

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AFFECTING STUDENTS

Notice to Students: College policies and procedures are currently under review and may be changed during the 2005-2006 academic year. Please check the HCC website for updated policies and procedures.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic work submitted by students to their instructors is assumed to be the result of their own thought, research or self-expression. Moreover, when students borrow ideas, wording or organization from another source they are expected to acknowledge that fact in the appropriate manner.

Plagiarism is unacceptable. Refer to the Code of Student Conduct for HCC's disciplinary actions.

### ACADEMIC PROGRESS

In order to have satisfactory academic standing, a student at HCC must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 "C".

**Academic Warning:** Students will be placed on academic warning if the students' cumulative grade point averages (cumulative GPA) are less than 2.0, and the students have not been warned previously.

To regain satisfactory academic standing, students must raise their cumulative GPAs to 2.0 or better after their next period of enrollment.

**Academic Probation:** Students on academic warning who fail to regain satisfactory academic standing (cumulative GPA of 2.0) at the end of their next period of enrollment will be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation must consult with and obtain the approval of a counselor before they may register.

To regain satisfactory academic standing, students must raise their cumulative GPAs to 2.0 or better.

**Final Academic Probation:** Students on academic probation who fail to achieve a term GPA of 2.0 will be placed on final academic probation. Students on final academic probation must consult with and obtain the approval of a counselor or academic advisor before they may register.

In addition, students on final academic probation may enroll for no more than six (6) credit hours per term.

Students on final academic probation who earn a **term** GPA of at least 2.0 and who fail to regain satisfactory academic standing (cumulative GPA of 2.0) will remain on final academic probation.

**Academic Suspension:** Students on final academic probation who fail to attain a term GPA of 2.0 or better will be placed on academic suspension for one fall or spring term.

Students who have been academically suspended may not register for classes.

**Readmission of Students on Academic Suspension:** Students who have been academically suspended must petition the academic standards committee for readmission. Students on academic suspension must see a counselor to begin the petition process.

**Lack of Progress by Students Readmitted after a One-Term Suspension:** Students readmitted from a one-term suspension will be suspended for one academic year if they fail to earn a term GPA of 2.0 in any period of enrollment before they regain satisfactory academic standing.

**Readmission of Students Suspended for One Year:** Students who are academically suspended from the College for a one-year period must petition for readmission and appear before the Academic Standards Committee. Students on academic suspension must see a counselor to begin the petition process. Those students readmitted by the committee will be readmitted with the status of final academic probation.

Students readmitted after a one-year suspension must meet regularly with a counselor to discuss their academic and career plans. In addition, students readmitted after a one-year suspension must earn a term GPA of 2.0 or higher during all periods of enrollment until they regain satisfactory academic standing.

**Academic Dismissal:** Students readmitted after a one-year suspension who fail to earn a term GPA of 2.0 or higher during all periods of enrollment before they regain satisfactory academic standing will be academically dismissed from the college.

After a period of three years, students who have been academically dismissed may petition the Academic Standards Committee for readmission. They must appear in person before the Committee and must present clear and decisive evidence that past poor academic performance has been remedied.

Students readmitted by the Academic Standards Committee are readmitted with the status of final academic probation.

**Academic Grade Appeals:** Students must adhere to the standards of academic performance established in the course syllabi provided by their instructors. However, students are protected against prejudicial or capricious evaluation and may dispute an assigned grade by asking the instructor for reconsideration. If grades remain in dispute, students should contact the appropriate campus Dean of Student Services. The Dean of Student Services will direct students to the appropriate appeals procedure.

No grade will be changed without the approval of the instructor and the Campus President.

## ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend class regularly and punctually. If students miss classes, regardless of the cause, their opportunities for learning and academic success will be adversely affected.

The syllabus for each course contains the instructor's attendance and grading requirements. It is the student's responsibility to read the syllabus, comply with the instructor's policies, and arrange to make up work missed because of absence or lateness.

Instructors will keep attendance records in official HCC grade books.

If students stop attending class, they will be assigned a letter grade unless they complete and submit a withdrawal form by the deadline published in this publication, in the current catalog and/or credit course schedule. Students receiving financial aid are advised to discuss the impact of not attending classes on their financial aid or veterans benefits.

## COLLEGE-LEVEL ACADEMIC SKILLS TEST (CLAST)

The CLAST measures the communication and computation skills generally associated with successful collegiate performance. (CLAST campus coordinators can provide a list of skills that are measured by CLAST). Florida Statutes and the Rules of the Florida State Board of Education require satisfactory completion of the CLAST test or successful completion of the required CLAST exemption alternatives before an AA degree can be awarded. The State Board of Education establishes passing scores on CLAST.

Students who are completing an AA degree program usually take the CLAST in the semester prior to graduating. Students in AS degree programs who are seeking admission to upper division programs in state universities must also take CLAST. In order to be awarded an AA degree and/or be eligible for admission to the upper division at a state university, students must have passed the CLAST or been granted a special waiver or exemption.

Note: If you are seeking teacher certification, you may not be exempted from passing the CLAST

The CLAST is offered at least three times each academic year. In order to be eligible to take the CLAST, students must complete at least 18 semester hours, or the equivalent. For additional information, refer to the HCC Catalog.

## FORGIVENESS POLICY

Courses in which a "C" or better is earned cannot be repeated. All course attempts will appear on the transcript. Courses in which a grade of "D" or "F" is earned may be repeated for credit, and only the most recent grade earned will be used to calculate the cumulative grade point average.

Note: Some courses may be repeated for credit, i.e., JOU 1949. This means the grade and quality points earned in each attempt for this course will be included in the GPA computation. Grade forgiveness does not apply to a course that may be taken more than one time for credit. Check the course description to determine if a course may be repeated for credit.

Students may attempt a course only three times—including the first attempt, repeat grades, and withdrawals. Permission for a fourth attempt will be granted only through the academic appeals process. Permission will be granted only to students who can document major extenuating circumstances. Students who wish to begin the academic appeals process should contact the appropriate campus Dean of Student Services. Grades for the third and all subsequent attempts will be included in calculating grade point averages.

Note: Some colleges and universities may not accept grades earned for repeated courses; some might use only the grades originally earned. Students receiving financial assistance of any type should speak with a financial aid counselor to ensure that any repeat attempts will qualify for aid.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) govern the confidentiality of student records. (Records are defined as all records, files and data directly related to students that are created, maintained, and used by HCC.)

HCC students have the right to

- inspect and review their educational reports and records;
- have privacy of their educational reports and records maintained;
- require the college to obtain written consent prior to disclosing personally identifiable information except in those instances specifically noted in the statute;
- challenge and request a hearing on requiring the college to amend any portion of the students' records that are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the students' privacy.

### **RIGHT OF ACCESS**

Students and parents or guardians of dependent students (per Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code) are entitled to these rights and to access to students' records. Parents or guardians of students will not be given access to the students' records without the written consent of the student or documentation that the student is a dependent.

Students and eligible parents or guardians may request a list of the types of student records maintained by HCC. These records include but are not limited to:

- academic records, i.e., application, transcript, enrollment verification, course records, grades, etc. (Direct requests to the appropriate campus admissions, registration and records office.);
- disciplinary records (Direct requests to the appropriate campus dean of student services.);
- financial aid records (Direct requests to the appropriate financial aid office.); and
- student account and fee records (Direct requests to the College financial services department.).

Eligible individuals may inspect or review student records and reports and receive copies for the cost of producing such copies. College employees may review student records when the reason for their review serves a legitimate educational or administrative purpose. Unless conducting approved research, faculty members may review the records only of students currently enrolled in their classes.

## **RIGHT OF WAIVER OF ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIAL LETTERS OR STATEMENTS**

A student, eligible parent, or guardian may waive the right of access to evaluations, confidential letters, or letters of recommendation. When requested, HCC will provide the names of individuals who have submitted such letters and evaluations. Moreover, HCC will endeavor to ensure the recommendations and evaluations are used only for the purpose(s) intended.

## **CORRECTIONS**

HCC maintains student records electronically, on paper, and on microfilm. In order to provide students the opportunity to correct errors and appeal discrepancies, the College will maintain the original documents on which the records are based for one year. After one year, the source documents may no longer be available and documenting errors will become the student's responsibility.

## **RIGHT TO CHALLENGE AND HEARING**

Students and eligible parents or guardians have the right to challenge the content and request amendment of records and reports they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. To present such a challenge, students, eligible parents or guardians should contact the appropriate campus admissions, registration and records office.

Challenges may be settled informally by a written agreement. If challenges cannot be settled informally, either party may request, within a reasonable period of time, that a formal hearing be held to settle the dispute. If a request is made, the appropriate campus president will appoint an administrator, without an interest in the outcome, to serve as the hearing officer. Students, eligible parents or guardians, and college employees whose testimony is relevant to the issue may present evidence. After reviewing all available evidence and testimony, the hearing officer will make a written recommendation to the appointing campus president. The Campus President will issue a written decision.

Students and eligible parents or guardians have the right to appeal decisions of campus presidents' rulings on FERPA challenges to the Vice President for Education and Student Development.

## **RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

Students have the right to privacy with respect to the educational records maintained by the College. Personally identifiable student records or reports are confidential and will not be released without the written consent of students, eligible parents or guardians. However, there are exceptions. HCC will release directory information on students unless students submit written requests to the appropriate campus admissions, registration & records office requesting that directory information be withheld. Directory information includes students'

- names, addresses and listed telephone numbers;
- date and place of birth;
- majors;
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- weight and height (of members of athletic teams);
- dates of attendance;
- degrees and awards received; and
- most recent previous educational institution.

## **COMPLAINTS**

Individuals who believe their privacy rights have been violated may petition the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts Office at the Department of Health & Welfare in Washington, D.C. or file suit in Circuit Court to request enforcement of the rights they believe to have been violated.

## **RULE AND PROCEDURE**

Students may obtain a copy of the administrative rule and procedure on student records, including the requirements of the federal and state laws, from their campus dean of student services or at the campus libraries.

## **RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

Upon request, HCC will prepare and certify statements relating to students' degrees earned, GPA, enrollment dates, etc. If students do not provide forms on which to report the information, it will be reported in a letter signed by a College official. Since the federal government requires educational institutions to take precautions to prevent the misuse of student data, HCC will release student information only upon receipt of a signed, written request by the student or other authorized requestor.

Parties requesting information should submit their requests, and any accompanying forms, to the campus office of admissions, registration and records. The College will try to process requests for information within ten working days.

# **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

## **CAMPUS DISTURBANCES**

State law prohibits the disruption of or interference with the administration, function or activities of an educational institution. In addition, the law prohibits individuals from encouraging students to disrupt the educational process or to interfere with the attendance of any student or employee.

Individuals who violate this law will be charged with a second-degree misdemeanor and, upon conviction, be fined up to \$500, imprisoned for up to 60 days, or both. In addition, students who violate this law will be subject to College disciplinary procedures.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

HCC personnel are familiar with the use of fire alarms, procedures for notifying fire departments, exit from College buildings, locations of fire extinguishers and other procedures for ensuring safety during emergencies. Instructors should brief students on emergency procedures, routes of evacuation, location of assembly points, and location of emergency rescue areas at the beginning of the term.

## **EMERGENCY RESCUE AREAS\***

Emergency Rescue areas have been designated and marked with red and white signs on floors above ground level to be used when escape routes are blocked or when a disabled person(s) cannot be evacuated safely. Emergency response personnel will be notified to check "Emergency Rescue" areas when they arrive on the scene.

*\*Note: An Emergency Rescue area should only be used when evacuation by any other means is not possible. If at all possible, tell another person to notify security of where you are located. When in a rescue area, keep communication to others by voice or other signals such as waving an item of clothing until you are sure that you are being helped.*

## **EVACUATION OF DISABLED PERSONS**

Instructors shall recruit (designate) for evacuation purposes students from their classes to assist students who use wheelchairs or other restrictive devices, or who have disabilities that seriously restrict mobility. If voluntary assistance cannot be provided for a particular student, then that student should notify the Security Office, and the Campus Dean of Student Services. As a secondary means, emergency evacuation chairs (Evacu-Chairs) are located at the top of stair landings in most buildings with two or more floors. The chairs are to be used by trained personnel as a safe means of evacuating disabled persons.

In an emergency situation, you should:

- evacuate the classroom and building in a prompt and orderly manner;
- take all personal belongings and valuables with you;
- remain at student's designated assembly point and at least 300 feet away from the scene of the emergency (in the event of a bomb threat, the assembly point should be at least 500 feet away);
- do not use elevators;
- follow the instructions of security personnel, instructors, supervisors and the building Emergency Marshall;
- do not return to the building until the "all clear" is given by authorized persons.

For more information refer to the HCC safety brochure available at the HCC website.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY SERVICES**

The HCC Office of Security is available to assist all students and employees. The Security Office patrols college property to detect and deter criminal activity, provide protection to those on campus, provide security for college property, and detect and document hazardous, unusual and suspicious behavior and conditions.

The Security Department provides information and assistance on a 24-hour basis. The department utilizes uniformed patrol officers with marked vehicles and officers on foot patrol to observe and detect criminal behavior and suspicious activities; enforce traffic and parking regulations; and assist students and employees.

Students, employees, and members of the community are required to obey all local, state and federal laws, statutes and ordinances. In addition, members of the college community must observe all HCC administrative rules and procedures. The Security Department is responsible for monitoring compliance with these laws and many of the College's rules and procedures.

Responsible students or employees should

- inform the Security Department about suspicious conduct, criminal activities and hazardous situations;
- refrain from leaving doors and windows open when rooms are vacant;
- walk to cars and classes in groups or with a companion; (Phone 253-7911 or cell 220-7032, after hours, to be escorted to your car);
- walk in well-lighted areas at night, even when in a group;
- stay alert and use your intuition; (If students feel they are being followed, they should change direction and walk toward a group of people or to a secure area.)
- watch their belongings;
- avoid strangers that appear suspicious or out of place; and
- freely contact Security to ask for assistance.

Students who notice situations that represent potential or real safety or security problems should notify the local campus security office or call 253-7911. After hours call 220-7032.

Upon request, the College will make available to prospective students its policies, procedures, statistics and other information about campus safety and security. The HCC Safety Brochure is available on the HCC website ([www.hccfl.edu/student/services](http://www.hccfl.edu/student/services)).

## **THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

Threats by HCC students, staff or visitors to do bodily harm, damage to property or disrupt the operation of the college are inimical with the goals of the College, and will not be tolerated. Students or employees who make such threats, whether verbal or written, expressed or implied, will be disciplined according to the appropriate administrative procedures.

## **TRAFFIC AND PARKING REGULATIONS**

Traffic and parking regulations apply to two and three-wheel motorized vehicles as well as to cars and trucks and are vigorously enforced.

HCC campuses use standard traffic signs and regulations. All members of the college community and guests operating vehicles must comply with them. Moreover, everyone operating a vehicle on a HCC campus must comply with lawful orders and directions given by HCC Security Officers and HCC employees authorized to direct, control or regulate traffic.

Unless otherwise posted, the campus speed limit is 15 MPH. U-turns are prohibited at all times. In addition, pulling through or backing into a parking space is prohibited. Any driver leaving a vehicle on campus overnight must notify the Office of Security.

Only motorized and non-motorized vehicles used by the disabled are permitted on campus sidewalks. Students who need permits to park in spaces reserved for the disabled must obtain those permits from the appropriate state agency.

Faculty, staff, reserved and other restricted parking areas are clearly marked. Students are allowed to park only in those lots and spaces designated for student parking.

Vehicles found in violation of the following regulations may be removed at the owner's expense:

- parking in restricted areas such as those reserved for faculty and staff;
- parking in a disabled student space without a Florida Permit (this may also result in a \$100 fine);
- obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
- receiving a third HCC Parking Citation within one year;
- parking motorcycles, bicycles and scooters off the designated areas or special racks;
- parking in fire lanes or in red curb zones;
- leaving a vehicle on campus for more than three days without notifying the Office of Security; and
- parking in any one of the following areas:
  - within 10 feet of a fire hydrant
  - in a loading zone

- in a driveway in a designated tow-away zone
- on a sidewalk
- on the grass
- out of a marked parking space
- obstructing a legally parked vehicle

Drivers of vehicles involved in accidents resulting in injury, death, or damage to the property of others must immediately stop, notify the appropriate law enforcement agency, report the accident and any injuries to the Office of Security, and remain with the vehicle until an officer or designee arrives.

Anyone on a campus found driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be subject to both College disciplinary procedures and state statutes and local ordinances. The Office of Security will contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities when such violations are discovered.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

You will get the most out of attending HCC if you include more than academics in your college experience. Joining a club, getting involved in student activities, participating in athletics, working on a college publication, and volunteering in the community - these are just a few of the ways you can increase the value of your HCC experience.

## **ASSEMBLIES AND DEMONSTRATIONS**

### **PURPOSE**

This administrative procedure establishes policy guidelines for organized mass assemblies and demonstrations at Hillsborough Community College.

### **PROCEDURE**

The following procedural guidelines will be followed for organized mass assemblies and demonstrations at the College:

1. Any organized mass assembly or demonstration planned to be held at the College must be registered in writing in the Campus President's office at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled commencement of the event. A request will be considered only when made by an organized student group that is recognized by the College or College staff. A request may be denied at the administration's discretion if the proposed assembly or demonstration could constitute a danger or disruption to the College's orderly operation.

A speaker's advocacy of topics such as, but not limited to, the following may be grounds for denying a request:

- A. the violent overthrow of the government of the United States, the state of Florida or any political subdivision thereof;
- B. the willful damage or destruction, seizure and subversion of the College's buildings or other property;
- C. the forcible disruption or impairment or interference with the College's building, classes or other property;
- D. the physical harm, coercion, intimidation or other invasion of lawful rights of the administration, faculty or students;
- E. other campus disorder of a violent or disruptive nature.