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Gardner-Webb Degree Completion Program: With You Every Step of the Way

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Communications

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One of the most common concerns we hear from potential Degree Completion students is, “Do I really have what it takes to succeed academically?”

Many students have been away from the classroom for years. Others are nervous about taking online courses, or about whether they will have access to extra help at their satellite campus. Others are simply unsure how they will fit classes and study time into their already packed schedules.

No matter what your specific concerns may be, Gardner-Webb strives to ensure that every student in every program has the resources necessary to thrive. “That’s one of the best parts of our culture,” says Sara Newcomb, Assistant Dean and Director of Academic Advising for Gardner-Webb University’s Degree Completion Program (DCP). “Our entire University community, from our professors to our academic support staff, is committed to partnering with students through every step of their journey. No matter whether you study online, at a satellite campus or here in Boiling Springs, you are a valuable part of the University family.”

Gardner-Webb delivers on that promise with a network of support services, including tutoring through the University’s Learning Enrichment and Assistance Program (LEAP), access to Gardner-Webb’s Writing Center, and a revolutionary new online tutoring service just launched in 2014.

As LEAP Director Meredith Garrett puts it, “Our goal is for every student to have all the support they need to succeed.”

Professors Committed to Partnering With Students

The best resource, Newcomb says, are the DCP professors. “Our faculty does a great job of making themselves available to students outside of class hours. They arrive at their various campuses early and stay late, they schedule video conferences and chat sessions online, and they spend hours corresponding one-on-one with students via email.”

For professors teaching online courses, Gardner-Webb offers mandatory online training to ensure that teachers learn how to make the online experience accessible and relatable, no matter how technically savvy students may be.

Most important, DCP faculty members are carefully selected because they embody the University's commitment to relational teaching and forging deep and lasting partnerships that fuel students' success.

Gardner-Webb's LEAP Program and the GWU Writing Center

Beyond the professors themselves, DCP students enjoy access to a variety of academic support services.

"For students who are close enough to Boiling Springs, we can always arrange for tutoring and extra support through the LEAP program here on campus," says Garrett. "Through LEAP, we connect people with trained student-tutors who are carefully qualified to provide support subject-by-subject."

DCP students also have access to Gardner-Webb's Writing Center, which offers hourly appointments via phone, internet technology, and video chat for those students who are too far from the main campus to visit in person.

"Our Writing Center staff members are phenomenal," Garrett says. "They are more than just proofreaders. They really are experts in helping students improve their writing process through every stage of an assignment, from brainstorming all the way through citing sources."

Free Online Live Tutoring Available 24/7

For students who do most of their studying during off-peak hours such as nights and weekends, or who are unable to capitalize on the LEAP tutoring services, an additional layer of academic support is available. Smarthinking is an online tutoring service available exclusively to DCP students.

Using real-time whiteboard technology, Smarthinking gives students 24/7 access to expert tutors in a variety of subjects, most of whom are working professors with advanced degrees in their fields.

Smarthinking allows students to schedule tutoring appointments or to "drop in" at any time, day or night. "That means if students are stumped in the middle of a Saturday night, there is help available," Garrett says. Smarthinking also offers an email response service and an online writing center, so students can send questions or upload writing samples and receive thoughtful feedback within 24 hours. "It really is a nice addition to the variety of services we offer," Garrett shared.

As with any worthwhile endeavor, there will be challenges along your journey to a bachelor's degree. Still, you can approach those challenges with confidence knowing that no matter the obstacles, no matter the hour, the Gardner-Webb community will be with you every step of the way.

To learn more about various academic support services available to Degree Completion students, call Sara Newcomb at 704-406-2174.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University provides exceptional educational opportunities within a Christian environment, preparing students to think critically, to succeed professionally, and to serve faithfully as members of their local and global communities.