

SECTION 3, COMPREHENSIVE STANDARD 3.4.9

The institution provides appropriate academic support services.

JUDGMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Compliant

Partially Compliant

Noncompliant

RATIONALE FOR JUDGMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The institution provides a variety of academic support services to its students through several offices on campus as well as to students at off-campus centers either through personnel at those sites or through internet web access. Many, but not all, services are provided through the offices of the Division of Academic Support Programs: Academic Advisement Center, Student Disability Services, Minority Advisement Program, and Learning Support. The institution also offers a Writing Center and a Math and Computer Science Lab for student assistance, as well as a tutoring referral service. Also supporting the academic program is a website option which allows users to access all institutional web pages in a text-only version.

Students who have not declared a major and pre-education majors with fewer than 45 credit hours are advised through the Academic Advisement Center. Faculty members volunteer to advise these students, guiding them through the process of becoming acclimated to the university and the core curriculum, pointing them to relevant resources on campus, alerting them to university and System requirements. Students may also choose to enroll in the Academic Advisement Center's mentoring program, which connects interested students with individual faculty members for a more personal and ongoing supportive relationship, providing students access to those skills and understandings most essential to academic success. Every year, students are asked their opinions about advisement services received at the Center through an anonymous survey developed in-house. As a result of the last survey, the layout of the Advisement Center was changed in summer 2005, providing individual advisement stations to increase privacy and reduce noise. Advising is provided at both the main campus and at the Gainesville Center.

A comprehensive orientation program is provided to new undergraduate students at both Dahlonega and the Gainesville Center, which includes academic advisement.

The Office of Student Disability Resources ensures equal access to all programs offered by the university. Specifically, the office assists students in receiving accommodations in the classroom and on tests, in gaining physical access to buildings and housing, in learning to be self-advocates, in developmental advisement and early registration, and in learning strategies to ensure success on a college campus. The services provided by the Office of Student Disability Resources are appropriate according to Board of Regents Policy as stated in the *Academic Affairs Handbook*, Section 2.22.01 [1]. All NGCSU students are eligible for accommodations at any of our facilities, regardless of campus. Also, the director of Student Disability Resources assists them in getting accommodations at other schools when they are a transient student from NGCSU and provides services to students who are transient at NGCSU. The director attends local transition meetings and fairs to discuss disability services. She collaborates with other agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Labor, and school systems, discussing available services with prospective students.

The Minority Advising Program at North Georgia College & State University addresses students' academic needs through individualized and group counseling, reinforcing the advisement process, developing study skills, tutoring, and providing socially and culturally appropriate programming to bring effective role models into contact with minority students.

The university offers Regents' Test skills courses to develop reading and writing skills in students who have not passed one or both parts of the Regents' Test by the time they have accumulated 45 credit hours. Because of scheduling and location issues, as well as to support off-campus students, the courses are offered online, making instruction available to students at a time that is convenient to their academic and work schedules. Additionally, students who are taking courses at satellite campuses have access to the Regents' skills courses without driving to Dahlonega. Students complete appropriate assignments in the courses and are provided with feedback on the quality of their work. These courses are led by full-time faculty members. In Fall 2005, 83% of students who participated in the Regents' reading course passed the reading portion of the Regents' Skills Test; 71% of students who participated in the Regents' essay courses passed the essay portion of the Regents' Skills Test [2]. In Spring 2006, the pass rate for reading was 83%; for essay, 81%. [3] Both pass rates compare quite favorably with University System-wide pass rates on the Regents' Skills Test.

Writing skills are also supported by the university's Writing Center. The Writing Center is open to all students and faculty of the university for assistance with all writing projects, not just course-based assignments. Additionally, the Writing Center offers seminars each semester on avoiding plagiarism, conforming to APA style format, and preparing for the Regents Skills Test. The center is staffed by trained students.

Math skills are supported through the Math and Computer Science Tutorial Center. This lab is also staffed by trained students and offers support for lower division math and computer science courses. Tutors also provide training in how to use graphing calculators and software programs.

Supporting language instruction at the institution is the Language Lab, a professionally directed facility staffed by student workers. The lab has 45 stations, each with a networked computer and headset. Each can operate as a stand-alone listening and speaking station, but because the stations are networked on a dedicated server, students also have the capability to engage in conversations. The Language Lab owns several hundred DVDs in the three languages taught at NGCSU. These movies can be deployed on the stations as they are assigned by professors. Finally, the Language Lab has a satellite dish, so that foreign language television is available as well. The students who work in the lab are available as tutors for students in need of further assistance. During the Fall and Spring semesters, the lab is open twelve hours a day Monday through Thursday and eight hours on Fridays. During summer session, the lab is open five hours daily.

The institution offers a course entitled "Strategies for College Success," directed particularly at freshmen, to assist in the transition to college. The course considers, among other, non-academic, topics, note-taking strategies, test-taking strategies, study skills, planning a schedule, choosing a major, relating to professors, and learning to use the undergraduate bulletin. The course is an elective but is strongly encouraged by many advisors and carries two credit hours.

The institution's Learning Support program serves students whose admission test scores, high school grades, or non-traditional status indicate a need for additional preparation in reading, composition, or mathematics, and students who choose to enroll in one or more of the courses in order to be better prepared for core curriculum courses. NGCSU's placement standards for Learning Support exceed the University System minimums, as allowed by the Board of Regents in its *Academic Affairs Handbook*, Section 2.09.01 [4]. Learning Support courses are taught by experienced faculty who also teach regular college courses in their fields.

Students who place in Learning Support receive instruction in the skills needed to prepare for regular freshman-level classes. A student who places in Learning Support English must complete the course with a minimum of a C and a passing score on the Compass exam before being eligible to take English 1101. According to data obtained for Fall 2003- Spring 2005, 71.4% of Lang 0099 students passed their first college credit English course with a grade of "C" or better. A student who places in Learning Support Math must complete the course with a minimum of a C and a passing score on the Compass exam before being eligible to take a regular mathematics course or certain science courses. During the Fall 2003- Spring 2005 period, 72.5% of Math 0099 students passed their first college credit math course with a grade of "C" or better. A student who places in Learning Support Reading must satisfy course requirements before being allowed to take certain reading-intensive courses. A student must exit all Learning Support courses within three semesters.

Student Development and Counseling Services also offers a Tutorial Assistance Program, which connects students with needs in core curriculum courses and some upper division courses to tutors in the field [5, p. 7-9]. For cadets, the Honors Program Tutor Service [6, p. 5] offers tutorial assistance during "quarters" study sessions. This service is staffed by eight to twelve Honors Program students each semester. Tutoring services are available to our students at distant locations as well. Beginning in fall, 2006, the university also participates in an online tutoring service, tutor.com [7], providing tutoring to all students in basic coursework. This innovative service is available to students from 2:00 pm to 1:00 am daily, via an internet connection and logon supplied by the university.

Gainesville State College's Academic, Computing, Tutoring & Testing Center (ACTT) provides a Writing Center, Mathematics and Computer Science tutorial services, student disability services, and minority affairs programming services to NGCSU students at the Gainesville Center. Our students at our Forsyth County Center obtain Writing Center support via email. The only complete programs offered at that center is the Ed. S. in Teacher Leadership, which offers its own advising. Students taking other classes there are advised by their instructors.

Document Reference:

Number	DB Num	Document Title	Resource
1		Board of Regents, Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.22.01, The Accommodation of	http://www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.22/2.22.01.phtml

Number	DB Num	Document Title	Resource
		Students with Learning Disabilities	
2		Fall 2005—Regents' Test Results Based on Student Participation	http://www.ngcsu.edu/sacs/Reference_Room/documents/Institutional_Assess/RTP_pass_rates_Fall_2005.pdf
3		Spring 2006 Regents Skills Course report	http://www.ngcsu.edu/sacs/Reference_Room/documents/Institutional_Assess/Regents_Skills_Course_Rpt_Spr06.pdf
4		Board of Regents, Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.09.01, Learning Support Policy	http://www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.09/2.09.01.phtml
5		NGCSU Student Handbook, 2005-2006, Counseling Office, Academic Services	http://www.ngcsu.edu/Stu_Lif/Handbook/2005_06_handbook.pdf , p. 53 in PDF, p. 51 in hard copy.
6		NGCSU Student Handbook, 2005-2006, Where to Go – Whom to See	http://www.ngcsu.edu/Stu_Lif/Handbook/2005_06_handbook.pdf , pp. 7-9 in PDF, pp. 5-7 in hard copy.
7		Online tutoring service	http://tutor.com/