


Slide 1



Welcome to graduate school in the College of Education at USA. We are glad that you have decided to pursue a graduate degree with us. This will be a brief orientation to your graduate studies. We hope that this orientation will be informative and helpful

Topics

- PAWS
- Advising
- Registering for courses
- Academic standards
- Comprehensive exams
- Graduation
- Useful weblinks

A stack of approximately seven books of varying thicknesses, stacked vertically on the right side of the slide. The books have light-colored covers and are slightly shadowed on the surface they are resting on.


We will discuss the following topics:

- PAWS
- Advising
- Registering for courses
- Academic standards
- Comprehensive exam
- Graduation
- Useful USA weblinks

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PAWS

- [Personal Access Web System \(PAWS\)](#)
 - View your Financial Aid Status
 - View and Update Demographic Information
 - View Catalog and current Schedule of Classes
 - Reset your PIN
 - Register for Classes
 - View your Unofficial Transcript
 - View your Student Information
 - Pay your tuition, fees, housing, and some fines online
 - Make your payments by credit card through a **SECURE** connection over the web
 - View or print your class schedule
 - View your Holds
 - View your Final Grades
 - Request Enrollment Verification
 - Degree Evaluations including What-If Scenarios




PAWS stands for Personal Access Web System. It is the main information source for students and faculty at USA. Through PAWS you can access university publications such as the Schedule of Classes and the Bulletin; investigate your Financial Aid status, view and change your personal information; pay many USA bills, register for and withdraw from classes; view any hold you may have; check final grades; and view and print your class schedule, an unofficial transcript, degree evaluations, and what-if scenarios. PAWS provides a secure connection over the internet. To login into PAWS you will need your JAG number and Personal Identification number. Your JAG number is your student id number and was sent to you in your acceptance letter.

Slide 4

Logging into PAWS

- You will need your JAG number and Personal Identification number.
 - JAG number is your student id number sent to you in your acceptance letter
- Enter your JAG Number (User ID) and your Personal Identification Number (PIN).
 - Your JAG Number is an upper case 'J' and two zeros (J00) added in front of your six-digit USA student number.
 - Your PIN for your initial login is your birthdate (mmddyy). Enter those six-digits.
 - When finished, click Login.
- Once you login, you will be prompted to change your six-digit PIN. Follow the instructions given. When you are finished using PAWS, always Exit and close your browser to protect your privacy.
- These instructions are available when you click on "enter secure area" from the PAWS main page. You can access PAWS through clicking on the link on this slide.




To log into PAWS you will need to

- Enter your JAG Number (User ID) and your Personal Identification Number (PIN).
- Your JAG Number is an upper case 'J' and two zeros (J00) added in front of your six-digit USA student number. For example, if your six-digit student number is 123456 then your JAG Number is J00123456.
- Your PIN for your initial login is your birthdate (mmddyy). Enter those six-digits. When finished, click Login.
- Once you login, you will be prompted to change your six-digit PIN. Follow the instructions given. When you are finished using PAWS, always Exit and close your browser to protect your privacy.

These instructions are available when you click on "enter secure area" from the PAWS main page. You can access PAWS through clicking on the link on the previous slide.

Advising

- Each student is assigned an advisor
- Check on PAWS to find out who your advisor is
- Consult with your advisor before registering for classes to ensure that the class is appropriate to your degree program


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You have been assigned an advisor. You can find out who your advisor is on PAWS.

Your advisor will help you with selecting and registering for classes, as well as with other forms of professional advice. Please contact your advisor by phone or email, if you have not yet done so. Their contact information is available through the university directory which is available online from the University's webpage. Advisors will ensure that the courses you select are appropriate for your degree program. They can also inform you of program, department, college, and university rules and regulations. Advisors can also tell you during which terms the courses you need will be offered. Advisors can also tell you about prerequisite coursework and the sequence for the courses in the curriculum. Advising should be an important part of your graduate education.

Registering for Classes


- Consult with your advisor
- [Schedule of courses online](#)
- You will need the CRN (five digit number after the course name)
- Follow the steps on PAWS
- For graduate students 6-10 credit hours is considered full-time enrollment
 - You must have permission from the college/department to take more than 10 hours
- If you get an error message, email your advisor and include the error message



At USA registering for courses is completed online through PAWS. You will be assigned a timeframe within which you can register for courses. There are several registration time periods for each semester. There are also late registration time periods that require that late fees be paid. Please consult with your advisor before registering so you are sure that you are registering for the right course at the right time in your degree program. You can access the [Schedule of Courses online through PAWS](#) (click on this link). To register you will need the 5-digit CRN for each course you want to register for. PAWS will guide you through the process. For graduate students you are considered to be enrolled full-time if you are enrolled in 6-10 hours. You will need special permission to take more than 10 hours in a term. If you get an error message during registration, email your advisor and include the error message in your email. Your advisor will help you figure out what the problem is. If you have holds on your record you may not be able to register. If classes are closed you will need to wait until a subsequent semester to take the course or you can ask your advisor and the course professor for permission to take the course. The course instructor may not provide such permission.

Academic Standards

- Grades of D can not be used toward degree requirements
- You must maintain a 3.0 program GPA to remain in graduate school
 - If GPA < 3.0 you will be put on academic probation and have two terms to bring your GPA up to at least 3.0
 - If you do not improve your GPA to 3.0 you will be dismissed by the Graduate School after you have been on academic probation for two semesters
 - Even if you maintain a 3.0 program GPA, only two grades of C can be used toward degree requirements
- You must have an overall GPA of 3.0 to graduate (3.25 for Ed.S. programs)



Graduate school has different academic standards than undergraduate programs. You are expected to work harder, synthesize information, be self-directed, and receive grades of A and B. Based on this there are many rules about grades and continued enrollment.


Grades of D or below will not be used toward degree requirements. Only two Cs can be counted toward your degree requirements. Some programs will not even allow Cs to count toward degree requirements; check with your advisor.

Master's students must maintain a program GPA of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale, A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) for the courses in your program. Your overall graduate GPA must be 3.0 or greater (3.25 for Ed.S. programs) for you to graduate. If your program GPA drops below 3.0 you will be placed on Academic Probation. You will have two semesters, and only two semesters, to improve your Program GPA to 3.0 or more. If you do not attain at least a 3.0 Program GPA after two semesters of academic probation you will be dismissed by the Graduate School. Once a student has been dismissed due to academic reasons, he or she cannot be re-admitted to the same program. He or she may be admitted to another USA graduate program with special permissions.

In addition, cheating and plagiarism are grounds for potential non-academic dismissal from USA. A non-academic dismissal from USA will result in ineligibility to apply to any graduate program in the university.

Academic Standards


- Time limits
 - Students in Master's and Ed.S. degree programs have 7 years from admission to complete their programs
 - Doctoral students have 10 years to complete their degree requirements



Students must complete degree requirements within certain time limits. Students in Master's and Educational Specialist programs have 7 years from date of admission to complete their degree. Students in doctoral programs have 10 years to complete requirements.

Comprehensive Exam


- At the end of the program, all students must pass a comprehensive exam
- You should take your comprehensive exam in your last semester of coursework or after you have completed all coursework
- You must [apply](#) to take the comprehensive exam by the [stated deadline](#) to sit for the exam
- The exams are given on [specific dates](#)
- [Some study guides online](#)
- Programs differ in how many times you can repeat the exam – check with your advisor



All graduate students at USA must pass a comprehensive exam in order to receive a degree. The comprehensive exam covers all classwork in the program and should be completed during the last semester of courses or in the term after all courses have been completed. The dates for the exam are stated for an entire academic year and vary by academic program within the College (see <http://www.southalabama.edu/coe/forms/deadlinetestdates.pdf>). You must [apply](#) early in the semester you plan to take the comprehensive exam, by the [stated deadline](#) , in order to sit for the exam. Programs differ in terms of the numbers of times students may repeat the comprehensive exam so check with your advisor. Failure to pass the comprehensive exam within the number of administrations approved by the program will lead to an academic dismissal from the Graduate School. [Study guides](#) for some programs' comprehensive exams are available at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/coe/forms/deadlinetestdates.pdf> .

Graduation

- You must apply for graduation one term before your anticipated graduation
 - Apply for graduation in the Registrar's Office in Meisler Hall
 - Dates are listed in the [University Calendar](#)



A graduation application must be filed in Registrar's Office in Meisler Hall in order for a student to graduate. Applications must be completed in the semester before the anticipated graduation date. Deadlines can be found on the [University Calendar](#) . Students who have applied for graduation will be issued a Graduation Checklist that indicates any requirements still needed to be met for graduation.

USA holds two graduation ceremonies a year. Students completing degree requirements in the Summer or Fall semester graduate at the Fall commencement ceremony. Students completing degree requirements in the Spring semester attend the Spring commencement.

Office of Graduate Studies and Research

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The Office of Graduate Studies and Research handles admissions, records, Graduate Assistantships, and enrollment verification requests for all graduate students in the College of Education. Ms. Katrina Thompson (kthompson@southal.edu), the Academic Records Specialist, can be reached by email or at 251-380-2630. Dr. Abigail Baxter (abaxter@southal.edu), Director, can be reached at 251-380-2738. Both Ms. Thompson and Dr. Baxter would be happy to help you with graduate school concerns or problems.

Additional Helpful Links


- [Bulletin](#)
- [Program Sheets/Courses of Study](#)
- [The Lowdown \(student handbook\)](#)
- [E-College or USA Online](#)
- [Graduate School](#)



Evaluation of Orientation

[Please click on this link to provide us with feedback about this orientation](#)

Thank you and welcome to the College of Education.

A stack of approximately seven books of varying thicknesses and colors, including some with gold lettering on the spines, stacked vertically on a white surface. The books are slightly shadowed, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

[Please click on this link to provide us feedback about this orientation.](#)

Thank you.