



**Houston Community College
Faculty Advising Handbook**

AY 2011 - 2012

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Mission

Houston Community College System provides superior academic advisement and career development through a systematic process based on a close advisor-student relationship that assists students in their educational and personal goals.

Purpose

This handbook serves as a guide and promotes a quality faculty advising foundation throughout the HCC system. It defines the duties and responsibilities of faculty and students as advisors/advisee and mentor/mentee. The HCCS faculty handbook provides academic information and advising policies that assist advisors in supporting students with their education and vocational preparation. The desired outcome is students will feel a sense of community with the advisor and our institution. Ultimately, the advisor-student relationship prepares individuals for a productive life in a diverse community and employment in the global and technological society. The handbook also tries to acknowledge and value that there are a variety of advising relationships depending on teaching program, location, and other factors. This handbook does not claim to cover all advising strategies and would welcome the inclusion of other modes of advising for future editions.

Advising Objectives

- A. Educate students in relation to specific education and institutional materials both in and out of their curriculum of study.
- B. Assist in student comprehension of the connection between selected degree tracks and vocational plans.
- C. Encourage students to view extracurricular activities to boost education and overall college encounter.

Developmental Advisement:

- A. Focus on students, their ongoing needs over an absolute time. One advising session builds on the next.
- B. Challenge students to achieve their learning potential and to take academic risks.
- C. View students as active partners actively engaged in intellectual and personal growth.
- D. Help students evaluate and articulate what is important to them in their academic as well as their personal lives.
- E. Set short-term as well as long-term goals, discuss ways to achieve those goals, and help students monitor progress in fulfilling those goals.

Advising Core Values

1) Advisors are accountable to the individuals they advise.

Academic advisors work to strengthen the importance, dignity, potential, and unique nature of each individual within the academic setting. The advisors' work is guided by the belief that students:

- ✓ Have diverse upbringing that can embrace distinct ethnic, racial, familial, and international communities; sexual characteristics; masculinity and femininity uniqueness; physical, emotional, and Psychological capabilities; political, religious, and educational values
- ✓ Hold their individual viewpoint and attitude
- ✓ Be Responsible for their own behaviors and the outcomes of those behaviors
- ✓ Enjoy successes based upon their individual objective and hard work
- ✓ Aspire to learn
- ✓ Have learning desires that fluctuate based upon individual ability, goals, tasks, and knowledge
- ✓ Use a mixture of methods and expertise to navigate their world

In support of these beliefs, the supportive hard work of all who counsel include, but not limited to, presenting precise and appropriate information, communicating in practical and resourceful ways, maintaining regular office hours, and offer various contact modes.

Advising, as part of the educational process, involves helping students develop a realistic self-perception and successfully transition to the postsecondary institution. Advisors encourage, respect, and assist students in establishing their goals and objectives. Advisors seek to gain the trust of their students and strive to honor students' expectations of faculty advising and its importance in their lives.

2) Advisors are accountable for linking others, when suitable, in the advising process.

Effective advising requires a holistic approach. A network of people and resources is available to students. Advisors serve as mediators and facilitators who effectively use their specialized knowledge and experience for student benefit. Advisors recognize their limitations and make referrals to qualified persons when appropriate. Advisors help students integrate information so they can make well-informed academic decisions.

3) Advisors are accountable to their institutions.

Advisors nurture collegial relationships. They uphold the specific policies, procedures, and values of their departments and institutions. Advisors maintain clear lines of communication with those not directly involved in the advising process but who have responsibility and authority for decisions regarding faculty advising at the institution.

Advisors recognize their individual roles in the success of their institutions.

4) Advisors are accountable to higher education.

Academic advisors honor academic freedom. They realize that faculty advising is not limited to any one theoretical perspective and well versed by a variety of theories from the fields of social sciences, the humanities, and education. They are free to base their work with students on the most relevant theories and on optimal models for the delivery of faculty advising programs. Advisors advocate for student educational achievement to the highest attainable standard, support student goals, and uphold the educational mission of the institution.

5) Advisors are accountable to their educational community.

Academic advisors convey institutional information and characteristics of student success to the local, state, regional, national, and global communities that support the student body. Advisors are sensitive to the values and mores of the surrounding community. They are familiar with community programs and services that may provide students with additional educational opportunities and resources.

6) Advisors are accountable for their educated practices and for themselves personally.

Advisors participate in professional development opportunities, establish appropriate relationships and boundaries with advisees, and create environments that promote physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Advisors maintain a healthy balance in their lives and articulate personal and professional needs when appropriate. They consider continued professional growth and development to be the responsibility of both themselves and their institutions.

NACADA core value citation at the end of core values: <http://www.nacada.ksu/Clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/Core-Values-Exposition.htm>

Student Growth and Development

1. Strengthen student self-direction and self-sufficiency.
2. Support students in evaluating their interests and aptitude, making choices, and developing short-term and long-term plans to meet their objectives.
3. Converse and simplify educational, profession, and life goals to aid in the development of a significant educational plan.
4. Aid students to grasp the educational structure in which they enrolled.
5. Help students make the best academic choice possible for their needs by encouraging association and valuation of options and consideration of the consequences of their choices

6. Coach students in use of course selection tools and registration systems.

Faculty Advisor Functions

Faculty advisors are chosen to give education guidance to college students. To be supportive, the advisor must know that each student has different abilities, interests, aspirations, needs, experiences, and troubles. Academic advising cannot be an emotionless, routine affair. The faculty advisor's most important responsibility is to assist individual advisees in planning their curriculum of study that will comply with college requirements and at the same time meet every student's particular needs. To achieve this goal, the faculty advisor must urge the student to consider the significance of education; he must direct the student in probing all major facets of education whilst making necessary decisions.

Although the functions of the faculty advisor vary for different students, the general advising duties are normally as follows:

1. The faculty advisor gives details to the student about the course of general or basic education as it correlates to the first two years of college, the student's major and the preparation of life pursuits.
2. The faculty advisor helps the student look at the courses in his/her major: link these to other probable majors and be familiar with the graduation requirements for the curriculum heading to a suitable degree.
3. The faculty advisor helps the student look at the career areas for which his major gives training and get hold of connected vocational information and investigate job opportunities.
4. The faculty advisor acts as a tie between the student and the administration by counseling the student on his scholastic dilemmas (course scheduling, course adjustment, academic progress and making correct referral to other support agencies).
5. The faculty advisor operates as a "faculty friend" to the student by signifying a personal concern in his/her adjustment to college. They also operate by acting as an essential contact person in finding information that can be used to help the student plus, by permitting the student independence to make his/her own decisions after the restrictions, options and consequences involved are pointed out.

The faculty advisor designated to counsel an undecided student about a major(s) have discrete duties. Instead of helping each student survey the chosen major, the advisor support the student's exploration of prospective majors by:

- a. Referring the student to the counseling center for available vocational testing and guidance; and
- b. Referring the student to special activities wherein interests may be investigated and experiences gained.

Once an undecided student has elected a major, it may be necessary to transfer him/her to a faculty advisor in his newly found major department.

In order to help the student materialize as a better-integrated individual, the faculty advisor engages in the following activities:

1. Aids the advisee in the choosing of a example of educational experiences which may result in improved personal integration;
2. Assembles, arranges, channels and consolidate all information, observations, and reports from every source relative to his/her advisee's development, abilities and plans;
3. Assists the advisee at regular intervals to make sufficient self-evaluation.

Faculty Advisors' Role

The role of faculty advisors includes but is not limited to:

1. Assisting students define personal, professional and career objectives
2. Referring students to counseling and student services departments when appropriate.
3. Inspire student consciousness of cultural and social opportunities for their family and themselves all through the HCCS system.
4. Be familiar with courses and experiential learning opportunities that will help the student achieve personal and professional goals
5. Learn the policies, procedures and requirements for graduation and clearly communicate the information to the advisee so they will not have any deficiencies or problems with the college requirements

Faculty Advisors Know:

1. How the student think in relation to school and the sense of duty they face (such as employment, family commitments and marital status) which influence the student's achievement.
2. A student motivational level and study skills.
3. A student's dedication level to attaining a degree and what additional services or assistance is necessary.
4. What a student academic roadblock is, which could possibly impede a student's progress and success.

Faculty Advising Best Practices

1. Become Familiar with each student, and maintain a professional environment at all times.
2. Introduce yourself to your students. Talk to students by name. Ask if students are presently registered.
3. Explore Ideas - inquiring in relation to students' wellbeing can unlock the entry to survey how devoted students are to their majors.
4. Exemplify Connection - revealing comparable experiences of yours and other students (without saying their names) can exhibit compassion.
5. Be familiar with the institution's Policies and Procedures - policies and procedures for withdrawing from classes, academic probation and suspension, are set up in the College Catalog. In addition, your facts of classes matter can persuade students to opt for electives that give them the chance to work with diverse personalities and dare them to try new things.
6. Assess Motivation.
 - a. Highlight the rewards of enrolling in challenging classes.
 - b. Give them encouragement to accomplish reasonable goals, and
 - c. Refer them to the support services that can be of assistance
7. Be conscious of your restrictions.
8. Tell to students when you do not have the answer to a question. Try to give them a resource somewhere they can obtain the answer.

Advising Dos

1. Rearticulate and confirm appointment time and information; be aware of what students say.
2. Ask descriptive questions.
3. Consider whether posture and pitch match up what students say.
4. Center awareness on the students.
5. Take it easy.

Advising Don'ts

1. Do not make hypothesis.
2. Do not make conclusions for students.
3. Do not pass judgment on other faculty or staff.
4. Do not be disloyal to students' confidentially.
5. Do not insinuate that they will be unsuccessful.

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

What is FERPA?

FERPA stands for Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (occasionally referred as the Buckley Amendment) passed by Congress in 1974. The Act permits four specific rights to the adult student:

- 1) The right to see information that the institution keeping on the student
- 2) The rights to seek amendment to those records and in certain cases append a statement to the record.
- 3) The right to consent to disclosure of his/her records.
- 4) The right to file a complaint with the FERPA Office in Washington

What are Educational Records?

Information recorded in any form that is directly related to a student and maintained by a college or university and by those acting for the college or university.

1. Personal information
2. Enrollment records
3. Grades
4. Schedules

The storage medium in which you find this information does not matter. A student educational record may be:

1. A document in the registrar's office
2. A computer printout in your office
3. A class list on your desktop
4. A computer display screen

Education Records Do Not Include:

1. Records of instructional, supervisory and administrative personnel kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record and not revealed to anyone other than the maker's substitute
2. Records of a campus law enforcement unit created and maintained by that unit and used solely for law enforcement purposes
3. Records relating to persons who are employees (but not student workers)
4. Records kept and maintained by a health care professional, used solely in connection with treatment and disclosed only to individuals providing treatment
5. Records which include information about an individual after he or she is no longer a student

What is Prior Written Consent?

A signed and dated document specifying the records to be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure and the identity of the person to who records will be disclosed

When is Consent Not Required?

1. For legitimate educational purposes within the university
2. To officials at an institution in which student seeks to enroll
3. To comply with a court order or subpoena
4. In connection with a health or safety emergency if necessary to protect the student or others
5. To parents of students who are dependents for income tax purposes
6. If it is directory information
7. To parents of a student younger than 21 years of age if the disclosure concerns discipline for violation of the campus drug and alcohol policy

What is Directory Information?

1. Name, address, telephone number
2. Email address
3. Date and place of birth
4. Major field of study
5. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
6. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
7. Dates of attendance, degrees, and awards received
8. Most recent previous institution attended

Special Concerns for Faculty and Support Staff:

Ways to avoid FERPA violations

DO NOT:

1. At any time use the entire Social Security Number of a student in a public posting of grades
2. Ever link the name of a student with that student's social security number in any public manner
3. Leave graded tests in a stack for students to pick up by sorting through the papers of all students
4. Circulate a printed class list with student name and social security number or grades as an attendance roster
5. Discuss the progress of any student with anyone other than the students (including parents) without the consent of the student
6. Provide anyone with lists of students enrolled in your classes for any commercial purpose

7. Provide anyone with student schedules or assist anyone other than university employees in finding a student on campus

FINANCIAL AID QUESTIONS

1. **How do I apply for financial aid?**

To apply for most financial aid, you will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You can complete it online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

2. **What is a FAFSA?**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) used to determine a student's need for federal, state and institutional aid.

3. **Where can I get information about Federal student financial aid?**

Call the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or 1-800-730-8913 (if hearing impaired) and ask for a free copy of The Student Guide: Financial Aid from the U S Department of Education. This toll free hotline is run by the U S Department of Education and can answer questions about federal and state student aid programs and applications. You can also write to: Federal Student Aid Information Center, P O Box 84, Washington, DC 20044.

4. **What is Houston Community College's federal school code?**

Houston Community College's federal school code is **010422**. Use this code on the FAFSA to reach Houston Community College financial aid office.

5. **I completed this form last year. Why do I need to complete another application again this year?**

Eligibility for financial aid is determined by using the previous year's earnings. It is necessary to apply each year to ensure that any changes to your and your spouse's or parent's financial situation are given proper consideration.

- 6.

- What is a PIN Number?**

A PIN (Personal Identification Number) is a 4-digit number used in combination with your Social Security Number, name, and date of birth to identify you as someone who has the right to access your own personal information on Federal Student Aid Web sites, such as FAFSA on the Web. If you are a parent and you want to electronically sign a FAFSA for your child, you need your own PIN. If you have more than one child attending college, you can use the same PIN to sign all applications.

6. **How do I get a PIN Number?**

If you do not already have a PIN and would like to apply for one, you can apply for one at www.pin.ed.gov.

- 7. Can my parents and I share the same PIN Number?**
No. You and your parents cannot share the same PIN. You must each have your own PIN.
- 8. I received my Student Aid Report (SAR) in the mail. What is this report and do I turn it in to the financial aid office?**
A Student Aid Report (SAR) is a document you will receive after your FAFSA is processed. Your SAR will list all answers provided on your FAFSA. You should review these answers carefully to make sure they are correct. Your SAR will contain your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Your school will use this number to determine how much financial aid you are eligible to receive based on your school's cost of attendance.
- 9. What is my Expected Family Contribution (EFC)?**
The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) measures your family's financial strength and used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid during one school year. You receive an EFC based on the processing results of your FAFSA.
- 10. When I originally applied for financial aid, I did not list Houston Community College. How do I now list HCC?**
Contact the Financial Aid Office and provide your DRN and Social Security number. They will be able to add Houston Community College to your application and obtain your financial aid information. You can also add Houston Community College's Federal School Code (010422) to your Student Aid Report (SAR) electronically or on the paper version.
- 11. What is Houston Community College's priority deadline?**
April 15th, however, if you miss the priority deadline your financial aid file can still be process. In the meantime, you will need to make other arrangements to pay for your classes until your financial aid award is received.
- 12. If I miss the deadline, can I still receive financial aid?**
Yes. If you miss the deadline, you may still receive some type of financial aid if you qualify and funding is still available. On the other hand, you should know that the longer you wait to complete the application process, the less chance you have to receive some aid that otherwise would be available if you applied early.
- 13. What will happen to my classes if I have not received my financial aid or made other payment arrangements?**
If you do not pay for your classes (either by financial or other payment arrangements) by the due date, your classes will be dropped. If you pay for your tuition and receive your financial aid later, you will be reimbursed.
- 14. Can I receive financial aid at more than one school/college at the same time?** No, you can only receive financial aid at one

school/college at a time. Failure to disclose financial aid for the current award year has been disbursed by another college for you may result in an over award. You would be responsible for repaying the over award back to the school/college.

15. What is the status of my financial aid?

If you turned in all required paperwork by the priority deadline, your application will be process before the semester begins. After your file is process and your eligibility determined, an electronic financial aid notification (EFAN) is forward via email to the student's email account. If you missed the priority deadline, your file is process in order of date received, so you may or may not receive an EFAN by the beginning of the semester.

16. What is the DRN?

Your Data Release Number (DRN) is a four-digit number assigned to your application by Federal Student Aid. Both the electronic and paper Student Aid Report (SAR) has the DRN in the upper right corner. You will need the DRN when contacting the Federal Student Aid Information Center to make corrections to your mailing address or the schools you listed on your FAFSA. The DRN also allows you to release your FAFSA data to schools you did not list on your original FAFSA.

17. I sent in my FAFSA over four weeks ago but have not heard anything. What should I do?

If you have not received a Student Aid Report (SAR), call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID for 1-319-337-5665. You must provide them with your social security number and date of birth as verification. You can also write to: Federal Student Aid Programs, P O Box 4038, Washington, DC 52243-4038.

18. When can I expect to hear about my financial aid package?

It is Houston Community College's policy to notify students by Electronic Financial Aid Notification via the student's email account when your financial aid package is ready. If you submit a completed student aid file to financial aid before the April 15 deadline, and have met all eligibility criteria, your student aid package should be ready in time for you to pay for your classes.

19. How will my financial aid be disbursed to me?

All financial aid, with the exception of work-study funds, will be credited to your student account in two equal disbursements: Once your charges have been paid (tuition, and fees), any additional funds will be refund to you to help pay for living costs, books, or personal expenses. Students, who have been awarded campus employment, will receive a paycheck for the number of hours worked in a specific pay period. Students are paid on the 15th and the last day of the month.

20. When will I receive the balance of my aid?

The balance of your financial aid is refund to your HCC Higher One Eagle Card, once your tuition and fee charges are process. For

information regarding your HCC Higher One Eagle Card, please go to <https://hcc eaglecard.higheroneaccount.com/>.

21. How do I log onto my student account?

- ❖ Log onto the HCC web site at www.hccs.edu.
- ❖ Click on **Register for classes**.
- ❖ Click on **Registration (online)**.
- ❖ Log on using your **User ID: and Password**.
- ❖ Click on **Finances**.
- ❖ Click on **View My Financial Aid**.
- ❖ Select the **2011** aid year.
- ❖ Read the information provided.
- ❖ Select your preference for student aid and select the **SUBMIT** button. Each semester, the amount you have been awarded may increase/decrease if you drop, add or withdraw from classes.
- ❖ **Checking your account frequently will keep you informed of any changes to your aid amount.**

22. Do I need to be admitted before I can apply for financial aid at HCC?

No, you can apply for financial aid any time after January 1. To actually receive funds, however, you must be admitted and enrolled at the college.

23. I was told that I had to be full-time student to receive financial aid. Is that right?

No, you do not have to be enrolled full-time to receive financial aid. For most programs, you can receive funding for half-time time (6-8 credits), three-quarter time (9-11 credits) or full-time (12 + credits). You may be enrolled less than halftime and be eligible for some federal financial aid programs. Based on the enrollment status information that you provided when you applied, the Financial Aid Office Processing Center will process your award. If you change your enrollment plans, you should contact your campus Financial Aid Office immediately.

24. Do I have to tell the Financial Aid Office if my personal or school information has changed?

Yes, if any of the following things have changed, you must notify the Financial Aid Office: Enrollment Status; Address; Phone Number; Major; Graduation Date (If you have a loan) and Receipt of outside funding.

25. What if my financial aid is not enough to cover my bill?

If the financial aid assistance you are offered is not enough to pay for your entire college charges (tuition, fees, books, etc.), you are responsible for making other arrangements to cover these charges (cash payment, installment plan, short-term loan).

26. What is the difference between a grant and a loan?

Grants are considered gift aid while loans must be repaid. There are several grant and loan programs available.

27. Is a loan financial aid?

Yes. An education loan is a type of financial aid that must be repaid.

28. I only want to apply for a loan. Why do I have to complete the FAFSA?

The FAFSA is used to determine eligibility for federal, state and institutional aid. The information reported on your FAFSA will determine your eligibility for the different programs, and it helps ensure that you get the greatest benefit for your particular financial situation. In addition, in order to receive student loan funds, you must comply with deadlines by submitting applications. November 15th for a fall only loan, April 15 for a fall and spring loan and for a spring only loan.

29. What is verification?

The process of documenting the information you provided on the FAFSA is called verification. If your application is selected for verification and you do not provide the documents requested by your school, you will not receive federal student aid and you might not receive aid from other non-federal sources.

30. Can I get aid for summer school?

It depends. The summer sessions are a trailer to our regular academic year. If you have not already used up your full eligibility in the Pell Grant program, you may use the funds for summer school. Many scholarships are not available, but college work-study may be available.

31. How do I become an independent student for federal aid purposes?

You may be considered independent for the 2010-2011 academic year if you meet at least one of the following requirements:

- ❖ Born before January 1, 1985
- ❖ A veteran of the u s armed forces
- ❖ Married or a ward of the court, or were a ward of the court until age 18
- ❖ A legal dependent for whom you provide more than half of their support, or
- ❖ Enroll in a graduate or professional program;
- ❖ Active duty in the U. S. armed forces for purposes other than training.

32. Am I eligible for financial aid if I am not a U. S. citizen?

Yes, but you must meet one of the following criteria to be considered an eligible non-citizen:

- ❖ You are a permanent resident with an Alien Registration Card (i-551).
- ❖ You are a conditional permanent resident with a 1-551C card.

- ❖ You have an Arrival Departure Record (I-94) from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) with any of the following designations:
 - ❖ Refugee
 - ❖ Asylum granted
 - ❖ Parolee
 - ❖ Cuban-Haitian entrant
 - ❖ For other eligibility requirements, please refer the student to the financial aid office.

33. We will file our taxes in April, so I cannot complete the FAFSA. What do I do?

Many families do not have their federal and state income taxes completed until April; however, this should not prevent you from applying for aid on time. The FAFSA allows you to use estimated income figures on its form. You can always update your application later and the financial aid will adjust your aid eligibility, if necessary.

34. Do I need to include my stepparent's income on the FAFSA?

Yes. Your stepparent's financial information must be included even if he or she is not helping you pay for your education.

35. If my parents are legally separated or divorced but filed taxes jointly this year, do I need to include their financial information on the FAFSA?

No. Only the parent with whom you have resided the longest during the preceding 12 months should provide financial information. If you do not live with either parent or lived with both parents equally, then the parent who provided more financial support should provide financial information on the FAFSA.

36. If I plan to get married after filing the FAFSA, should I list my status as married?

No. Because the FAFSA is based on the information provided on the date it was completed, your marital status would be "unmarried" if you complete the FAFSA before you get married.

37. Does the FAFSA consider me an independent student if I am expecting a child during the academic year for which I will receive financial aid?

Yes. Also, be sure to include the child under household size.

38. If I do not have my federal income tax return, how can I get a copy?

In most cases a "Tax Return Transcript" from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will meet financial aid requirements. The transcript can be ordered on a Form 4506, "Request for Copy or Transcript of Tax form," which is available at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-fill/f4506.pfd> or by calling (1-800-829-1040). Transcripts are mailed directly to you and should be received within two weeks.

39. Are work-study earnings taxable?

The money you earn from Federal Work-Study is generally subject to federal and state income tax, but exempt from FICA taxes (provided you are enrolled full-time and work less than half-time).

40. How much can I earn before I disqualify for aid?

There are no income cutoffs when determining a student's financial aid eligibility. Many factors are taken into consideration when determining a family's ability to pay beyond parental income such as household size, number of dependent children in college, family assets, and cost of the institution; so it is impossible to determine your eligibility based strictly on income.

41. What if my family financial circumstances changes drastically during a given year? What can be done?

There are circumstances that will enable the HCC financial aid office to adjust a student's aid eligibility. These circumstances could include: job loss due to unemployment or illness, a one-time benefit that affected your federal adjusted gross income, separation or divorce, or unusual medical expenses. If conditions such as these occur during any of your two years at HCC, please contact the financial aid office. Do not send any letters to the federal aid-processing center. They are not able to adjust your aid eligibility.

42. What will happen to my financial aid award if I drop a course or withdraw from the college?

If your tuition is adjusted because you drop a course, it may be necessary to reduce your financial aid. If you totally withdraw from the college during the first 60 percent of the term, your financial aid eligibility must be recalculated. Dropping courses and withdrawing are academic actions which might have serious financial implications and may affect your future aid eligibility because of failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress. It is your responsibility to understand the effects these actions will have on your financial aid award.

43. Will I be able to transfer my financial aid if I transfer to another school?

No. Financial aid does not transfer from school to school. Students planning to transfer to another school should contact the Financial Aid Office at both schools to find out what is required.

COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE CONTACT LIST

Houston Community College uses the FAFSA. Students needing assistance may contact one of the colleges listed below:

<p>Central College Cynthia Harris, Financial Aid Officer 1300 Holman, Houston, TX 77004 Direct Number: (713) 718-6067 Main Number: (713) 718-6100 finaid.central@hccs.edu cynthia.harris@hccs.edu</p>	<p>Coleman College of Health Sciences Charlene Strong, Financial Aid Associate 1900 Pressler Street, Houston, TX 77030 Direct Number: (713) 718-7627 Main Number: (713) 718-7630 finaid.coleman@hccs.edu charlene.strong@hccs.edu</p>
<p>Northeast College North line Mall Center Consuelo Gonzalez, Financial Aid Officer 401 North line Mall, Houston, TX 77022 Direct Number: (713) 718-8160 Main Number: (713) 718-8080 finaid.northeast@hccs.edu consuelo.gonzalez@hccs.edu</p>	<p>Northeast Campus Consuelo Gonzalez, Financial Aid Officer 555 Community College Drive Houston, TX 77013 Direct Number: (713) 718-8305 Main Number (713) 718-8304 finaid.northeast@hccs.edu consuelo.gonzalez@hccs.edu</p>
<p>Northwest College Town & Country Center Elizabeth Soles, Financial Aid Officer 1010 W. Sam Houston Pkwy N., Houston, TX 77043 Direct Number: (713) 718-5613 Main Number: (713) 718-5713 finaid.northwest@hccs.edu elizabeth.soles@hccs.edu</p>	<p>Katy Center Elizabeth Soles, Financial Aid Officer 1550 Fox Lake Drive Houston, TX 77084 Direct Number: (713) 718-5907 Main Number: (713) 718-5901 finaid.northwest@hccs.edu elizabeth.soles@hccs.edu</p>
<p>Southeast College Eastside Campus Carmen Franco, Financial Aid Officer 6815 Rustic Houston, TX 77087 Direct Number: (713) 718-8135 Main Number: (713) 718-7030 finaid.southeast@hccs.edu carmen.franco@hccs.edu</p>	<p>The Main Financial Aid Number: 713-718-8550</p>

HCCS COUNSELING OFFICE CONTACT LIST

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HCCS Academic and Counseling Frequently Asked Questions

1. What type of degrees and certificates does HCCS offer?

- a. HCCS offer the **Associates in Arts (AA)**, **Associates in Science (AS)**, the **Associates in Applied Science (AAS)**, and the **Associates in Teaching (AAT)**.

While an AA or an AAS is certainly more appropriate to certain intended majors, either one will transfer to a Bachelor's program; e.g., certain university programs may require certain courses not in the AA requirements as prerequisites. It's not that the AA will not transfer to a science program

- b. The **Associates in Arts** is intended primarily for students planning on transferring to a senior college or university to receive a baccalaureate degree in communication, business, social science, humanities and the fine arts.
- c. The **Associates in Science**, like the AA, is primarily for students planning on transferring to a senior college or university to receive a baccalaureate degree in computer science, engineering, health and natural sciences, and mathematics, * Commencing in 1999, all Associates in Science academic core curriculum courses taken at HCCS are guaranteed to transfer and count toward the core curriculum at all Texas public higher educational institutions.

Both the AA and the AS degrees prepare students for the academic challenges and commitment of high education before transferring to a four year institution. These academic degrees provide a strong, solid foundation through a traditional liberal arts education, which develops the needed critical and analytical skills, demanded by our constantly changing global societies.

The disciplines students may select as a major include the humanities and fine arts, social sciences, communication, teacher education, mathematics, and sciences.

- d. **Associates in Applied Sciences** is designed for students seeking skills, knowledge and training leading to employment in a specific field in the Career and Technology track. This degree is awarded in the technical and occupational areas. These courses and programs are divided into 16 clusters. While AAS students are

increasingly transferring to universities, this degree is intended to be primarily terminal.

- e. **Associates in Teaching is designed for students seeking skills, knowledge and training leading to employment in the education field.**
- f. **Certificates of Completion** are awarded upon successful completion of small clusters of job-specific CEU or SCH courses. These courses provide students with a skill level and/or knowledge in an occupational area.
- g. **Marketable Skills Achievement Award (MSA)** is awarded students after completing a sequence of credit courses totaling 9-14 SCH or Career and Technology courses of 144-359 contact hours. This award is designed to prepare students for employment.

Exemplary Programs

HCCS's commitment to quality education in Career and Technology education was validated during the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) site visit in April 2005. The THECB rigorously examined the HCC workforce programs and granted "exemplary programs" status, the highest rating possible, the programs include:

Accounting
Audio Recording/Video Production
Automotive Technology
Broadcast Technology
Business Technology
Child Development
Computer Information Sciences
Computer Programming
Criminal Justice
Drafting and Design Engineering Technology
Emergency Medical Services
Fashion Design
Fashion Merchandising
Finance (Banking)
Marketing, Management and Research
Medical Assistant
Physical Therapist Assistant
Real Estate
Respiratory Therapist
Technical Communication

2. What is the difference between the Associates in Arts and the Associates in Science degree?

- a. The Associates of Arts (AA) and the Associates of Sciences (AS) have the same core requirements for History, English, Social Sciences, Humanities, Visual/Performing Arts, College Algebra, and Science with a lab, Science lab optional, Communication, Government and Cross Cultural. The difference is that where the AA requires 17 additional elective credits, the AS indicated that of those electives two must be in the college level math (6 credits and one additional science with a lab, 4 credits). We highly recommend and strongly encourage students, who are undecided of AA and AS to visit the Counseling Department so the staff can see what their ultimate vocational goal is; what education is required for that goal and then backtrack to the HCC level.
 - 1. It's similar to planning a trip:
 - ii. You look at a map, find your present location, and decide where you want to go, navigate the most accurate path between the two, and finally plan for everything you will need to make the trip successful.

3. What is a degree plan and why is it important?

- a. A degree plan is a binding contract between the institution and the student, which lists the courses that a student must complete in order to receive their degree or certificate. It is a course "roadmap" to graduation. Because the requirements for particular programs change annually, it is imperative that students select a degree plan and complete the course work in a timely manner.

4. Can a student obtain two degrees at the same time?

- a. Students cannot "obtain", meaning be sent or conferred, two degrees at the same time. However, some students complete the coursework for a certificate, and then go on to complete the Associates in Applied Science after transferring the certificate credits into the AAS. They then receive the AAS after it has been completed.

5. Can a student pursue an Associate in Arts and Associates in Science concurrently?

- a. Some students have changed their degree plan from AA to AS in mid course realizing that the AA is not sufficient if they wish to transfer to engineering or health related Bachelor's program.

6. How does a student decide on a degree track?

- a. Students who are undecided or unsure of their career path can visit the counseling department and request for an appointment with a counselor for career exploration. The counseling department has a

number of "Interest Inventories" that assist students with their interest and vocational/career goals. Once a decision has been made, the best educational/training path toward that goal is selected. The counselor can select the appropriate degree track, and the student is given their Degree Plan to follow while attending HCCS, as well as any transfer plans to Universities if that is in order for the vocational goal.

7. Can a student take a class over for a better grade?

- a. Yes, students can repeat courses for a better grade, and many have after realizing that a grade would not transfer to a university. For example: a student earns "D" in History would not transfer to a university. The student can retake the course; however, the "D" remains on the record even though the "A" is reported.
- b. Students need to realize that the "repeat" will be tailed and that they can only repeat a course three times before the cost for the course increases. The business office representative can provide more information on the "three peat rule."

8. How do students find out the requirements for acceptance into a degree program?

- a. The acceptance requirements for a degree program are limited unless students are interested in various health careers offered at John B. Coleman College for Health Related Sciences. In either case, students should visit the Counseling department; meet with a counselor or student service associate, to discuss what program best suits their interest. The student will be equipped with all the information he/she needs to be successful in their desired program.

9. What are the HCCS graduation requirements?

- a. To receive a certificate, Associates of Applied Science, Associates of Arts or Associates of Science, the student must complete 18 hours at HCCS, which includes all the courses within that degree plan prior to the document being sent, or it being listed as completed on his/her transcript.
- b. To take part in the commencement ceremony, a student must be within one semester of completing his/her degree plan.

Student Complaint Process-Addressing Policy 4.2.3

General Academic Complaints

When a student wishes to file a complaint related to academic matters not covered under the Grade Appeal or EEO Process, the student is to follow the chain of command. A student should first discuss the issue with the faculty member. If the matter does not reach a resolution satisfactory to the student, the student may then present the issue to the department chair. If the student is still dissatisfied with the outcome after speaking with the department chair, he/she may direct the complaint to the academic dean. Once the matter has been discussed with the dean, the student's final resolution is bringing the concern to the college president. The president's decision is final.

General Student Services Complaints

When a student wishes to file a complaint related to a student services matter not covered under the EEO, discipline or financial aid appeal process, the student is to follow the chain of command. The student should bring the complaint to the attention of the department manager. If after having spoken with the department manager, a resolution is not reached to the student's satisfaction, the student may present the issue to the dean of student services. Upon addressing the issue with the dean of student services, if the student is still dissatisfied with the outcome, the student may present to the president. The president's decision is final.

General Continuing Education Complaints

Students enrolled in the School of Continuing Education should first discuss concerns with the faculty member. If the student is still dissatisfied he/she may appeal to the program Director of the content area. The Program Director may bring the issue to the Director of SCE for a final decision.

Distance Education

The Houston Community College Distance Education (DE) Department provides students the opportunity to attend college in a non-traditional environment and setting. Courses are "delivered via technology, maximizing accessibility by removing barriers of location and time." DE is one of the fastest growing areas of HCC and it offers a convenient, flexible and attractive alternative to the on-campus classroom.

The Distance Education Department strives to promote student success for the online learner. It provides an array of services from technical support to online tutoring and administrative assistance. Students have the option of selecting the Associates in Science and the Associates in Applied Science degrees.

The Distance Education Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the Distance Education student. Students should review the handbook as part of the mandatory orientation. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the handbook's contents. The handbook

contains valuable information, answers and resources, such as DE contracts, policies, procedures (how to drop, attendance requirements, etc), student services (ADA, financial aid, degree planning, etc.), course information, testing procedures, technical support, and academic calendars. Refer to the DE Student handbooks by visiting this link: <http://de.hccs.edu/de/de-student-handbook>.

Faculty Advising Handbook Resources

- 1) Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook, second edition, Virginia N. Gordon, Wesley R. Habley, Thomas Grites and Associates, NACADA, Jossey-Bass, 2008, San Francisco, California
- 2) "Reaffirming the Role of Faculty in Academic Advising," Gary L. Kramer, NACADA Monograph Series, Number 1, 1995,
- 3) "Advising As Teaching: Establishing Outcomes, Developing Tools, and Assessing Student Learning," Robert Hurt, NACADA Journal, volume 27, Number 2, Fall 2007
- 4) Houston Community College Student Handbook, 2009-2011
- 5) Houston Community College Course Catalog, 2009-2010
- 6) "The New Advisor Guidebook: Mastering the Art of Advising Through the First Year and Beyond", NACADA, Monograph Series, Number 16, 2007
- 7) "Advising Special Populations: Adult Learners, Community College Students, LGBTQ Students, Multicultural Students, Students on Probation, Undecided Students", NACADA, Monograph Series, Number 17, 2007