



# Be Advised Newsletter

Fall 2020

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## Spring 2021 Registration Information



**Now is the time to start making appointments with your advisees to discuss spring registration!** Students have already received text messages from the college telling them to contact you.

**Spring class registration *begins* on the following dates:**

- **November 2:** Currently enrolled **sophomores** (earned 30+ credit hours *prior to* this semester)
- **November 3:** Currently enrolled **freshmen** (earned fewer than 30 credit hours *prior to* this semester)
- **November 16:** New and readmitted students

**Campus Connect Orientation will be virtual again and is required for new freshmen for spring before they can register for classes.** Dates will be announced soon. Students will receive invites in their Vol State email accounts.

**Instructional methods for spring 2021 will be like fall 2020.** There will be synchronous and asynchronous online courses, hybrid courses, and a limited number of in-person courses. See definitions [here](#). Meeting with a student who's nervous about online classes? [See ways to help](#).

## New Dynamic Forms Related to Advising

Several paper-based processes have been changed to Dynamic Forms!

- **Forms Initiated by Faculty and Professional Advisors:**
  - Log in to your My Vol State portal at <https://portal.volstate.edu> > **Faculty** > **Student Forms**

### Student Forms

- [Grade Change Form](#)
- [Course Substitution Form](#)
- [Transfer Credit Equivalency](#)
- [Request for Incomplete Form](#)
- [Graduation Application](#)
- [LDA Change Form](#)

- **Course Substitution Forms:** After you submit the form, it goes to the dean and then to Records for processing if approved. You will receive a confirmation email from Records letting you know the result.
  - *If the substitution is denied, please put a note in Degree Works so other advisors are aware too.*
- **Graduation Application:** You as the advisor initiate the form. It goes to the student to review, and the student forwards it to Records for processing. You'll get a confirmation email when this is done.
- **Forms Initiated by Students:**
  - Student logs into their My Vol State portal at <https://portal.volstate.edu> > Pride Online > Student Forms

#### Student Forms

- [Order Your Vol State Transcript](#)
- [Enrollment Verification](#)
- [Name/Permanent Address Change](#)
- [Major Change](#)
- [Veterans Certification Request](#)
- [Appeal for late withdrawal and/or refund](#)

- **Major Changes:** Ideally, students meet with an advisor prior to changing their major. Student then fills out the major change form and submits it. The form goes to Admissions for the major to be changed.
- **Financial Aid PLAN form:** If a student wins a financial aid appeal, they will receive a link from the Financial Aid Office to the PLAN form. **The student must initiate the form** by clicking on the link filling out the information requested. Then they submit it to you to fill out.
  - **You and the student must collaborate on what courses they will take their remaining semesters** so that they know what is going to be on the PLAN form. Then you submit the form to the Financial Aid Office.
  - Failure to submit the student's Financial Aid PLAN form will result in their aid not being disbursed and them possibly being purged for non-payment.

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## Faculty Advisor Spotlight: Don Ellis



*“...it’s passion, compassion, and empathy that makes it all work. Be an advocate for the students you advise.”*

**Where are you from?** Gloucester City, New Jersey where I spent my first 46 years. Currently Greenbrier, TN where I have lived for the last 8 years.

**Where did you go to college?** Undergrad Bethel College, MBA Bethel University. (It changed its designation Fall 2009.)

**What was your career prior to coming to Vol State to teach?** I had a 43-year career with DuPont in operations, maintenance and 30+ years in Supply Chain. My last assignment prior to retirement was Global Sourcing Quality Leader responsible for supplier quality focusing on engineered equipment, maintenance materials, contract services and capital expenditures. It was in this role I chaired a research team for the Construction Industry Institute out of the University of Texas. “Achieving Zero Rework through Effective Supplier Quality Surveillance. Working with academics and grad school students during my first year at Vol State also encouraged me to keep moving forward with my teaching career.

**How did you decide you wanted to be a teacher?** I call it Divine Intervention. I met George Wilson while I was President of ISM Nashville Inc. (the Nashville affiliate of the Institute for Supply Management.) George asked me to participate in his discussion boards to bring an outside perspective to his class. That was January 2011. In April he asked for my transcripts and sent me a link to the application for Vol State. Summer 2011 I taught my first class. And as they say, the rest is history.

**What do you teach at Vol State?** I am the program lead and teach the Logistics and Supply Chain Management classes along with other business classes.

**What do you like best about advising?** I teach primarily online so I don't get to see my students. I started advising after I retired to help out in the summer and then took on the Logistics students. I like the interaction, the ability to help students, especially non-traditional learners to achieve their goal. As an adult learner myself I feel we need to take the extra steps to keep those students in our programs.

**What is the hardest part about advising?** In my opinion you have to have passion for your students and be able to show your empathy and compassion to them as you deal with students who hit difficult times or students who are truly in the wrong major. Working through that sometimes is the hardest part for me. Inevitably you don't always deliver good news.

**How has the COVID situation and the transition to mostly virtual services affected you as a faculty advisor?** This summer was very interesting providing either phone or Zoom advising sessions. All in all, it worked out well but I found it much easier to work with students on Zoom than just on the phone. Since we didn't have the face to face [Campus] Connect sessions, I took the time to take all the students I worked with through Degree Works and Schedule planner to be sure they knew where to find information. I think that was a plus.

**What advice do you have for new faculty advisors?** First and foremost, don't be afraid to ask questions. We have great folks in the advising group who helped train me and who I drove crazy on Skype this summer. Get all the advising information you can; we're all still learning. Learn who the Completion Advisors are outside of your department; you will need them. After that, remember it's passion, compassion, and empathy that makes it all work. Be an advocate for the students you advise.

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## How to Assist Students Struggling with (or Nervous About) Online Classes



Unfortunately, as you know, many students do not feel comfortable with online classes.

Regardless of a student's age, often their expectations of what online classes will be like can set them up for failure, such as thinking online classes will be too hard, or easier than in person, etc.

Students come from many different backgrounds and levels of preparation academically and technologically. The absolute necessity for strong time management, self-discipline, and self-advocacy skills in online classes hits a lot of students hard, and many flounder.

We often hear students say that they don't know who their professor is, and they feel like they are alone teaching themselves. Conversely, many professors try to reach out to struggling students with no response.

**How can we help them in our advising roles?**

## Encourage students to:

- **Come in with an open mind**, willing to try something new and ask for help!
- **READ EVERY WORD in eLearn**. It is a LOT to process and they should leave no stone unturned!
- **Take eLearn classes instead of TN eCampus classes whenever possible**. Vol State eLearn courses are less expensive and they are taught by Vol State professors.
- **Consider synchronous online courses** if available. Face-to-face is the next best thing to in person.
- **Schedule one-on-one Zoom meetings with professors** and to have **specific** questions ready to ask them.
- **Use online tutoring resources** such as the [Vol State Learning Commons](#), tutor.com through eLearn, etc.
- **Connect with a Vol State Academic Coach** to help them navigate online classes, learn time management techniques, and communicate better. (They do not offer tutoring.)
- **Carry a planner or use a calendar app in their phone** to keep track of deadlines, set reminders, etc. Students have free access to the Microsoft Outlook calendar through their [Microsoft 365 suite](#).
- **Schedule study time** for every class every day. They should study, on average, 3 times the number of credit hours they're taking.
- **NOT work too many hours in addition to school!** Students taking a full load of classes should not work full time. If they MUST work full time, they should talk to the Financial Aid Office about options for funding a part-time load. We have found that a lot of TN Promise students think they can work full time while going to school full time. The proper amount of study time for a 15-hour load is a 45-hour, full-time job!
- **Connect with their classmates virtually**. So many students think they are alone in online classes, even with the online discussion boards.
- **Adult Learners only:** Apply to be paired with a [Pioneer Connections Peer Mentor!](#) (fellow adult learner)

**Use your own experience!** Your faculty role gives you a unique perspective to inform your advising role. What do **you** recommend for students?

[Vol State was ranked #7](#) in the U.S. in College Consensus's Top 50 Online Community Colleges 2020. We are the only TN college listed in the rankings. We offer a great product to students, and a little encouragement goes a long way!

*Several members of the Office of Advising team contributed to the above list.*

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## TypeFocus – Personality and Career Assessment UPDATE



VSCC Campus Share (V :) > Advising Information > Career Counseling > TypeFocus

You may encounter students who are undecided about their major or career. Vol State offers a **FREE** career and personality assessment option for students called TypeFocus. This program includes an abbreviated Myers-Briggs Type Indicator assessment and an abbreviated Strong Interest Inventory all in one.

***Soon, TypeFocus will link students to actual Vol State degree programs that match their interests per the assessments!***

Students need to contact an advisor in the Office of Advising in order to obtain the information to take the assessments.

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## Drop/Withdrawal Procedure Review for Fall 2020

The following outlines the procedures required of **students, professors, and advisors** in order to drop or withdraw from the semester. **Note that this has changed a bit since most students are taking online classes only!**

See [Important Dates](#) for drop/withdrawal deadlines of all terms within the fall semester.

### Dropping a Class (But Still Keeping At Least One Course) = Handled by Student and Professor

1. **Students** must talk to the Financial Aid Office to determine how the drop will affect their aid AND whether or not they will owe money back. **615-230-3456** | [financial.aid@volstate.edu](mailto:financial.aid@volstate.edu) | **Ramer 129**
2. **Students** must notify the **professor** (in eLearn or by regular email) that they want to drop the class. Students must include their full name, V number, and the reason for the drop.
3. **Student and professor** discuss the situation and determine whether a drop is necessary.
4. If the student decides to drop, the **professor** must forward the student's email to [Records@volstate.edu](mailto:Records@volstate.edu).
5. The **Records Office** will drop the student from the class. **Please do not send these students to the Office of Advising.**
6. The **student** should check their My Vol State portal at <https://portal.volstate.edu> > Pride Online > Student Detail Schedule within 24 hours to make sure the course is dropped.

### Withdrawing from the Semester (Dropping All Courses) = Handled by Student and Office of Advising

1. **Students** must talk to the Financial Aid Office to determine how the withdrawal will affect their aid AND whether or not they will owe money back. **615-230-3456** | [financial.aid@volstate.edu](mailto:financial.aid@volstate.edu) | **Ramer 129**
2. **Students** must notify an **Advisor/Counselor, Completion Advisor, or other approved staff advisor** that they want to withdraw from the semester. *Student may also contact the Office of Advising for assistance.* [See contact info.](#)
3. **Student and advisor** will discuss the situation and determine whether a withdrawal is necessary.
4. If the student decides to withdraw, the **advisor** will complete the new online Dynamic Withdrawal Form, sign it electronically, and submit it to the student.
5. **Student** will receive an email with a link to the form. The student must review and sign electronically, and then submit it. It will go to the **Records Office**.
6. The **Records Office** will withdraw the student from the semester.
7. The **student** should check their My Vol State portal at <https://portal.volstate.edu> > Pride Online > Student Detail Schedule within 24 hours to make sure all courses are withdrawn.

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## Important Term and Drop/Withdrawal Dates

### Term Dates:

Aug 24 – Dec 4	Full term
Aug 24 – Dec 3	Full Term (TN eCampus)
Sept 29 – Nov 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> 5 Weeks
Nov 3 – Dec 4	3 <sup>rd</sup> 5 Weeks
Sept 29 – Dec 4	10 Weeks
Oct 14 – Dec 1	2 <sup>nd</sup> 7 Weeks
Oct 14 – Dec 3	2 <sup>nd</sup> 7 Weeks (TN eCampus)

**The day prior to the start of each term is the last day for a 100% refund for that term.**

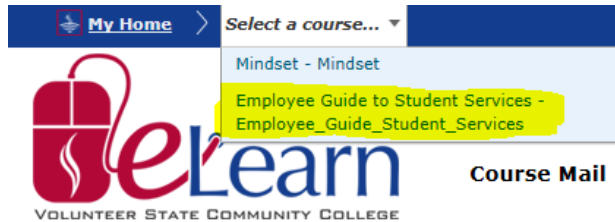
### Last Day to Withdraw (by Term):

Oct 30	Full term
Oct 30	Full term (TN eCampus)
Oct 21	2 <sup>nd</sup> 5 weeks
Nov 25	3 <sup>rd</sup> 5 Weeks
Nov 13	10 Weeks
Nov 13	2 <sup>nd</sup> 7 Weeks
Nov 13	2 <sup>nd</sup> 7 Weeks (TN eCampus)
Nov 13	10 weeks

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## Advising Information Quick References – Reminder

1. VSCC Campus Share (V:) > Advising Information
2. Campus Resource Guide  
(V: ) > Advising Information > Quick Resource Guide
3. VSCC Campus Share (V :) > Advising Information> BE ADVISED NEWSLETTERS
4. eLearn: Employee Guide to Student Services



If you do not find the answers you are seeking, call the Advising Hotline at **615-230-2736**. (Faculty and staff only!)

The Office of Advising is still offering the same services remotely as in person. Feel free to contact us!

You have received this publication of *Be Advised*  
because you serve in an advising role at Vol  
State.

Questions, comments, or suggestions?

Know someone who should have received this  
publication but did not?

Please contact Lindsay Guenther at  
[Lindsay.Guenther@volstate.edu](mailto:Lindsay.Guenther@volstate.edu) or 615-230-3377.

