

Please understand that AMSC's knowledge about the COVID-19 virus and the best practices to respond continue to evolve. For this reason, guidance, plans and policies related to the return to **Trailblazer** campus operations will also evolve.

---

**AMSC RETURN TO CAMPUS | SPRING 2021 SEMESTER**

• **STUDENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** •

**1. When do Spring classes begin and end? Have there been any modifications to the academic calendar?**

Atlanta Metropolitan State College will maintain its current operational calendar for Spring 2021. Our full-term (15-weeks) classes will begin on January 11, 2021 and end on April 30, 2021. For your convenience, we do have additional start terms (12-weeks and 8-weeks) that provides a robust student experience.

Final exams will be virtual and take place during the week of May 3<sup>rd</sup> - May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Commencement will be held on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**2. How will Atlanta Metropolitan State College offer classes for the Spring 2021 semester, which begins January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021?**

Using two different instructional methods:

- a. 100% online (asynchronous) classes will be offered, fully online.
- b. The Hybrid/Blended Method

**3. What is a Hybrid/Blended method?**

AMSC's hybrid/blended instructional method involves a combination of face-to-face (synchronous) opportunities and online instruction. For the online instruction portion of the hybrid method, students and instructors will be online at the same time and interact in real time. To connect to classes remotely away from campus, students will have three options: TEAMS, Bongo, or Brightspace/D2L. More information about these three connectivity options and their use is provided later in this document.

#### 4. What will I need to participate in Hybrid/Blended Model class/course?

To participate in Hybrid/Blended classes students ***MUST HAVE*** two things:

- (a) A PC, laptop, Chromebook or some electronic device to connect to the internet. A smartphone that allows for video conferencing (and audio capabilities) will be useful but may create challenges for creating class work. Remember, it will be difficult for students to participate in classes if they only have a smartphone. Smartphones are minimally acceptable for class participation, but they are usually unacceptable for turning in assignments (especially written assignments) or taking quizzes.
- (b) Students should also have internet connectivity to meet certain days in hybrid classes online and to connect to Brightspace/D2L. Brightspace/D2L is AMSC's platform for managing online course activities, such as quizzes, discussion groups, videos, and other class learning aids and tools.

#### 5. How does a Hybrid/Blended Classroom work (class scheduling)?

AMSC's hybrid/blended classes allow students to participate face-to-face in one class period each week, and use virtual and distance technology for the other class period that week. To ensure social distancing and that AMSC classes follow the CDC coronavirus safety guidelines, students in each hybrid/blended class will be divided into two groups or cohorts:

- **Cohort A (Students last name that begins with A-K)**
- **Cohort B (Students last name that begins with L-Z)**

For a Monday/Wednesday class, on Monday, Cohort A will attend class in a face-to-face format, and Cohort B will attend class in an online, virtual (and real-time) format.

On Wednesday, the Cohorts switch formats; Cohort A then attends class in a virtual (and real-time) format and Cohort B will attend face-to-face classes.

The same arrangements hold true for Tuesday/Thursday classes. Cohort A attends face-to-face classes on Tuesday, and Cohort B attends virtual classes on Tuesday. The two cohorts switch formats on Thursday.

***Example:***

John **A**dams has a 9:00-10:15 Criminal Justice class on Monday/Wednesday and he is placed in (Cohort A). Mary **S**mith has the same class but is placed in (Cohort B). John has the opportunity to attend face-to-face on Monday (practicing social distancing) and Mary has to join the class virtually using TEAMS or Brightspace/D2L. On Wednesday, Mary has the opportunity to attend class face-to-face and John has to attend the class virtually using TEAMS or Brightspace/D2L.

This alternating/staggered format will assist the College in practicing social distancing and COVID19 guidelines.

The same format holds true for a Math class that meets Tuesday/Thursday 11:00 – 12:15p.m.. John Wynn is placed in (Cohort B) for that math class, and Mary Carson is placed in (Cohort A) for that class. John has to participate in that class using TEAMS or Brightspace/D2L on Tuesday, and Mary has the opportunity to participate in that class, face-to-face on Tuesday. On Thursday, John may participate in this class face-to-face and Mary has to attend the class virtually using TEAMS or Brightspace/D2L.

Students will be informed ***in each class*** which cohort they are assigned, Cohort A or Cohort B.

## **6. Can you elaborate on what Cohort I'm in and how does it work?**

Placing students in Cohorts allows Atlanta Metropolitan State College (AMSC) to maintain a safe campus and adherence to the social distancing/ COVID19 guidelines. AMSC hybrid classes will meet weekly (*with one face-to-face class session and one virtual class session*).

All AMSC students have been divided into two cohorts (Cohort A and Cohort B).

- **Cohort A: Students last name that begins with A-K**
- **Cohort B: Students last name that begins with L-Z**

See the explanation below taken from Question #5:

- For a Monday/Wednesday class, on Monday, Cohort A will attend class in a face-to-face format, and Cohort B will attend class in an online, virtual (and real-time) format. On Wednesday, the Cohorts switch formats; Cohort A then attends class in a virtual (and real-time) format and Cohort B will attend face-to-face classes.
- The same arrangements hold true for Tuesday/Thursday classes. Cohort A attends face-to-face classes on Tuesday, and Cohort B attends virtual classes on Tuesday. The two cohorts switch formats on Thursday; Cohort A then attends class virtual (and real-time) format and Cohort B will attend face-to-face classes.

## **7. How am I required to participate in class on those days that I choose not to come to class or not scheduled to attend classes face-to-face?**

On the days that students are not scheduled to attend their hybrid classes face-to-face; they will be required to participate in those classes online via TEAMS, Bongo, or connect directly to Brightspace/D2L, during the regularly scheduled class times.

## **8. What are TEAMS and Bongo?**

TEAMS and Bongo are free distance learning management programs given to all AMSC students that allow them to connect and participate in online classes in real-time. TEAMS is especially useful with smartphones. Students should download and use the TEAMS app, as it has more features than the online version of TEAMS. Microsoft TEAMS and Bongo apps are available for download to AMSC students via the College's paid educational subscription.

Because TEAMS and Bongo apps allow for a live, real-time connection to your classes, there is no excuse not to attend class when you are not on campus in face-to-face hybrid classes, or if because of the coronavirus, hybrid classes are changed to fully online classes.

## **9. How do I use TEAMS, Bongo, and Brightspace/D2L from my PC, laptop, or phone?**

*Please view the following links:*

### **Brightspace/D2L**

<https://www.atlm.edu/brightspace>

### **TEAMS**

[https://storyals.com/blog/what-is-microsoft-teams.](https://storyals.com/blog/what-is-microsoft-teams)

### **Bongo**

<https://www.youseeu.com/d2L/> and <https://www.atlm.edu/bongo>

## **10. How will I complete class assignments in the Hybrid/Blended course?**

The class instructor will explain to you how to complete and submit class assignments. For fully online class activities, all assignments, readings, videos, testing, and other class activities will be done through Brightspace/D2L.

## **11. How may I contact my professor?**

The course syllabus will provide information on how to contact your instructor by telephone, email, and/or office hours (virtual or campus). To contact your class instructor from your course in Brightspace/D2L, (a) go to the course homepage, (b) click on the “Communication” dropdown menu at the top of the page, (c) click on “Class list”. Your instructor’s name will be listed there, and (d) click on the down arrow next to your instructor’s name, create your email message, and click “send.”

## **12. What are some things I can do to help me prepare for this new learning environment of online and hybrid classes? And, what should I do/know to prepare for my return to campus in the first week of class?**

- a. Visit Brightspace website and review [these short interesting videos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysM2cc2zIPM&list=PLxHabmZzFY6mtggGZAitZ61kmpS-pMIaM&index=1) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysM2cc2zIPM&list=PLxHabmZzFY6mtggGZAitZ61kmpS-pMIaM&index=1>) to learn about how to navigate Brightspace learning environment and access all the tools like discussion board, quiz, assignment, email, etc.
- b. To assess your strengths and weaknesses in an online learning environment, take this [Smarter Measure Survey](#). You will receive a full color assessment report to your Atlm

Ginger email. You can also access the link by going to <http://www.amsc.smartermeasure.com>: Use: username - amsc, password - student. Use the assessment report to hone your online learning skills.

### **13. What academic support services will be available during the Spring 2021 semester?**

Academic support services will continue to be available to students throughout the Spring 2021 semester. Visit <https://www.atlm.edu/academics/CAAS.aspx> for links to academic advising and support services.

### **14. Will the Library be open during the Spring 2021 semester?**

Yes, the Library will adapt to the blended instructional methods and remain open for research needs of our students and faculty. GALILEO (AMSC's Virtual Library) will still be used as our primary method of research. Once students come back on campus, 6 feet social distancing will be promoted by new configurations in computer labs and study areas. Printing will resume as normal. Checking out books will be pulled and pre-checked out to a student's library account. Then, the student would only have to come to pick up the titles (or books). For assistance, students and faculty can email their question / request to [library@atlm.edu](mailto:library@atlm.edu) or call the Library at (404-756-4010).

### **15. How can I purchase textbooks?**

The ATLM Bookstore is now a Hybrid Bookstore operated by Textbook Brokers. The ATLM Bookstore will be open in-store during the busy times at the beginning and end of each semester and will close in-store during the semester. Students will be served in-store faster with Concierge Counter Service - ATLM Bookstore staff will gather course materials for students behind the service counter. Students will also experience the same high level of service online. Students can live chat with a real ATLM Bookstore employee online during business hours. The ATLM Bookstore offers Free In-store Pickup (when the ATLM Bookstore is open in-store) and Free Priority Shipping (1-3 business days) on orders over \$25. The ATLM Bookstore also stocks logo'd apparel, gifts, accessories, school supplies, computers, technology accessories, and more.

Please visit us online at <https://atlm.textbooktech.com/>

### **16. What if students are not allowed to come back to campus to participate in real-time, face-to-face classes, how do I stay connected to my class?**

One of the advantages of hybrid/blended classroom is if the face-to-face options are discontinued at some point during the semester the hybrid course will continue to meet virtually (fully online) as planned. At that point, students will be left with only two options:

- (a) Join/participate in the hybrid/blended class in TEAMS or Bongo (YouseeU) in Brightspace/D2L from any place with internet capabilities,
- (b) Come to campus and connect to the internet (campus-wide internet connectivity). As long as students are on campus in one of the campus parking lots or in a designated safe space (social distancing in place), they will be able to connect to the internet.

### **17. How can I get assistance if I have technology problems?**

For assistance with technology, including password and other technical support issues:

- (a) Contact the 24/7 online support center at 855-772-0423, with your Brightspace/D2L username, or
- (b) Use this link: <https://d2Lhelp.view.usg.edu/>
- (c) During business hours, contact the AMSC Brightspace/D2L Administrator stating the problem, including your username, CRN, and AMSC ID (932 number) at:

Dr. Eze Nwaogu ([enwaogu@atlm.edu](mailto:enwaogu@atlm.edu)) or Dr. Kokila Ravi ([kravi@atlm.edu](mailto:kravi@atlm.edu))

It is our goal to offer classes/courses in an engaging and simplistic manner. This is a significant change for both faculty and students to use the hybrid/blended classes. Student success and faculty/student safety is a top priority. Let's work together and make this a substantive learning experience for all of us.

### **18. If a student has a hardship and does not have an electronic device to connect to the internet, what can he or she do to still take classes?**

If a student has a hardship that prohibits him or her from obtaining an electronic device to connect to the internet, he or she should fill out a Loaner Laptop application housed at the AMSC Library. The College will have a limited number of loaner laptop computers to check-out to students on a first-come-first-served basis. These loaner laptops will be required to be returned at the end of the semester.

## **Where can students get answers to additional questions regarding the Spring 2021 semester?**

Students can email questions to [webchat@atlm.edu](mailto:webchat@atlm.edu) or go to the AMSC website homepage at <https://www.atlm.edu>, scroll down midway the page and click on the “Ask Questions” red button to submit a question.

## **19. What should I do if I am experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or if I am concerned that I have been in contact with someone who has now tested positive?**

Immediate self-reporting is critical to help us assess and respond to risks and exposures on campus. If students are experiencing COVID-19 emergency warning signs, they should seek emergency care immediately. For students who have been exposed to COVID-19 (been in close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms and/or 48 hours of a diagnosis), they should quarantine and get tested immediately.

Students experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should isolate and get tested. Symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

AMSC strongly encourages student who have been exposed and who are experiencing symptoms to get tested and quarantine for 14 days.

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 should report the positive diagnosis to the identified AMSC campus contact immediately. Students are encouraged to report via e-mail or phone.

Contact:

Dr. Dorothy Williams/ Yvonne Varner-Kirkland  
Counseling/Accessibility,/Career & Intern Services  
Email: [dwilliams@atlm.edu](mailto:dwilliams@atlm.edu); / [yvarnerkirkland@atlm.edu](mailto:yvarnerkirkland@atlm.edu)  
404-756-4016

Students who have not been exposed and have no symptoms may come to campus.