

# FACT SHEET

## ACCESSING THE FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM

This sheet provides valuable information to assist students as they prepare for postsecondary education at a Florida college. Florida's 28 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 colleges are open to everyone and offer GED training, adult basic education, as well as certificate, associate, and bachelor degree programs. Certificate and degree programs offered at the colleges are diverse, and range from auto mechanics to nursing to the Associate in Arts degree, which guarantees transfer to a state university. Many colleges are now offering bachelor degrees as well. If a student plans to pursue an associate or bachelor 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 with disabilities prepare for 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](http://FACTS.org).
- ▶ Fill out the college application in the spring of the senior year of high school. Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, more commonly known as the FASFA, to find out what type of financial aid the student is eligible to receive. The student should fill out the FASFA 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 FASFA for a fee. Completing the FASFA is free and should be completed at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.
- ▶ 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 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 college if he or she graduates with a special diploma?

If a student earns a special diploma, he or she may enroll in certain career and technical certificate programs (students should check with the college to find out about specific programs), GED and adult basic education. Most of the 28 colleges offer career and technical programs, as well as GED and adult basic education.

### Does the admission 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 (FASFA). The application can be found at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.
- ▶ Make sure to search for scholarships offered by the college.
- ▶ Attend “Financial Aid Night” events in the local area.
- ▶ Check out <http://studentaid.ed.gov> to find out about financial aid opportunities offered through the federal government.

### **What should a student do once he or she is admitted to a 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 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 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 coursework.
- ▶ The disability services office will be able to provide assistance with planning accommodations.

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

*Amy Albee, Coordinator of Outreach and Access  
Division of Florida Colleges  
Florida Department of Education  
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1544  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400  
Phone (850) 245-9488*