

GENERAL INFORMATION

❖ Mission Statement

The mission of Okaloosa-Walton Community College is to provide quality educational programs and services whereby students may achieve their goals and the community is enhanced through academic, vocational, cultural, economic, and personal development opportunities.

❖ Goals

- To provide an environment that promotes equity and access to college programs for all members of the community.
- To provide student services and activities that enhance student success.
- To provide freshman and sophomore courses leading to baccalaureate degrees.
- To provide associate degrees and occupational programs that prepare students for employment and careers in the public and private sectors.
- To provide leadership and support for the economic and workforce development of Okaloosa and Walton counties.
- To provide college preparatory and basic skills instruction, literacy programs, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), adult secondary education and vocational preparatory instruction.
- To provide social, cultural and co-curricular opportunities in Okaloosa and Walton counties.
- To provide a variety of continuing education and distance learning opportunities.
- To promote understanding, application, and use of technology.

❖ Background

Located in the coastal heart of Northwest Florida, Okaloosa-Walton Community College has earned a reputation for educational excellence and community involvement. As one of Florida's network of 28 public community colleges, OWCC offers post-secondary education opportunities within reach of every Okaloosa and Walton County citizen. The college's two-county service district stretches from the Gulf of Mexico to the Alabama state line and encompasses a population in excess of 190,000 permanent residents.

In addition to a 264 acre campus in Niceville, OWCC operates a joint campus with the University of West Florida in Fort Walton Beach, the

Chautauqua Center in DeFuniak Springs, the Robert L.F. Sikes Education Center in Crestview and full-time centers at Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field.

When its doors first opened in August of 1964 in a temporary campus of vacant buildings in Valparaiso, OWCC had a faculty of ten instructors, three support personnel and five administrators for the 309 full-time and 458 part-time students on hand. Now, more than thirty years later, approximately 77 full-time and 228 part-time instructors, as well as 275 support staff and 12 administrators (including 4 instructional department administrators) serve more than 14,500 students annually at the college's six campuses and centers. Since its inception, more than 200,000 persons have been served by Okaloosa-Walton Community College.

Originally named Okaloosa-Walton Junior College, the college remained at the temporary Valparaiso Campus until December 1968 when the college moved to the permanent Niceville Campus. Located between State Roads 85 and 285, the 264 beautifully wooded acres of the Niceville Campus were transferred to the college from the Eglin Air Force Reservation by an act of Congress in January 1966. OWJC changed its name to Okaloosa-Walton Community College in 1988 in order to more accurately reflect the college's scope and mission in the local community.

A unique "2+2" program was established with the University of West Florida in 1982, and an act of Congress designated a permanent site for the OWCC/UWF Fort Walton Beach Campus in 1989. The 156 acre Fort Walton Beach Campus now boasts a fully combined program from the freshman year through graduate school and annually serves a combined enrollment of approximately 7,500 students.

Throughout the college's history, OWCC has maintained a consistent record of educational excellence. The median grade point average for OWCC students who transfer to the state university system consistently ranks among the top five in the state. OWCC instructors have been recognized with numerous state and national level awards for instructional excellence. The college's Forensics Debate team has achieved four state and three national championships in the last decade. OWCC students and student athletes are also consistently named to the All-Florida Academic Teams. In addition, various instructional departments routinely achieve recognition in their respective fields, such as OWCC Musical Theater, which has ranked first in the state for the past ten years.

In addition to a record of regional and national accolades, OWCC offers state-of-the-art student computer labs, a top-rated sports complex and a full program of intercollegiate and intramural sports,

a child development center, and a criminal justice training center. A 120,000 square foot fine and performing arts center on the Niceville Campus provides students the finest in instructional facilities for dance, music, theater, the visual arts and the Humanities.

❖ Facilities

The Niceville Campus of Okaloosa-Walton Community College (OWCC) is located between State Roads 85 and 285 on 264 beautifully wooded acres. Associate degrees, adult basic education, technical certificates, college and vocational preparatory programs, GED preparation and testing, and continuing education programs are offered in both day and evening classes.

The Niceville Campus includes the following permanent facilities:

Administration (A): houses the executive and administrative offices, including instructional services, administrative and financial services, marketing/community relations, the college foundation and the OWCC Alumni Association.

Technical Laboratories (B): contains electronics, drafting and design, laboratories for computer-assisted drafting and computer-aided manufacturing, computer engineering technology, and the local Cisco Academy. The Veterans Upward Bound Program is also housed in this location.

Student Services Center (C-1): houses admissions, registration, counseling, financial aid advisement services, and Veteran's Affairs.

Business & Student Support Services (C-2): provides facilities for instructional programs in business education, business administration, computer science, and mid-management. Testing services, the Student JOBS Center, and the Women's Resource Center are also housed in this location.

Science (D): comprised of classrooms and laboratory facilities for programs in biology, physics, physical sciences, and chemistry.

Learning Resources Center (E): located on the two center floors and the south mezzanine of Building "E". It contains a collection of more than 84,991 books, 10,800 audio-visual items, 365 magazines and newspapers, and 2,500 online full-text periodicals. A computer network provides access to the library holdings of all 10 state universities and 28 community colleges, numerous CD-ROM databases and worldwide information sources through Internet.

The upper north mezzanine levels house the Academic Success Center, three computer labs/classrooms and the Division of Communications and Social Sciences office. The Periodicals/Audio/Visual sections of the LRC are on the

south side. The first floor level contains faculty offices, a computer lab, and classrooms. A conference center and classrooms are located on the ground level.

Athletics and Physical Education (F): contains offices, classrooms, and storage facilities for the Division of Athletics and Physical Education, and houses the Wellness Center.

Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) (F-1): contains ROTC offices and classrooms.

Utilities, Maintenance, and Receiving (G) and (G-1): houses the air conditioning and heating equipment, central services, maintenance, custodial, grounds functions and security office.

Gymnasium (H): a multi-purpose facility used to house all indoor physical education activities and indoor sports events.

The Arts Center (J): consists of two theaters, two art galleries, a dance studio, recital hall, and choral and musical studios.

College Mall (K): contains student activities, food services, the College Store, lounges, meeting rooms, recreational areas, and houses the Continuing Education Department.

Mathematics/Public Safety (L): provides offices, classrooms, and specialized laboratories for the mathematics department and facilities, and forensics photo lab, for programs offered by the Florida Criminal Justice Training Center No. 21.

Visual Arts (M): houses instructional art programs in pottery and drawing.

Child Development & Education Center and Collegiate High School (P): houses the Mary Lou O'Connor Child Development Education Center, the Early Childhood Education staff and classrooms, and the Collegiate High School offices, classrooms and labs.

Graphic Arts Building (Q): houses Graphic Services and the Instructional Graphic Communications programs. Facilities for the Public Safety Division are also housed in this location as are the Adult General Education classes.

Computer Services (R): provides laboratories and related instructional facilities for the computer science program. The college's Information Technology staff is located in this facility.

The Sports Complex: The sports complex is located west of the Niceville Campus and contains a golf course, field houses for men's and women's baseball and softball, two diamonds, bleachers, and a Strength Training Center.

Observatory (D-2): located on the northwest corner of the Niceville Campus, the Observatory houses an 18" automated reflective telescope, complete with a CCD camera and software to allow the location and recording of events in the sky. This 18" telescope is comparable to the finest telescopes in the southeastern USA. The observatory includes a state-of-the-art classroom and fiber-optic connection to the OWCC campus.

OWCC operates instructional sites throughout the two county area, making the programs and services of the college easily accessible to the entire community.

The Okaloosa-Walton Community College and the University of West Florida Fort Walton Beach Campus is a fully combined joint campus which provides higher education opportunities ranging from Associate to Doctoral degree programs, as well as non-credit and adult basic education programs. In addition, the campus houses OWCC's various economic development programs including: the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, the Technology Coast Manufacturing & Engineering Network, the Gulf Coast Alliance for Technology Transfer, the Quality Institute, the Northwest Florida Manufacturing Technology Center and the Institute for Professional Development. The campus also houses the college's Distance Learning program.

The OWCC/UWF campus is located on a 156-acre wooded site on Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and includes the following permanent facilities:

Administration (1): houses administrative offices and the business and registration offices of both institutions, a large community meeting room, and two conference rooms.

Student Services (2): contains the campus College Store, student center and student government offices.

Classroom Building (3): houses classrooms and the Career Assessment Center.

Classroom Building (4): comprised of faculty offices, classrooms, a reading improvement laboratory, Math and English tutoring services and counseling offices.

Utilities and Maintenance Building (5): houses the air conditioning and heating equipment, central services, maintenance, and custodial/grounds functions for the campus.

Science Building (6): contains science laboratory facilities for programs in earth science, biology, chemistry, and physics.

Computer Labs (7): houses computer laboratories, classrooms, and OWCC's various Economic Development programs.

Library, Fitness Center, Auditorium (8): contains a 14,391 volume graduate level library, fitness center, dance studio, and a 230 seat lecture auditorium.

The OWCC Chautauqua Center (N): located on 90 wooded acres along Highway 90 West in DeFuniak Springs, offers a full range of college services and programs. Diversified college credit and non-credit programs including 2-year degrees, adult education/GED preparation, college preparatory, and recreational/leisure courses are offered in day and evening classes. The center provides admissions/registration, financial aid information, placement testing and academic counseling services. The center houses three computer labs, small conferencing facilities as well as a Title 20 Child Care Center.

The Robert L.F. Sikes Education Center (I) in Crestview is located on Highway 90 East. The full-service center offers college credit, adult basic education and other courses and provides placement testing, advising and program planning, registration, and financial aid services. The center houses two computer labs, six classrooms, and administrative/student services space.

OWCC Eglin Air Force Base and OWCC Hurlburt Field Centers: offer college credit and noncredit programs for military and civil service personnel and the general public. Both centers provide admissions/registration, financial aid information, placement testing and counseling services. Also offered are courses specifically geared toward the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) studies, English as a Second Language (ESL), General Education Development (GED), and other courses designed to meet the needs of individual military units, base contractors, and individuals who are retiring from the military.

❖ OWCC Foundation

The Okaloosa-Walton Community College Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization which seeks tax deductible contributions to help OWCC promote academic excellence through scholarships, instructional improvements, and educational equipment acquisition.

The OWCC Foundation was established in 1988 to give individuals, organizations and businesses the opportunity to directly invest in the educational mission of OWCC. As an IRS 501 (c)(3) organization, donations to the OWCC Foundation are tax deductible and may be eligible for matching funds.

4 ❖ GENERAL INFORMATION

The Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund matches private contributions to community colleges for endowments on a \$4 to \$6 ratio. The OWCC Foundation has a 23 member Board of Directors comprised of business and community leaders in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

The OWCC Foundation is vitally important to the quality and diversity of higher education in our community. The foundation operates under the philosophy of building principal and using the interest to support various college endeavors. To further the mission of the college, no donations to the OWCC Foundation are used for the foundation's operating expenses. Annual pledges of \$50 to the Foundation President's Club help underwrite these operational expenses. For information, contact the OWCC Foundation office at (850) 729-5357 or visit www.owccfoundation.org.

❖ OWCC Alumni Association

The Okaloosa-Walton Community College Alumni Association provides all former students and graduates with an organization to promote the interests of OWCC. Alumni help support causes which enhance educational opportunities and perpetuate the friendships made while attending OWCC.

Membership in the OWCC Alumni Association is open to all graduates of the college and to any student who has attended OWCC.

The Alumni Association, in cooperation with the college, participates in various activities and sponsors events. It encourages creation of OWCC Alumni chapters at senior institutions. The association attempts to provide resources to help in scholarships and other program support beneficial to OWCC.

For additional information about the OWCC Alumni Association contact the OWCC Foundation and Alumni office at (850) 729-5357.

❖ Year-Round Opportunity

The college's programs of continuing study vary considerably in their timing. Enrichment programs, workshops, institutes, and numerous community services and certificate programs are offered on demand as sufficient requests occur. Special programs are announced as they are developed. The public is especially invited to request short or extended offerings in areas of need or interest.

❖ Composition of Student Body

Okaloosa-Walton Community College is a coeducational institution serving approximately 14,500 students annually. Students age 16 to 24 comprise

52 percent of the student body. Students age 25 to 34 comprise 23 percent and students 35 to 49 comprise 21 percent. Other age students comprise the remainder of the student population.

❖ Accreditation

Okaloosa-Walton Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award associate degrees, certificates and diplomas.

❖ Equal Rights

Okaloosa-Walton Community College is dedicated to the concepts of equity and equal opportunity. It is the specific intention of the college not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, creed, handicap, marital status, national origin, race, religion, or sex in its employment practices or in the admission and treatment of students. The OWCC Equity Coordinator may be contacted through the Office of the Director of Human Resources, Niceville Campus, extension 6365. The coordinator is designated to coordinate compliance with the Florida Educational Equity Act and information about the availability of the OWCC Grievance Procedure. The Equity Coordinator is also Coordinator of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

❖ Student Records and Transcripts

Student Records

The Office of Enrollment Services oversees both admissions and registration at Okaloosa-Walton Community College. All permanent, official, and final records of students who have attended the college are housed in and released by this office located on the Niceville Campus. A student who submits an application for admission and official transcripts to the college yet fails to enroll within 3 years must re-submit original documents upon re-entry to the college. Information is released only upon the written request of the student in accordance with federal laws.

Student Transcripts

Transcripts and other student information will not be released if the student has an outstanding obligation to the college (financial obligation or an incomplete admission file). Under most circumstances, a student may obtain a copy of his/her transcript within 24 hours after the request. Transcripts will be sent within seven (7) working days of the request. All requests must be in writing

by the student. A student may request a copy of the academic record by completing the Transcript Request Form or by submitting a signed statement of request to the Office of Enrollment Services in person or via U.S. Mail or by fax. E-mail requests do not include an original signature and therefore cannot be honored.

Release of Student Information

The following information may be released at the discretion of the college. **Directory Information: Name, address, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, enrollment status, degrees and awards received, and the most previous education agency or institution attended. In addition to directory information, the college is required by law to release to the United States Armed Forces student recruiting information which may include the student's name, address, phone number, date and place of birth, level of education, most recent previous institution attended, major field of study, and degrees received.**

Access & Review of Records

A student or parent* will be accorded access to the student's record within a reasonable time after the submission of a written request to the custodian of that record. Suitable arrangements will be made to permit the record to be reviewed in the presence of a representative of the custodian of the record.

*Rights of parents: Once a student reaches the age of eighteen, or is enrolled in a post-secondary program, parents no longer have any rights under the privacy act unless:

- The student gives written consent to release the information to the student's parents, or
- The parents provide evidence that the student is a dependent of the parents as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

Protection of Privacy

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (Public Law 93-380) students may request that no information, including "Directory Information", be released except as required by law, by obtaining a *Notification to Deny Disclosure of Directory Information Form* from the Dean of Students. This form must be signed and submitted to the Dean. **Note:** A student's request to prevent the release of any informational items may result in preventing the publication of all items including

graduation, honors, and awards. Students are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students or the Director of Enrollment Services/Registrar with any concerns about confidentiality of records and release of information.

The custodian of student records may release information from these records to others only upon authorization in writing from the student or upon order of a court of competent jurisdiction except as required by the President in the discharge of his duties as authorized by law, the state, and the board.

Enrollment Verification

The college utilizes the services of the National Student Loan Clearinghouse to automatically process enrollment verifications for student loans.

Address Change

It is the student's responsibility to keep information current by officially notifying the college. The student's signature is required to make such changes in person or students may make changes electronically by using the OWCC RaiderNet system and a PIN (personal ID number). Forms to change residence, mailing address, telephone number, etc. are available from the Office of Enrollment Services, 729-5374.

❖ College Internet Site

The OWCC Internet Site (<http://www.owcc.cc.fl.us>) supports the mission of the college by providing worldwide access to college information, registration, student services, distance learning instruction and support, academic resources, and more. The OWCC web site is the gateway to subordinate web sites affiliated with the college such as those maintained by individual college instructors or organizations. The privacy of users is upheld through the standards in force for public institutions in Florida, and privacy policies are posted on the site.

❖ RaiderNet

RaiderNet is the OWCC student on-line information and registration system. This computer based system provides students on-line access to register for classes, view their term grade report, view financial information such as payment due dates and fees owed, and allows students to update directory information such as change of address to protect privacy. RaiderNet provides access via a personal identification number (PIN) that ensures that the student alone will have access to his or her own

student information. The system is available via the Internet worldwide through the OWCC internet site at <http://www.owcc.cc.fl.us>. Questions regarding RaiderNet should be referred to 729-OWCC (6922).

❖ **FACTS**

FACTS, the Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students system, allows access to student services and resources for Florida public community colleges and universities, and many private institutions. OWCC students can view their student transcripts, run a degree audit, track progress toward graduation or apply for admission. FACTS can be accessed either through the college internet site or directly through the FACTS web site at <http://www.facts.org>.

❖ **Drug-Free Workplace**

Okaloosa-Walton Community College is firmly committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace. Employees and consultants are prohibited from engaging in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the workplace while officially representing the college. Violation of this policy will subject the employee or consultant to appropriate disciplinary

action up to and including termination of employment. Violators may also be required to participate in an approved drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program. Compliance with this policy statement is a condition of employment with Okaloosa-Walton Community College as an organization receiving federal grants and contracts.

❖ **Copyright Statement for College Publications**

College policy (Policy No. 6Hx17-9.03) states that employees and students will comply with the U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code, Section 101). Employees and students may use, perform, or reproduce copyrighted works when authorized by (1) licenses or written permission from copyright owner; (2) the fair-use guidelines (available from the OWCC Learning Resources Center); (3) the principle of fair use; (4) specific documented exemptions in the copyright law. Copyright items include print, video, electronic data, performances, music, and computer software.

Employees and students who willfully disregard this policy or the specific provisions set forth in the College Copyright Manual (available in the OWCC Learning Resources Center) are subject to state and federal penalties as well as college disciplinary action. The college will refuse to grant a request to copy material if fulfillment of the request might lead to a violation of the copyright law. Further information is available from the Office of the Director of the Learning Resources Center, 729-5392.



OWCC academic counseling and advising staff are ready to help new and returning students plan a program of study at OWCC.