

FACT SHEET

ACCESSING THE FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM

This sheet provides valuable information to assist students as they prepare for postsecondary education at a Florida community college. Florida's 28 community colleges have an open door admission policy. Some colleges have dropped "community" from their names, while others have added "state;" however, all of the colleges remain open door institutions. Upon admission, students planning to enroll in a degree-seeking program are required to take the CPT, ACT, or SAT to determine placement in developmental and college-ready courses, and there is no GPA or SAT/ACT score required for admission.

Florida's community colleges are open to everyone and offer GED training, adult basic education, as well as certificate, associate, and bachelor's degree programs. Certificate and degree programs offered at the community colleges are diverse, and range from auto mechanics to nursing to the Associate in Arts degree, which guarantees transfer to a state university. Many community colleges are now offering bachelor's degrees as well. If a student plans to pursue an associate's or bachelor's degree, he or she will need to earn a standard high school diploma, GED, or CPT-eligible certificate of completion. This sheet will provide you with tips on helping students prepare for community college.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the first steps a student should take to prepare for college?

- Prepare by meeting regularly with guidance counselors to ensure student is taking necessary high school coursework to reach postsecondary goals. Encourage tracking progress using FACTS.org.
- Fill out the college application in the spring of the senior year of high school. This can be found on the Web site of the school the student is interested in attending or on www.FACTS.org. Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, more commonly known as the FAFSA, to find out what type of financial aid the student is eligible to receive. The student should fill out the FAFSA as soon as possible in the spring of the senior year of high school. There are many web sites which offer assistance in completing the FAFSA for a fee. Completing the FAFSA is free and should be completed at <http://fafsa.ed.gov>.



Your First Choice for Success

- If a student wants to enroll in a degree program (Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, or Associate in Applied Science), he or she will need to earn a standard diploma (this includes the FCAT Waiver diploma, GED, or CPT-eligible Certificate of Completion). Once the student has applied to the college, he or she will need to take the College Placement Test or CPT. The CPT can be taken at any of the 28 community colleges. The CPT score will be used to determine whether the student should be placed in remedial or college level courses. The ACT or SAT score can also be used to determine which courses the student should take.

Can a student be admitted to a community college if he or she graduates with a special diploma?

If a student earns a special diploma, he or she may enroll in career and technical certificate programs, GED, and adult basic education. Most of the 28 community colleges offer career and technical programs as well as GED and adult basic education.

Does the admissions process differ for students with disabilities?

No, students with disabilities must complete the same admissions forms and follow the same procedures as students without disabilities.

Frequently Asked Questions(continued)

How can students get help paying for college?

- Apply for federal and state financial aid by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The application can be found at <http://FAFSA.ed.gov>. Filling out the application is free and there is money available.
- Make sure to search for scholarships offered by the community college.
- Attend “Financial Aid Night” events in the local area.
- Check out <http://www.studentfinancialaid.org> to find out about the different types of financial aid available to Florida residents. Students automatically apply for state aid by filling out the FAFSA.
- Check out <http://studentaid.ed.gov> to find out about financial aid opportunities offered through the federal government. Students automatically apply for federal aid by filling out the FAFSA.
- Bright Futures Medallion Scholars get 100 percent tuition and fees covered at a community college.

What should a student do once he or she is admitted to college?

- Register with the Disability Services office.
- Attend orientation.
- Visit the Academic Advisor to find what classes to take.
- Get involved in campus activities.
- Register for Student Success Skills course.

In order to receive accommodations for a disability at the community college, what does the student need to do?

The student must make an appointment with the campus disability services office. The student should bring their most recent documentation to the appointment. Documentation requirements may vary between high school and college, and students may be asked to provide updated documentation.

What types of accommodations are offered at the community college?

Accommodations can vary between high school and college and include, but are not limited to: note-takers, texts in alternative format, sign language interpreters, extended time on exams, and a quiet location to take exams.

Where can a student go to get help on the college campus?

- The financial aid office will be able to answer questions regarding financial aid.
- The advising center will be able to answer questions regarding course.
- The disability services office will be able to provide assistance with planning accommodations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ACCESSING THE FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM, CONTACT:

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