Washtenaw
Community College

Parent
Orientation
Handbook

Our Mission

Washtenaw Community College strives to make a positive difference in people's lives through accessible and excellent educational programs and services.

- We provide a caring, open-door teaching and learning environment

- We provide excellent teaching, counseling and support services

- We reach out to people who have limited income or other barriers to success

- We enable people to progress in their academic and career pursuits

- We work in partnership with the communities we serve

WCC is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association

230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411
312-263-0456
hlcommission.org

For information on WCC, visit wccnet.edu or call 734-973-3300.

Confidentiality of Students' Academic Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA protects the confidentiality of WCC student records. After enrolling at WCC, even if they are under 18, parents or guardians are not granted access to their student's records.

In compliance with FERPA, WCC maintains the following procedures:

- WCC officials, including instructors and academic advisors, can not discuss the specifics of a student's academic, financial and/or disciplinary situation, unless the student is present and willingly agrees to share the information.

- All correspondence from WCC regarding academic, financial and disciplinary issues is addressed to the student and mailed to the address the student has listed with Student Connection.

Parents often ask how to find out their student's grades. WCC expects each student to assume full personal responsibility for their academic progress, which includes the appropriate communication of that progress to their parents. The student can log into *MyWCC* at any time to view final grades, financial aid, payment records, transcripts and more.

As a parent, it's important to maintain open communication with your student so that they will be comfortable discussing their academic progress with you.

For more information about FERPA, please contact Kathy Currie in Student Services at 734-677-5143.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I have a question for an advisor?

If you have a question, contact Counseling and Career Planning or your student's counselor. Please remember that Federal law does not allow advisors, counselors and instructors to share specific student information with parents.

My student got low grades in high school. What can I do to help them earn better grades in college?

Low high school grades don't always translate into low grades in college. Many high school students who feel frustrated by a system designed for adolescents thrive in college, which encourages independence, flexibility and responsibility as adults.

How can I help my student succeed academically in college?

Encourage getting to know instructors

Research shows that students who get to know their instructors earn higher grades than those who don't. During the first week of classes, suggest that your student visit their instructors during their office hours. Most college instructors enjoy getting to know students this way.

Encourage regular class attendance

Research shows that students who attend class regularly earn higher grades. Since college courses meet less often than high school courses, it's easy to fall behind quickly. If your student must miss an upcoming class session, encourage them to call or email the instructor beforehand.

Encourage treating college as a full-time job

Taking a "full load" of 12 credit hours means spending at least 12 hours weekly in class. For each hour spent in class, a student should expect to spend at least two hours preparing (reading the textbook, writing papers, etc.). This means that being a full-time college student is equivalent to working a 36-hour per-week job. Many students are pleasantly surprised to learn that the same work ethic they develop as students working for college credit serves them well as employees working for pay.

Will I receive a copy of my child's grades?

No. The student may log into *MyWCC* to view grades.

What's the difference between dropping a class and withdrawing from a class?

A student who drops a class on or before the refund deadline will receive a 100 percent tuition refund for that class. The dropped class will not appear on the student's transcript. A student who withdraws from a class after the drop deadline will receive no refund. The student's transcript will show a "W" grade, indicating that they withdrew from the class.
See *wccnet.edu* for deadline information.

How is the grade point average (GPA) calculated?

Instructors assign grades using a letter scale, with each letter having a numerical value. The letter grades and their corresponding point values are:

A = 4 B = 3 C = 2 D = 1 F = 0

To determine a student's grade-point average, divide the total number of grade points earned by the total number of credit hours attempted.

Should my student work while attending college?

It depends on the student. Many students work while attending college and still earn excellent grades, thanks to careful time management. Most students get more benefit from their studies when they work less or not at all. Students who must work 30+ hours weekly should consider taking courses part-time rather than full-time. Whether your student works or not, encourage them to apply for scholarships.

My student is receiving a scholarship to attend WCC. How do I make sure that the scholarship has been credited to their account?

If your student is receiving a scholarship from an external source (such as a corporation or charitable organization), then the award amount will be credited to their WCC account once payment is received. Before that time, the best way to confirm that the award has been or will be made is to check with the provider of the award. Visit wccnet.edu/financialaid for a list of frequently asked questions posted by the Financial Aid Office. If your question isn't answered there, please call 734-973-3523 or stop by the Financial Aid Office (located in the Student Center building, 2nd floor lobby) for help.

Some material in this section comes from:

Mullendore, Richard H. and **Banahan, Leslie.** Empowering Parents of First-Year College Students: A Guide for Success. Columbia, SC: National Orientation Directors Association, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students In Transition. 2007. *nrcpubs.com*

Learning Support Services (LSS)

Office Location: LA 104
734-973-3342
wccnet.edu/learningsupport

Tutoring

Free tutoring is available for all students enrolled in WCC classes:

GM 201/203

Math (all levels, including statistics) and **Science**

Computer Commons – 2nd Floor of the Bailey Library

General Studies: English, ESL (Computer Commons, 2nd Floor of Library)

Computers: BOS and CIS and more ...

For schedules and more information including online resources please visit: *departments.wccnet.edu/learningsupport*

Why use tutoring?

Tutoring reinforces and clarifies the concepts presented in class. Students are expected to be prepared with questions for the tutoring session.

- Tutors are familiar with course content and texts.

- Tutors often assist with study skills and strategies during the session while covering subject material.

- Tutoring is done on an individualized basis so that the student's specific questions can be addressed. Some students prefer this to meeting with a study group or relying on extra time with an instructor.

- Tutoring is not a substitute for class attendance or to cover all coursework during the sessions. Students report that they are able to better understand course material and see improved grades as they use the service during the semester.

- Tutoring is free!

Services for Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities obtain accommodations through LSS.

What is considered a disability?

Students with documented disabilities (including learning disabilities, physical, psychiatric, sensory disabilities or health impairments) may qualify for classroom and/or test taking accommodations.

A student with a temporary condition (e.g., a broken arm) is not covered as a student with a disability. However, temporary academic adjustments may be made with the instructor and LSS.

What are accommodations?

Accommodations are set up on an individualized basis to bridge barriers caused by a disability. The same condition with common characteristics can affect different persons in different ways, which is why it's important that specific medical, psychological or assessment information be provided.

Examples of accommodations include:

- Testing in an individual room by appointment for any of the placement tests

- Extended time for classroom tests in a reduced distraction environment

- Interpreters/readers/writers or scribes

- Note-takers

- Assistive/adaptive technology

What information is needed to obtain accommodations?

Documentation is required. In general, the information must
be current (usually within three years), contain a diagnosis, barriers listed as a result of the condition and any accommodations that have been provided in the past.

Detailed information on the requirements for documentation is listed at *wccnet.edu/resources/ learningassistance/learningsupport/ disabilitysupportservice*s.

Why is it important to obtain accommodations?

Post-secondary institutions are required by law to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities.

It is important to note that the laws and the process to obtain accommodations are different in college than in high school.

We encourage new students to meet with Program Specialists
in our office to get specific information. This doesn't substitute for the New Student Orientation, which offers more detailed information about WCC. With student permission, parents are welcome to accompany their student to their meetings with
a Program Specialist.

An excellent resource for information about obtaining accommodations in college is provided by the U.S. Department of Education, "Students with Disabilities
Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights
and Responsibilities." The publication is available online at
www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ transition.html.

How often should a student meet with a Program Specialist?

Students need to register with the LSS office each semester by completing and submitting an Intake Form and speaking to a Program Specialist to obtain academic advising and accommodations. While a student may choose to meet with another counselor at WCC, accommodations can only be
arranged through LSS. Students may also meet with a
Program Specialist at any time during the semester to ask questions and/or request assistance.

After verification of the disability is obtained and the student has discussed their needs with a Program Specialist, a letter is provided by Learning Support Services for the student to give to each instructor. Accommodations will not be provided unless the instructor has this letter.

Other support services available at LSS for students with disabilities include tutoring (available to all students) and assistive technology.

Student Activities & Student Organizations Office

Location: Student Center building, room 112
734-973-3500
wccnet.edu/studentactivities

Why are extra-curricular activities important?

Extra-curricular activities are a great way for students to relieve stress, meet new people with similar interests, experience new things and have a well-rounded college experience. Since WCC isn't a residential college, taking advantage of these opportunities is the best way for students to feel like they are part of a community. Forming bonds with other students and staff provides motivation to complete school when things get tough.

How can students get involved?

Student Activities offers trips to amusement parks, discounted ticket sales, cultural events, social activities in the cafeteria during lunch and much more. All of these events are either FREE or available at an affordable cost. Student Organizations registers over 60 active student-led clubs each year. Your student is sure to find something interesting and exciting. Student can call or visit the Student Activities Office for more information.

The Washtenaw Voice newspaper is published every other Monday throughout the academic year. Students who excel at feature writing, photography, graphic design, web development and/or sales and marketing are encouraged to apply for positions.

Contact: 734-677-5405
washtenawvoice.com

Orchard Radio is WCC's internet radio station, streaming commercial-free music all day, every day. Students hear everything from pop, rock, hip-hop, jazz, sports and much more. Radio hosts choose their own formats, create their own play-lists and run their own weekly radio shows.

Contact: radio@wccnet.edu
orchardradio.wccnet.edu

Be sure to have your student visit WCC's Campus Connect social network to learn more about student life:
campusconnect.wccnet.edu.

FROM ORIENTATION THROUGH GRADUATION
STAY CONNECTED!

Visit **FAMILIES.WCCNET.EDU** for information and resources to help support your student as they transition to Washtenaw Community College.

Financial Aid

Location: Student Center building, 2nd floor

734-973-3523
wccnet.edu/financialaid

What is financial aid?

Financial aid is any source of funds used to help students meet their educational expenses. WCC offers four basic types of financial aid, funded by federal, state, college and private sources. Many eligible students receive a combination of these types of aid known as a "financial aid award."

- **Grants** are usually based on financial need as determined by the FASFA and do not require repayment unless the student has an overpayment or fails to meet conditions.

- **Scholarships** are usually based on academic performance and/or financial need with no repayment required unless the student fails to meet conditions.

- **Work study** is an award of part-time employment based on financial need.

- **Loans** are need and non-need based awards that require repayment with interest.

Who is eligible?

In general, a student is considered eligible for financial aid if they:

- Is enrolled as a regular student. Guest students cannot receive financial aid. In the case of current high school students, students must graduate from high school prior to the start of the college semester for which they are seeking aid.

- Is a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen

- Is a high school graduate or has earned a GED

- Is not in default on a student loan nor owes a repayment on a student grant previously received

- Is making satisfactory academic progress as defined by WCC

- Is registered with the Selective Service (males only)

- Is pursuing a course of study leading to a WCC degree, certificate, or transfer to a four-year university

- Has not already earned a bachelor's degree, unless interested in a student loan only. Only undergraduate students without a bachelor's degree can receive the Federal Pell Grant, SEOG and other grant funds.

How to apply for financial aid

- Go to *fafsa.gov* to complete the application for aid. WCC's school code is 002328. You may need to create a FSA ID (username and password) in order to complete the application.

- Submit your FAFSA. Remember your FSA ID—you will need it in the future.

- Students will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) via email or mail. They should review the SAR for errors. If the SAR is correct, no action is necessary. If there are errors, go back to fafsa.gov and make corrections.

NOTE: Any changes to a completed FAFSA require the student and parent to sign in with their FSA ID.

- FAFSA information will be sent to WCC electronically within three business days. An email will be sent to the student's WCC email address when the Financial Aid Office receives the information. Students should read their WCC email daily, as well as their U.S. mail.

- If documentation is requested, students must submit the completed forms in a timely manner. If no documents are requested, or once documents are processed, students will receive an Award Letter via their student email. The Award Letter includes the offered financial aid as well as additional instructions.

Financial Aid Tips

Applying for financial aid often seems complicated and confusing. Here are a few simple suggestions to help make the process easier.

- Submit a new FAFSA each academic year. The academic year begins with the fall semester and continues through the end of the spring/summer semester.

- Read instructions carefully. Use correct and accurate information. Serious delays may result due to inaccurate, incorrect or missing information.

- Apply and submit all required documents as early as possible.

- Financial aid recipients must choose a program and follow it.

- Request help from the Financial Aid Office if needed.

How to buy books

Student financial aid is first applied to tuition and fees. If there is money left over, students may use it to purchase books at the on-campus Barnes & Noble Bookstore. Once students authorize for funds to be sent, money is available for students during specific dates at the beginning of each semester. Students can locate these dates at *wccnet.edu/ financialaid.*

Direct deposit and mailing checks

If the student has financial aid funds left after tuition, fees, and books are paid, the college will mail a refund check or issue a direct deposit to their bank account. Distribution dates can be found online at *wccnet.edu/financialaid*. To authorize direct deposit, the student needs to go to *MyWCC* and select the 'Financial Aid' tab. Then choose 'Account Information', then 'direct deposit student refunds'. The student needs to sign up for direct deposit once per academic year.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I check on my student's financial aid?

Per college policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), account information can only be disclosed to the student. However, WCC does have a Release of Information form which, if completed by the student, authorizes a designee to obtain information. The form will ask the student to create a four digit PIN number which will be needed from designee each time they would like to access information.

If my student is receiving financial aid, why did they receive an email notice that the bill was ready?

A bill is created for every student who enrolls at WCC. Students should confirm that all charges on that bill will be paid by financial aid. To view a bill, students should log into their MyWCC account and click on 'Pay My Tuition', then 'Billing and Payments'. If the bill shows an outstanding balance, they should check their information in the 'Financial Aid' tab. If their aid is shown as being "authorized" and the amount of aid is enough to cover the entire bill, the account is considered to be paid in full. However, students should immediately answer any further requests about their financial aid to keep the paid status. Financial aid funds get applied to the student's account after they have attended the first few week of classes.

Does my student need to report their step-parent's financial information?

Yes. If a parent has remarried, then the step-parent's income is part of the household income and must be reported.

What if my family's income situation changes?

If there is a change in income, the student should stop by the Financial Aid Office to determine whether their financial aid status would be affected. If so, additional information, such as pay stubs, and written statements will be needed to make any changes.

Helpful Contact Information

WCC Financial Aid

734-973-3523
wccnet.edu/financialaid

FAFSA

800-433-3243
fafsa.gov

Michigan Office of Scholarships and Grants

888-447-2687
michigan.gov/osg

Campus Map

Parking is free on campus. Students can ride the AATA bus from campus free of charge with a valid WCC ID thanks to a special agreement between WCC and AATA. Students also are encouraged to take advantage of the paved paths around the county and ride their bike to school. If students must drive to campus, there are often spaces available around classroom buildings and sometimes in the Parking Structure. Go to wccnet.edu/about-us/visiting to review parking options.

Geddes Rd.

N

23

Washtenaw Ave.

94

HFC

Huron River Drive

IT

HL

DF

BE

TI

GM

SC

GL

LA

OE

FE

PS

ML

Clark Road

BE	Business Education
DF	Damon Flowers
FE	Family Education
GL	Great Lakes Regional Training Center
GM	Gunder Myran
HFC	Health and Fitness Center
IT	Industrial Technology
LA	Crane Liberal Arts and Science
ML	Morris J. Lawrence
OE	Larry L. Whitworth Occupational Education
PS	Parking Structure
SC	Student Center
HL	Henry S. Landau Skilled Trades
TI	Technical and Industrial
	Parking Lots
	Bus Stop

Washtenaw Community College

Campus Map

Student Services

Academic Advising and Counseling

Student Center building, room 206
734-677-5102
wccnet.edu/counseling

Offers academic and career advising and personal counseling.

Bookstore

Student Center building, first floor
734-973-3594
wccnet.edu/resources/otherresources/bookstore

Sells or rents new and used textbooks and other academic supplies for WCC classes.

Cashier's Office

Student Center building, second floor
734-973-7703
wccnet.edu/payingtuition

Various online and in-person tuition/fee payment options are available. WCC accepts cash, checks, credit cards, ePay Plan, financial aid and third-party payment.

Computer Commons

Gunder Myran building, second floor
734-973-3420
wccnet.edu/resources/computercommons

Houses more than 200 computers for student use.

Career Services

Student Center, room 112
734-677-5155
departments.wccnet.edu/careerservices

Uses extensive resources to assist with employment and employability: workshops, online job search system, internships and cooperative education and one-on-one appointments.

Financial Aid

Student center building, second floor
734-973-3523
wccnet.edu/financialaid

Assists students with loans, grants, work study and scholarships, based on achievement and/or need.

International Student Center

Student Center building, second floor, room 281
734-677-5128
wccnet.edu/international

Assists international students with and without F-1 visas.

Learning Support Services

Crane Liberal Arts and Science building, room 104
734-973-3342
wccnet.edu/learningsupport

Offers free, individualized tutoring in academic subjects.
Also offers services to students with disabilities.

Math and Science Resource Center

Gunder Myran building, room 201/203
734-973-3392
wccnet.edu/tutoring

Offers free individualized tutoring and access to biology resources for WCC students enrolled in math and science courses.

New Student Programming

Student Center building, second floor lobby
734-973-3701
wccnet.edu/orientation

Offers personalized hands-on sessions and peer to peer experiences for new students.

Public Safety

Parking structure and Student Center building, Second floor
734-973-3411
wccnet.edu/services/publicsafety

Offers a walking escort, vehicle jump starts and creates student IDs.

Student Connection

Student Center building, room 203
734-973-3543
wccnet.edu/studentconnection

Assists students in submitting address, name, program changes, applying for graduation and obtaining transcripts.

Student Activities and Club Sports

Student Center building, first floor
734-973-3500
wccnet.edu/activities

Coordinates social, cultural and recreational activities.

Student Resource Center

Student Center building, room 206
734-677-5105
src.wccnet.edu

Provides financial and other assistance to single parents, displaced homemakers, displaced workers, students entering non-traditional fields and academically and economically disadvantaged students. While sensitive to the needs of these students, the Student Resource Center will provide financial assistance and basic need assistance for any currently enrolled WCC student. There is also a small emergency food pantry available for students.

Testing Center

Student Center building, room 300
734-477-8550
wccnet.edu/services/testing-center

Offers a quiet, comfortable, and secure environment for
taking tests (including ACCUPLACER, ALEKS and
tests for WCC courses).

Writing Center

Crane Liberal Arts and Sciences building, room 355
734-973-3647
sites.wccnet.edu/writingcenter

Assists students with writing assignments given in WCC classes. Provides additional practice and/or required assignments for students enrolled in English Composition classes.

Washtenaw
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4800 E. Huron River Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-4800
wccnet.edu

For further information and support, visit: **sites.wccnet.edu/families**