



## **School Handbook**

**2019 – 2020**

WELCOME.....	1
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY .....	1
ATTENDANCE.....	1
CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE .....	2
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT .....	2
CLASSROOM FACILITATION.....	3
COMMUNICATION.....	3
COMPUTER USAGE .....	3
CONCURRENT CREDIT – INSTITUTIONAL CONFLICT .....	3
COPYRIGHT OF VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CONTENT .....	3
DROP/ADD PROCEDURES - VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CORE AND CTE STUDENTS .....	3
DROP/ADD PROCEDURE - VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CONCURRENT CREDIT STUDENTS .....	4
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS .....	4
ENROLLMENT .....	5
ENROLLMENT STATUS.....	5
EXTENSIONS/EARLY TESTING.....	5
FEE STRUCTURE .....	5
FLEX PACED ENROLLMENT GUIDELINES .....	6
GRADE POLICY .....	6
GRADE CHALLENGE PROCEDURES.....	6
GRADE REPORTING .....	6
GRADE REPORTING - CONCURRENT CREDIT STUDENTS .....	7
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.....	7
INCLEMENT WEATHER .....	7
LATE ENROLLMENTS .....	8
LIVE INTERACTIVE ZOOM SESSIONS.....	8
ATTENDING LIVE ZOOM SESSIONS FROM LOCATIONS OTHER THAN THE LOCAL SCHOOL.....	8
MAINTAINING RECORDS.....	9
MAKE-UP POLICY .....	9
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT .....	9
PREREQUISITES.....	10
SCHEDULING COURSES .....	10
SCHOOL DISMISSAL .....	10
SEMESTER EXTENSIONS .....	10
STUDENT COMMUNICATION .....	11
STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS .....	11
TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES .....	11
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS .....	11
TESTING POLICY.....	12
TESTING RETAKES – EXIT AND MODULE TESTS.....	12
TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS .....	12
TRANSFERS .....	12
TUITION REFUND .....	13
VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CONTACT INFORMATION .....	14

## **WELCOME**

The administrators and teachers of Virtual Arkansas welcome you to the 2019 -2020 school year. Virtual Arkansas is committed to developing the full potential of Arkansas students by providing access to quality digital/online courses that incorporate blended, interactive teaching, to prepare students to be successful in their college and career educational pursuits and in the global economy. We will provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum taught by Arkansas qualified teachers. Maintaining the academic integrity of the educational process through digital learning is a priority of the Virtual Arkansas team.

The Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit campus may have different policies due to the requirements of the partnering university.

Students are encouraged to participate in the live, interactive sessions. Important information concerning academics, upcoming events, and general updates will be disseminated to you by electronic and personal communication from Virtual Arkansas.

We appreciate your school's participation and know that our partnership will be successful. These coordinated policies and assurances are designed to equip students for success in our course opportunities. We thank you in advance for partnering with Virtual Arkansas.

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Institutions are implementing policies and strategies to address academic dishonesty and to ensure that students do their own work and give credit to the originator of the ideas, when using the thoughts or work of others. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, stealing academic property, and cheating. Virtual Arkansas subscribes to online services to identify material that may have been plagiarized. Students identified as being in violation of an Academic Dishonesty Policy may not receive credit for that work and may suffer additional penalties based on local school policy. Depending on the severity of the academic dishonesty, as determined by the campus director and teacher, a student may receive a zero (0) for the assignment.

The Virtual Arkansas campuses may impose, but are not limited to, the following actions in situations involving academic dishonesty.

1. The student may receive a lower grade, with the possibility of revision,
2. The student may receive a grade of zero for the test or assignment,
3. The student may be awarded a failing grade for the course, or
4. The student may be withdrawn from the course.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In the online environment, students assume more responsibility for keeping up with the course requirements. It is critical that students access and interact with the online content on a daily basis and participate in the scheduled live interactive Zoom sessions. If a student is absent from a digital learning class, the student is responsible for making up the missed assignments.

When students put-off accessing the course content, they soon discover that they are behind and then may not be able to satisfy the course requirements to pass a class. There will be times when students have to miss class for locally scheduled activities. If a school has scheduled an event that will interfere with a Virtual Arkansas course, please reinforce with the students the need to access the course content so they do not fall behind. Students absent from Virtual

Arkansas classes are responsible for making up the missed assignments. Facilitators will not be responsible for reporting attendance to the Virtual Arkansas teacher, but they may need to provide this information to the appropriate individual at their schools. Teachers monitor student progress and if a student is not accessing the course content on a consistent basis, the school will be notified by the teacher.

Attendance for the Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit campus is specialized due to preparation for post-secondary involvement. Students are to communicate in advance with the teacher regarding absences and making up assignments/tests except in emergency situations. They must adhere to the specific guidelines given in each teacher's course syllabus.

Advanced Placement classes do not end until the Advanced Placement exam is given. In the event of absences due to extenuating circumstances (illness, medical emergency, etc.), the Virtual Arkansas campus will work on a case-by-case basis with the local administration to devise a plan for the student.

## **CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE**

Classroom discipline will be in accordance with the policies of the local school district. Each teacher may establish his/her own class rules and procedures as long as they do not conflict with local school policy. In the event of serious student discipline issues, the name of the student and the specifics of the problem could be reported to the local principal. If action is merited, the procedure below may be followed:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – Upon request, the Facilitator will complete a local school Discipline Report and turn this into the principal.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – Upon request, the Facilitator will complete a local school Discipline Report and turn this into the principal. The local school principal or designee should contact the parent and inform the parent of the issue.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Student will be disciplined according to local school policy.

4<sup>th</sup> offense – Student may be officially dropped from the class. If this occurs, the student may not receive credit for the digital learning course.

*\*Please be aware that some actions may result in immediate removal from class, regardless of whether it is the first, second, or third offense. If a student is removed from class, he/she may be issued a W, F, or not receive a grade.*

## **CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT**

Schools are responsible for ensuring the digital learning classroom is equipped based on the Virtual Arkansas [technology specifications](https://virtualarkansas.org/30897_1) ([https://virtualarkansas.org/30897\\_1](https://virtualarkansas.org/30897_1)). The goal is to provide a classroom that supports a healthy and optimal learning experience for students enrolled in Virtual Arkansas courses. On-going training and support on establishing and maintaining a classroom environment conducive to learning will be provided throughout the academic year. Local administration is encouraged to support the facilitator's efforts to design a safe, clean classroom environment that is conducive to learning.

Students must have the following to participate in Virtual Arkansas classes:

1. A district assigned email address. If students do not have a school assigned email account, communication with the teacher may be delayed.
2. A webcam.
3. A headset with a microphone.

## **CLASSROOM FACILITATION**

An effective facilitator is essential to the digital learning classroom. According to the [Arkansas Department of Education's Rules Governing Distance and Digital Learning](#) (Section 3.01), All digital learning courses shall have an "Adult Facilitator" (who) is the person responsible for supervising and assisting the students at a brick-and-mortar location. The adult facilitator must be an adult approved by the school district or open-enrollment public charter school." Research shows that training and access to effective communication tools are keys to a successful digital learning experience for all stakeholders. The school should ensure that the facilitator completes the Virtual Arkansas provided training. Upon completion of the required training, facilitators will be issued a certificate for documentation. If your facilitator has six periods to facilitate a day, it is also recommended that a planning period be provided to prepare documents, print instructional materials, and access lesson plans. Facilitators should have a personal computer in the digital learning classroom for instant communication with the teacher and to monitor student progress in classes.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between local school personnel and the Virtual Arkansas administrators/ teacher is important to the overall success of the digital learning program. Each participating school should designate a Super User and Registrar who will be responsible for transmitting student records, handling communication issues, student enrollment, update the school administrator contact information, etc. This should be done prior to the first day of class.

## **COMPUTER USAGE**

The school district's computer usage policy will be enforced in the Virtual Arkansas classroom. In regard to digital learning applications, unacceptable usage includes, but is not limited to, using inappropriate language, cyberbullying, logging in using another student's username and password, and trespassing in the files of others. These actions may result in the loss of access to these applications and websites. Any communication or content is subject to access and review by local school and Virtual Arkansas personnel at any time.

## **CONCURRENT CREDIT – INSTITUTIONAL CONFLICT**

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) Coordinating Board policy regarding off campus instruction provides a process by which ADHE will resolve any conflict between institutions related to the service area. Please contact the Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit program supervisor for details regarding this policy.

## **COPYRIGHT OF VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CONTENT**

All original content contained in Virtual Arkansas courses and housed within the LMS is the property of Virtual Arkansas. This includes, but is not limited to: reading material, assignment/tests, images, course resources, videos, and Zoom recordings. This content is intended for the sole use of students currently enrolled in a Virtual Arkansas course and is not to be reproduced, copied, shared, used locally by districts, or posted to any outside services, e.g. social media, without the written permission of Virtual Arkansas.

## **DROP/ADD PROCEDURES - VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CORE AND CTE STUDENTS**

All drops/adds in Virtual Arkansas classes are done using the registration system.

As a courtesy to other schools, if you know a student will not be in a course at the beginning of

the semester, please drop the student so that a student on the Waiting List may be enrolled in the course.

If a student is not enrolled in a requested class by the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of instruction, the school should place the student in another course locally or contact Virtual Arkansas to determine if there are openings in other courses that the student may be enrolled in for the semester.

**General Drop Policy** - Virtual Arkansas teachers will do everything possible to help students succeed in coursework, but there may be situations when a school should consider dropping students who are enrolled in Virtual Arkansas Core and CTE classes. These situations are usually failure to complete work, discipline, or an academic dishonesty violation. To be successful, students should not procrastinate in completing coursework, but do it on a timely basis. These policies are intended to minimize the adverse effects on students when they are not progressing in the course.

Schools should consider dropping students who have not logged in to begin working within the first 10 school days after enrollment, or the instructional start date.

## **DROP/ADD PROCEDURE - VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CONCURRENT CREDIT STUDENTS**

Please refer to your syllabi or contact the Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit office for information regarding university deadlines to add/drop classes. The school administrator or counselor has access to the withdrawal forms and must follow the university's procedures for dropping students from concurrent classes. Students are responsible for the partnering university course drop fees and withdrawal from the institution, if applicable. Failure to pay these fees may prevent a student from receiving an official college transcript.

Students should be prepared for the academic rigor of concurrent credit courses.

- The partnering university may have different deadlines to drop a course.
- The student must be dropped from the course in the Virtual Arkansas registration system and through the university.
- Before withdrawing/dropping a course, a student should consider the impact on future financial aid.
- College hours attempted in high school under pre-freshman status count toward the maximum number of hours a student is allowed to attempt under federal and state grant programs.

Students should use good judgment and consult the post-secondary institution they currently attend, as well as the post-secondary institution they plan to attend after high school graduation, for advice before withdrawing.

## **EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS**

Participating schools should ensure each student has the [required text and resource materials](https://virtualarkansas.org/227526_2) ([https://virtualarkansas.org/227526\\_2](https://virtualarkansas.org/227526_2)), (calculators, dictionaries, etc.) necessary for the Virtual Arkansas classes by the first day of class. Schools may have the option to lease/purchase the electronic version of a textbook. If an e-book is used, please ensure that students have access outside the academic day to the resource. If after-hours access is not possible, schools may elect to provide students with paper textbooks. For those students who do not have internet connectivity at home, facilitators may be able to print the current text material for those students. As always, please be aware of the copyright restrictions imposed by the publisher of

the e-book. In addition to the required text and ancillary materials, schools will need to ensure that access to whitelisted resources.

## ENROLLMENT

Unlike planning and scheduling for one school, Virtual Arkansas coordinates the scheduling and delivery of instruction to over 280 Arkansas high schools. If issues arise enrolling students in classes, please be patient as we work to serve our students in the most efficient and effective manner possible. To schedule teachers efficiently, we ask schools to be diligent in registering and maintaining their student enrollments in the Virtual Arkansas registration system. **As your needs change**, please update the information in the Virtual Arkansas registration system as soon as possible so that students on the Waiting List may be enrolled.

## ENROLLMENT STATUS

Student enrollment is not guaranteed until the district confirms acceptance of the electronic Memorandum of Understanding and provides the required student information (IEP, 504 Modifications) to complete the enrollment.

Each participating district must also assure Virtual Arkansas that each student enrolled in a Virtual Arkansas course has the required Audio Visual Release/Memorandum of Understanding form, with a parent or guardian signature, on file with the district, **within the first 10 days of the student being enrolled in a Virtual Arkansas course**. If the required documents are not provided within the stated time frame, the student may be dropped from the course.

## EXTENSIONS/EARLY TESTING

There will be situations when a student, school, or parent requests an extension or early testing. Virtual Arkansas instructors are to follow the following procedures if this form of request arises:

1. Local students must first receive permission from their local administrator prior to receiving approval from Virtual Arkansas.
2. VA instructor will inform student and facilitator that he/she must receive, via email, approval for any extension requests from a local administrator (the email shall include the student's name, a statement of approval, and the approved extension final date or window.)
3. Upon receipt of the approval, instructor will contact the student and facilitator confirming the approval and the approved extension deadline. The Director of Academics or designee will be copied on this email.

**Concurrent Credit Campus students must meet directly with their instructor prior to extension consideration due to university guidelines.**

## FEE STRUCTURE

The fee structure has changed for the 2019 – 2020 school year. The district membership fee has been eliminated. Districts may continue to submit enrollment requests for any of the courses offered through Virtual Arkansas. Specific paperwork must be submitted by the deadline for schools to enroll students in the Concurrent Credit courses. Schools that elect to use the Virtual Arkansas content-only will provide a local teacher as the teacher-of-record. Virtual Arkansas will provide the content, LMS hosting, training, and support for the local teachers and students for the duration of the course.

For Concurrent Credit courses, the per student, per semester, per course fee will be \$80. The fee

structure for students enrolled in Core or CTE will depend on the course and may be either \$60, \$80, or \$100 per student, per .5 unit. The new fee for Content-Only enrollments is \$25 per student, per course, per .5 unit. For schools using the Home-Grown service, the costs will vary based on the complexity of the development and implementation. For more information on the Home-Grown service, please contact Michael Lar at [mike.lar@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:mike.lar@virtualarkansas.org).

Districts may also partner with Virtual Arkansas to house local teacher content on our LMS. The additional cost for this service is \$25 per student, per course, per .5 unit.

Districts will be invoiced for the individual student enrollment fees for students enrolled in a class at midnight on October 1<sup>st</sup> for the fall semester. Districts will be invoiced for the individual student enrollment fees for students enrolled in a class at midnight on January 31<sup>st</sup> for the spring semester. Students enrolled after the October 1<sup>st</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup> dates will be included on subsequent invoices.

## **FLEX PACED ENROLLMENT GUIDELINES**

### **Fall Semester**

Students will have 22 weeks from the original or earliest date of entry into a course/section to complete the course requirements for that section or semester. If incomplete at the end of 22 weeks, the student will receive an incomplete designation and will lose course access.

### **Spring Semester**

If, at the end of the Spring semester, the student has not completed the course or section requirements, the student will receive an incomplete designation. The student may be re-enrolled in the course during the summer session or the following fall semester.

## **GRADE POLICY**

Students should follow the course pacing guide and teachers should report updated grades by each Monday. Exceptions will be made for CR/Flex and students who are working significantly behind or ahead. Teachers will make every effort to provide prompt grading in these situations.

Students in a teacher-led course who do not turn in an assignment by a set deadline stated in the pacing guide and/or set by the teacher that is well communicated will receive a "0" (zero) for missing work. Once the student turns in the assignment the grade will reflect the grade earned on the assignment. In order for students to have an accurate understanding of their performance in the course, a "0" (zero) is awarded with the intent that it can be changed if the work is completed in accordance with the teacher's guidelines.\*\*

Concurrent Courses will follow Concurrent Grading Guidelines in this area.

## **GRADE CHALLENGE PROCEDURES**

Challenges to an earned grade for an assignment or assessment need to be submitted to the teacher within the nine-week or semester the grade is being challenged. Students have ten (10) school/week days from the end of the nine-week session or semester to submit a challenge for a grade received for the grading period in a course.

## **GRADE REPORTING**

In Core and CTE courses, teachers will provide numerical grades based on a range from zero to one hundred in four nine-week periods based on the Virtual Arkansas academic calendar. Semester averages will be calculated using the 40 – 40 – 20 formula.



Virtual Arkansas adheres to the Virtual Arkansas calendar posted on the Virtual Arkansas website and released through the newsletter. Official nine-week and semester grades are released on specific dates each semester. Grades accessed prior to the release of official grades may not reflect the official grade.

For concurrent credit courses, consult the course syllabus for the semester grade calculation.

## GRADE REPORTING - CONCURRENT CREDIT STUDENTS

The Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit campus operates on semester calendars. College grades earned through the Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit campus are part of a student's permanent college transcript. The grade will affect college grade point averages. The effect of pre-freshman status grades varies from one post-secondary institution to another. If a student is concerned about his/her grade assignment, the student is encouraged to check with the post-secondary institution he/she plans to attend after high school graduation for advice.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Most issues or questions can and should be resolved at the lowest level. Your first point of contact for classroom issues is the teacher.

There may be a time when you or someone from your school will need assistance beyond the teacher. Below you will find the steps to take when you need further assistance beyond the teacher:

1. **Contact the Virtual Arkansas instructor to seek a resolution.**
2. If you need further assistance, contact the applicable Virtual Arkansas campus supervisor to seek a resolution.

**CTE Campus Director:** James Malcom, CTE Campus Director  
Phone: 870-260-6046  
Email: [james.malcom@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:james.malcom@virtualarkansas.org)

**Core Campus Director:** Jason Bohler, Core Campus Director  
Phone: 501-477-2781  
Email: [jason.bohler@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:jason.bohler@virtualarkansas.org)

**Concurrent Credit Campus Director:** Ellora Hicks, Concurrent Credit Campus Director  
Phone: 870-224-3299  
Email: [ellora.hicks@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:ellora.hicks@virtualarkansas.org)

If a resolution is not reached through the individuals above, contact the Director of Curriculum and Instruction

**Director of Curriculum and Instruction:** Kirsten Wilson  
Phone: 501-477-2781  
Email: [kirsten.wilson@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:kirsten.wilson@virtualarkansas.org)

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

Due to the number of districts served, if a district closes due to inclement weather, it may not be possible for Virtual Arkansas teachers to be present during all make-up days for a district. Virtual Arkansas will respect each local school district policy regarding inclement weather **and make lesson plans and content available to the students and facilitators as needed.** If the Virtual Arkansas teachers are not online due to connectivity issues, students and facilitators should, if possible, access the course content within the LMS, and complete the required assignments.

## LATE ENROLLMENTS

There are two categories of students who may be added to a course after classes have begun.

1. A transfer student with a transfer grade.

For students with a transfer grade, students will begin at the point in the curriculum, which corresponds to their date of enrollment. If a local school claims that the student will have a transfer grade, but they have not received the transfer grade, the students will be placed at the point in the curriculum, which corresponds to their date of enrollment. A transfer grade must be provided for the coursework accomplished prior to a student receiving the final grade for that course. If a transfer grade is not provided, the student will receive a grade of incomplete.

2. A student who does not have a transfer grade.

The school assumes the responsibility of properly placing students without a transfer grade at the correct point in the curriculum to ensure the student satisfies the course requirements. If you encounter this situation, please contact Denise Gonia at 501.477.2781 or by email at [denise.gonia@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:denise.gonia@virtualarkansas.org).

- For students without a transfer grade who join a course after the first four weeks of a nine-week period, the student should have at least two periods per day to complete the course requirements if the student is enrolled in a Teacher-Led section of the course.
- Teachers who have students join their course after the first four weeks without a transfer grade must send an email to Denise Gonia. Ms. Gonia will initiate the communication with the local counselor concerning the student.

## LIVE INTERACTIVE ZOOM SESSIONS

These interactive sessions are scheduled to permit the greatest number of students to participate in real-time interaction with the teacher. Virtual Arkansas teachers will provide opportunities each week for students to participate in live interactive Zoom sessions. The scheduled interactive sessions provide students the opportunity to receive clarification on instructions, content, and to connect with their teachers.

**It is highly recommended that schools make the interactive sessions available to students. Teachers will have Zoom meetings available on those non-scheduled days to permit students and facilitators to contact them, if needed. Students need a webcam and a headset with a microphone to participate in the interactive sessions.**

## ATTENDING LIVE ZOOM SESSIONS FROM LOCATIONS OTHER THAN THE LOCAL SCHOOL

If allowed by local district policy, some students may attend live Zoom sessions from a location other than their local school. Any student attending a Virtual Arkansas Zoom session from a location other than their local school must be aware of the following guidelines:

1. The environment from which the student attends the Zoom session should be appropriate and conducive to learning. Please be aware of the following expectations regarding the Zoom environment:
  - a. During live Zoom sessions, the background should be appropriate and not distracting. There should not be any visible offensive material.
  - b. Background noise should be minimal or non-existent during Zoom sessions.

- c. Students should not eat or drink while in a Zoom session.
  - d. Other individuals not enrolled in the class should not be present during the Zoom session.
  - e. Pets should not be visible during a Zoom session.
2. The student should be dressed appropriately, according to the local school handbook, just as if the student was attending class on-campus.

The teacher may remove a student regardless of where the student is located during the live Zoom session if that teacher feels the student is not dressed appropriately, displaying offensive behavior, or if distractions are considered inappropriate and interfering with other students who are in attendance.

If a student is removed from a live session, the teacher will document the incident immediately and send that documentation to their campus director. The campus director will then contact an administrator or school official and provide the documentation of the incident.

## **MAINTAINING RECORDS**

Section 7.05.1 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules and Regulations Governing Distance and Digital Learning (May 2016), requires that “Documentation of student achievement assessments shall be maintained and shall be available for review at the receiving school for a minimum of five (5) years after the final grade for the student has been issued. Documentation shall include the assessment questions, student responses, and the grade for each student assessment and grading period.”

Schools should work with the individual Virtual Arkansas teachers to ensure the required documents are received by the school. We recommend that schools store the data electronically on a local server. This is important to assist with inquiries from the NCAA and other agencies.

Virtual Arkansas will archive course grade information, but due to the randomization of assessment questions, we cannot provide the actual assessment a student may have taken that accurately reflects the student responses. Virtual Arkansas may be able to assist you with grade requests, but the district could incur additional expenses, based on the nature of the request.

## **MAKE-UP POLICY**

For Virtual Arkansas Core and CTE classes, if a student has an excused absence, the student should complete all graded assignments as allowed by his/her local school’s make-up policy. It is the student’s responsibility to check with the facilitator/teacher for the materials needed to complete missed assignments. In cases of an extended excused absence, the Virtual Arkansas campus supervisor will consult with the local principal to develop a plan for a student to complete the coursework.

Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit courses must follow the guidelines set by the partnering institution of higher education in respect to make-up policies. These guidelines are included in each course syllabus.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Virtual Arkansas teachers utilize the information provided by local schools to attempt parent/guardian contact regarding student performance and achievement. If parent/guardian contact is not provided, Virtual Arkansas teachers will attempt to obtain this information from the local schools. Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to provide an email address and

a phone number at the beginning of the year while signing the Virtual Arkansas Student AV Release and MOU. The primary means of parent contact will be via email, but phone calls may also be made by Virtual Arkansas teachers.

Parent-Teacher conferences are an excellent time to provide parents an opportunity to experience the digital learning environment and to see how technology is integrated into their child's education. Local personnel should be involved in advocating these opportunities with parents and stakeholders whenever possible. The classroom facilitator, Super User, or Registrar should be present during these conferences. At any time, parents may request that the Virtual Arkansas teacher contact the parent by telephone or email to discuss the grades or behavior of their child.

Virtual Arkansas concurrent credit teachers must abide by federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations. FERPA is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The regulations are found at [Ed.gov](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html?src=rn), (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html?src=rn>).

## PREREQUISITES

Many courses adhere to a set of prerequisites to increase student success. School administrators should ensure that students have met all prerequisites and are academically prepared for the intended course.

## SCHEDULING COURSES

**Academic Calendar** – Virtual Arkansas will comply with Act 65 of the 88th General Assembly Regular Session of 2011 concerning the academic calendar requirements. Virtual Arkansas will begin classes on the earliest date possible permitted under Act 65.

**Bell Schedule** – In the asynchronous environment, strict adherence to a bell schedule is not as critical as in the synchronous environment. However, it is important that a district's bell schedule permit students enrolled in Virtual Arkansas classes to join the blended/interactive sessions in a timely manner to minimize disrupting the scheduled interactive instruction that is occurring.

## SCHOOL DISMISSAL

In rare cases, a school may not meet its responsibilities outlined in these policies. Communication between the Virtual Arkansas Director and local school administration should take place to address concerns. When warranted, failure to abide by Virtual Arkansas policies and the ADE Rules Governing Distance and Digital Learning may result in the school being removed from receiving services.

## SEMESTER EXTENSIONS

For Core and CTE students, semester extensions will be considered on a per case basis. The request for a particular student must be made by a local school administrator directly to the student's Virtual Arkansas instructor(s) and must be received by the teacher at least five (5) days prior to the end of the semester for which the extension is being sought. Fall semester extensions will not extend past January 31 of the Spring semester.

Students needing an extension to complete the course requirements at the conclusion of the Spring semester have two options:

1. The student may be enrolled in the Summer Session to complete the remaining course

requirements.

2. The student may be enrolled in the Fall semester of the new academic year to complete the course requirements.

## STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Students will need a school assigned email account. This will aid in communication with Virtual Arkansas staff. If students do not have a school assigned email account, communication with the teacher may be delayed. Students have the ability to reset their passwords. If a student does not have a school assigned email account, this will disrupt their ability to reset his/her password.

Virtual Arkansas contracts with a private vendor for our Student Information System (SIS), which is used for enrollment and reporting.

## STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

It is the policy of Virtual Arkansas to accommodate individuals with disabilities pursuant to federal law in regard to equal educational opportunities. It is the responsibility of school administrators or their designees to inform the teacher of any necessary accommodations at the start of the course in any semester. Disability notifications must be made within the first (10) ten days of class. As the teacher of record for administering a course to your district, Virtual Arkansas teachers are legally bound to provide modifications to students. Student IEP and/or 504 **MODIFICATIONS ONLY** shall be uploaded to the student's account within the Power Panel **within ten (10) days** of the beginning of the semester or when a student is enrolled in a course. Refer to the **ENROLLMENT STATUS** section for additional information.

For Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit classes, the partnering university has specific statements in the course syllabi concerning accommodations for students with special needs. Please refer to the course syllabus for specific guidelines.

## TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

Technical issues may occur during the academic year. For assistance in resolving student username or password issues, hardware, or software issues, please complete the [contact form](#) at the Virtual Arkansas website. If a school site is experiencing connection issues, in addition to submitting the information using the website [contact form](#), the facilitator should notify the Virtual Arkansas teacher as soon as possible. Students are responsible for completing all course work that is missed due to not being able to connect to the local network or the Virtual Arkansas LMS.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

<https://www.virtualarkansas.org/30897Hardware> – Participating schools are responsible for maintaining local equipment for their students enrolled in Virtual Arkansas courses. In order to support a 21st Century blended-learning experience, it is required that each student have daily access to a computer connected to the internet, a headset with a microphone, and webcam. We recommend computers be hard-wired to the network in the digital learning classroom. Schools may use a wireless configuration, but performance may be negatively impacted as the number of computer connections increase in a wireless setting. Districts should ensure that the technology requirements are satisfied prior to classes beginning. A computer specification sheet is available at the [Virtual Arkansas](https://virtualarkansas.org/211912_2) ([https://virtualarkansas.org/211912\\_2](https://virtualarkansas.org/211912_2)) website. Students may need access to certain technology based on specific course enrollments. Please consult the textbook and resources list, as well as the course catalog, for any special hardware or software

needed for a course.

**Software** – Some courses require specialized software be installed on the local digital learning room computers. All measures have been taken to reduce the burden on districts, i.e., installing the software on every other computer. **Please check the Textbook List to see if the courses your students are enrolled in require specific software.**

## TESTING POLICY

All students enrolled in a Virtual Arkansas Core and CTE courses are required to take all nine-weeks and cumulative/semester exams as detailed by the teacher.

**There are no exemptions for Virtual Arkansas Core, CTE, or Concurrent Credit cumulative/semester exams.** However, students who take the AP Exam may substitute this for the second semester final exam. Students enrolled in an AP course and who do not take the AP Exam must take the second semester final exam for the AP course. If a student misses a major exam and does not make it up during the time frame allowed by district policy, the student will receive a zero for the exam. A school administrator must request that the student be provided the opportunity to make up the missed exam.

Students enrolled in Advanced Placement Courses must take the AP exam for each AP course in which the student is enrolled to receive weighted credit at the district level.

Semester final dates for Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit classes are established by the partnering universities and are listed in the course syllabus.

## TESTING RETAKES – EXIT AND MODULE TESTS

The following criteria must be met to retake an exit test:

1. All coursework is completed in the applicable module
2. Exit test is completed for the applicable module
3. The exit test is within the current 9 weeks.
4. There must be some intervention between teacher and student as determined by the teacher.

\*\*Concurrent Courses will follow Concurrent Grading Guidelines in this area.

## TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

To request a transcript for students enrolled in Concurrent Credit courses, go to the post-secondary institution website. The institution has specific instructions for requesting a transcript with your college grades.

## TRANSFERS

If a student enrolled in Virtual Arkansas course transfers out of your district, please notify the Virtual Arkansas teacher as soon as possible. This will be important to our teacher when trying to identify late or missing assignments. Prior to dropping a student who transfers to a new school in the Power Panel, please contact the Central Office at 501-477-2781.

Please contact the Virtual Arkansas Central Office as soon as possible if a student transfers into your district and meets any of the criteria below:

- The student was enrolled in a Virtual Arkansas course at their former district.

- You need to request a new student be enrolled in a course that you receive from Virtual Arkansas.

When a transfer or new student is officially enrolled in your school, Virtual Arkansas will need an updated COGNOS report submitted to complete the enrollment process.

## **TUITION REFUND**

Virtual Arkansas will invoice districts for the membership and the per student, per course, per semester fees based on a district's student enrollment in Virtual Arkansas classes on October 1<sup>st</sup> for the fall semester. For the spring semester, the per student, per course, per semester invoiced amount will be based on student enrollments on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Students who have been officially dropped prior to the close of business on these dates will not be included in a district's student count. If a student drops after these dates, the student will be included in the district's invoice. Virtual Arkansas will not refund the per student, per course, per semester fee to the district.

## VIRTUAL ARKANSAS CONTACT INFORMATION

### Virtual Arkansas Central Office

John Ashworth – Director – [john.ashworth@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:john.ashworth@virtualarkansas.org), 501.477.2781  
Kirsten Wilson – Director of Curriculum and Instruction – [kirsten.wilson@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:kirsten.wilson@virtualarkansas.org)  
Michael Lar – Director of Operations – [mike.lar@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:mike.lar@virtualarkansas.org), 501.477.2781  
Jeremy Woodward – Director of Technology – [jeremy.woodward@virtualarkansas.org](mailto:jeremy.woodward@virtualarkansas.org), 870.637.1011

### Virtual Arkansas CTE Campus

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### Virtual Arkansas Core Campus

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### Virtual Arkansas Concurrent Credit Campus

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