practices to ensure all students are offered the resources and relationships necessary for high quality learning, academic persistence, and degree completion. This includes Academic Advising & Transfer Services, the Center for Academic Excellence, Career Services, Second Year Experience, Summer Start, freshman learning communities, the university first year experience courses, and the USA Scholars initiative, including our Earn Back program. For more information visit <https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicssuccess/>.

Learning Communities

Freshman learning communities at South are focused on academic courses. A learning community usually includes two or three classes shared with other students enrolled in that community. Learning communities typically enroll about 25 first year students; generally, all students share their first year experience course. In most communities, students will share one or two additional classes with the same group of 25 students. Learning communities are designed to provide students with the opportunity to meet other students in the same major, to offer the best schedule for the first semester, and to maximize the applicability of courses should a student decide to change majors.

First Year Experience Courses

First year experience (FYE) courses are offered at universities around the world. At USA, this course was constructed by faculty and designed to address areas where first year students need additional development. First year experience courses include college success strategies, metacognitive practices, and often discipline specific skills. They help maximize our students' potential to achieve academic success; adjust to the shift in responsibility that comes with college learning; and overcome interpersonal challenges associated with college life.

Summer Start

Summer Start is a six-week, seven credit-hour summer session that focuses on providing students with a jump-start on college, giving them an early opportunity to learn more about campus, and engage with academic success and extracurricular activities during the summer term. Students who are admitted into Summer Start are required to participate in the program and to continue at the University in the fall. Summer Start allows students to enjoy smaller class sizes while learning "in community" - sharing the same group of classes together.

Second Year Experience

The Second Year Experience (SYE) at the University includes a leadership and skills development program for second year students, with a special focus on students who identify as first-generation and/or have unmet financial need, which supports strategic efforts to close equity gaps and graduate more students. Through the SYE Transformational Leadership Program (TLP), students develop leadership, service, and crucial career skills to prepare them for a Career Trek to meet employers. SYE focuses on student engagement with faculty in a high impact practice (HIP), such as diversity/global learning, experiential learning, internships, study abroad, and undergraduate research (AAC&U, 2013), and will culminate with a poster presentation on that experience to be delivered at the

University Second Year Showcase to take place in the fall semester of a student's third year at USA.

USA Scholars Initiative

The USA Scholars Initiative focuses additional attention on USA scholarship students who may be academically at risk. First year students whose fall GPA is below 3.0 may be contacted about additional resources designed specifically to increase academic insight. Included in this program is our Earn Back opportunity. Students who have lost their Freshman Admission Scholarship may be able to earn it back by participating in this program.

Students begin their relationship with their advisor during orientation. Students should meet with their academic advisor each term and are encouraged to meet as often as needed. Generally, students move to an advisor in their major when they complete between thirty and sixty credit hours. Students are expected to communicate with their assigned academic advisor regularly; however expectations for meetings vary by major and department. For more information visit <https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicadvising/>.

Students enrolled in Pathway USA meet with transfer advisors during enrollment at their community college prior to transferring to USA. Transfer students outside of Pathway USA are welcome to make an appointment with transfer advisors to discuss their transition to USA. Students may also be referred to major advisors as appropriate. For more information visit <https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/admissions/pathwayusa/>.

Pre-Health advising at the University of South Alabama offers valuable resources to students interested in a variety of graduate professional health programs. In order to prepare students for the rigorous demands of these programs, advisors provide information and guidance on required course work, admission test needs, the application process and non-academic requirements. Pre-health advising is provided as a supplement to major academic advising. All pre-health students have an academic advisor who will guide them in meeting requirements for graduation.

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicadvising/pre-health/>

The Center for Academic Excellence is a full-service learning center, providing subject tutoring, writing center consultations, workshops, and learning resources for all USA students. The Center for Academic Excellence strives to help every student reach their academic goals. The CAE's academic enrichment services are grounded in a growth mindset that students can learn anything with hard work, perseverance, and good study habits.

The Center for Academic Excellence offers subject tutoring for a large variety of general education courses. Subject tutoring is a collaborative learning experience in which peers work together to develop knowledge, build skills, and think critically and creatively to solve problems. The CAE also provides writing center consultations for courses in any discipline. Writing center consultations focus on helping students improve their writing skills, rather than simply editing papers. Students may receive help with any type of writing task at any stage of the writing process, including understanding assignments, brainstorming, organization, development, and revision. Additionally, the CAE provides workshops, events, and a variety of programs aimed at empowering USA students to succeed in their coursework and beyond.

The Center for Academic Excellence is located on the second floor of the Marx Library. For more information, please call (251) 460-6480 or visit <https://www.southalabama.edu/cae/> (<https://www.southalabama.edu/cae/>).

USA Career Services assists students and alumni in all phases of the career development process. As a comprehensive career services center, the office offers services to support career and academic major exploration, co-op and internship participation, identification and preparation for employment opportunities, and graduate and professional school preparation assistance.

Career Exploration

Career Services guides students in determining career interests and selecting appropriate academic programs to reach career goals. The appropriate selection of a major can impact a student's desire to complete a college education and a student's success in college and the workplace. Career Advisors are trained to assist students in the various aspects of career and academic development. Among the many resources available to students are:

- One-on-one advising appointments with career advising staff
- Information on career and major exploration, job search skills, resume preparation, interviewing, employer information, and more
- Self-assessments and career inventories
- Handshake career management system
- Video interviewing platform containing curriculum and capability to practice and record mock interviews.
- Resources on numerous career fields including entrance requirements and projected employment outlook
- Graduate and professional school information

Cooperative Education and Internship Program

The Cooperative Education (Co-op) and Internship Program enables students to combine classroom studies with paid work experience related to their major field of study. Co-op and Internships are designed to supplement classroom experience and to promote academic and professional development. Students generally complete one year of courses prior to beginning an assignment. Students receive academic recognition through a transcript notation for each term. Students do not earn academic credit hours. Employers and students appreciate this official recognition because it reflects a student's desire to obtain practical work experience while pursuing their degree.

Program Requirements

Undergraduate students must meet general program requirements, including being classified as a full-time student upon participation in the program, completion of 12-24 credit hours depending upon the selected program option, an overall institutional GPA of 2.3 or higher for the Co-op options, and an overall institutional GPA of 2.0 or higher for the Internship option. Graduate students may participate after they are accepted into a graduate program. Program requirements may vary based upon the student's academic college. While the program is open to all academic majors, there are some majors/academic departments in which the curriculum may not support a particular work-schedule option. Students on study visas can participate in the program with prior approval from the Office of Immigration.

Program Options

Alternating Co-op

The Alternating Co-op program option integrates multiple terms of work and academics. Students work in professional assignments directly related to their major. Students on the alternating plan rotate semesters of full-time work with semesters of full-time school. Students are required to meet and maintain an institutional GPA of 2.3 or higher and remain in good standing with the university in order to be eligible. Engineering students must also complete MA 125 and MA 126 prior to participation. Students must meet with Career Services to receive program approval prior to accepting employment.

Parallel Co-op

The Parallel Co-op program option allows nursing students to gain practical, relevant work experience at one of the participating area hospitals. Nursing students may apply to the Co-op program after completing the designated first semester foundation courses with at least a 2.5 GPA. Students must maintain above a 'C' in nursing courses, may not earn an 'F' in any course, and must be designated as full-time to remain eligible for participation. Students accepted into the Co-op program must meet with Career Services to complete the program orientation.

Internship

The internship program offers students a unique educational opportunity to participate in either a part-time or full-time work experience to complement their major field of study. Participants are required to meet and maintain an institutional GPA of 2.0 or above and remain in good standing with the university in order to be eligible. The partnership between the student, the employer, and the university is a collaboration structured to maximize the value of an internship. Prior to accepting employment, students should meet with a Career Services advisor to review the internship duties and discuss program requirements.

Career Services support internships completed for academic credit. These opportunities may be paid or unpaid. Students interested in earning academic credit should consult with their academic department to determine eligibility for credit. For assistance initiating, an internship search or help with the approval process, please contact Career Services.

Job Search and Graduate School Assistance

Career Services assists students in multiple ways. Students seeking career-related employment, planning to pursue graduate or professional school, or those that need a job to supplement income while completing their degree, are encouraged to utilize Career Services' resources. Handshake, an online career management system, is just one of the resources students are encouraged to use when seeking a job, internship, or co-op. From Handshake, students can share their profile, submit employment applications, upload and have resume documents reviewed. In addition, career advisors are available for individual appointments at a student's request. Career Services provides additional assistance by offering seminars, job search and networking programs, career, graduate, and professional school fairs, on-campus interviews, employer information sessions, and other career-related events.