

FACT SHEET

Accessing the Florida College System

Introduction

You may not be aware of what steps are needed to get into college. You may think college is not a realistic goal. Florida's 28 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 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 you plan to pursue an associate's or bachelor's degree, you will need to earn a standard high school diploma or a GED. You do not have to have a minimum GPA or SAT/ACT score in order to be admitted, you just have to have a goal and the willingness to learn. Here are some tips on how to get into a community college in Florida.

I have noticed that many community colleges have changed their name. Does this mean that the institutions still have an open door admissions policy?

- Yes, all 28 community colleges in the system have an open door admissions policy. Some colleges have dropped "community" from their name, while others have added "state"; however, all of the colleges remain open door institutions. Upon admission, students 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.

What should I do to prepare for college?

- Fill out the college application in the spring of your senior year of high school. (This can be found on the Web site of the school you are interested in attending or on 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 you are eligible for. The FAFSA can be found on the web at <http://fafsa.ed.gov>. You will want to fill this out as soon as possible in the spring of your senior year of high school.
- If you will graduate with a standard high school diploma or CPT-eligible Certificate of Completion and want to enroll in a degree program (Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, or Associate in Applied Science), take the College Placement Test or CPT. You can take the CPT at any of the 28 community colleges. The CPT is used to determine what courses you should enroll in. Your ACT or SAT score can also be used to determine which courses you should take.



For more information on Accessing the Florida Community College System contact:



Amy Albee, Coordinator of Outreach and Access
Division of Community Colleges
Florida Department of Education
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1344
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
Phone: (850) 245-9488
www.fldoe.org/cc/

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Can I go to a community college if I graduate with a special diploma?

- If you earn a special diploma, you 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. Check the web site of the college you are interested in attending to find out more about specific career and technical certificate programs being offered at the institution.

Can I enroll in a degree program with a GED?

- Yes, students who successfully complete the GED may enroll in a degree seeking program. If you earn a GED, you will be required to take the CPT or present ACT or SAT scores to determine which courses you should enroll in.

I want to go to college but do not have the money. How can I get help paying for college?

- Apply for federal and state financial aid by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or 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 your community college.
- Attend "Financial Aid Night" events in your local area.
- Check out <http://www.studentfinancialaid.org> to find out about the different types of financial aid available to Florida residents.
- Check out <http://studentaid.ed.gov> to find out about financial aid opportunities offered through the federal government.

What should I do once I have been admitted to college?

- Attend orientation.
- Visit your academic advisor to find out what classes you should take.
- Get involved in campus activities.
- Register for Student Success Skills course.
- Find out where the Math and Writing Labs are on campus.
- Register with the Disability Services office, if necessary.

Where can I go to get help on the college campus?

- Go to the financial aid office if you have questions concerning financial aid and paying for college.
- Go to the Advising Center to get your questions answered concerning your schedule or what courses you should take.