**Start Planning Today!**

The longer you wait to make decisions, the longer it may take you to complete a degree and transfer. Do your best to complete the following as soon as possible: **Declare a major and Select a transfer institution**

The following is a general timeline to assist you in planning your transfer. Remember, the process for transferring out of one institution and into another varies at each college or university.

Make sure you are working with an academic advisor at your current institution and an admissions counselor at the institution where you plan to transfer.

**STEP 1:**

* Identify your area of study. This is vital in choosing courses each semester as well as a college. If you don't know what you want to major in, then make an appointment with your academic, who can assist you with this decision.
* Investigate possible transfer institutions. Use HACC’s Transfer Services website to Search for Institutions and review College Profiles. Look for desired features such as cost, location, size, student services, and availability of distance learning, and ask yourself the following questions:
	+ What is important to me in a college?
	+ Where do I want the college to be located?
	+ How far away is the college from my home?
	+ Does the college offer my program(s) of study?
	+ What size institution is suitable for my learning style?
	+ What is the cost? What financial aid and scholarships are available?
	+ What is the campus setting? Is it rural, city, or suburban?
* Send for information. Request college catalogs and applications or look for this information online.
* Begin looking for scholarships, discounts, and other ways to meet costs.
* Pay attention to required course sequencing and GPA requirements for your program of study at your current institution. This is especially important if you plan to earn an associate’s degree before transferring.
* Register with "transfer" in mind. When you meet with your advisor each semester, remind them that you plan on transferring so that they can assist you in selecting courses that transfer easily.
* Remember, your grades are important from the start! Your transfer GPA is cumulative, so work hard and make every grade count.

**STEP 2:**

* Select a transfer institution. Tell your HACC advisor which college or university you have selected.
* Research the admissions requirements for the college/university where you plan to transfer. Search catalogs, advising manuals, and websites. Investigate program-specific selection criteria and requirements such as auditions or portfolios, and be aware of deadlines that may affect your major of study.
* Confirm your choice of academic major or area of study.
* Register for courses that will fulfill your current degree requirements and meet the degree program requirements at your transfer institution. Use the Course Equivalency Guide on PA TRAC to assist you with course selection.
* Get to know your chosen transfer institution's academic calendar and deadlines.
* Visit the university before you apply. This is an excellent time to find information about the institution and let them know who you are.
	+ Check out the bulletin boards in the buildings. What is happening on campus?
	+ Visit a class in your major.
	+ Visit the cafeteria. Does the food meet your dietary requirements?
	+ Visit the residence halls if you plan to live on campus. Are they co-ed by floor or room? What is the atmosphere like?
	+ Read the college newspaper.
	+ Talk to students (even beyond your tour guide.) What do they like and dislike?
	+ Go to the library. Is it welcoming? Do they have the materials you will need?
	+ If you will commute, how are the services for commuters? Do offices have hours that are convenient for you?

**STEP 3:**

* Continue selecting courses that transfer appropriately within your program of study.
* Apply for admission. Submit your applications along with all of your official transcripts and (if applicable) AP and CLEP test scores
	+ Even if you know the college you want to attend, you may still want to consider applying to more than one college to be sure. Applying to more than one institution will give you choices, and that's a good thing!
	+ Depending upon the college and major of study, high school transcripts and test scores such as the ACT or SAT may also be required. Check with the Admissions Office before applying.
	+ If references are needed, use professors who know you. Ask them early and provide them with a stamped, addressed envelope to make the task easy.
* Complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Ensure to include the institution codes for all colleges or universities to which you plan to apply. The key to maximizing financial aid is applying early and meeting all deadlines!
* Once admitted, send in your deposit and complete specific scholarship applications. Apply for housing, if needed.
* Talk with advisors and academic professionals at your transfer institution. Call ahead for an appointment. Find out if orientation is required and stay up-to-date on changes to program requirements.
* Meet with your current college advisor to discuss plans. If you are planning to transfer the next semester, find out from your advisor what you need to do to leave your current institution and transfer to another. If you are working toward an associate degree, verify your eligibility to graduate and discuss what you need to do next to earn your degree.

**STEP 4:**

* Complete transferable coursework at your current institution.
* If you are earning an Associate’s degree, apply for your associate’s degree and Graduation.
* If you are not earning your associate’s degree, ask your HACC Transfer Unit representative if you qualify for Reverse Transfer.
* Send official transcripts at the end of your last semester to your transfer institution.
* Make sure you have no financial/administrative holds that might prohibit your transcript from being sent.
* Attend the new student orientation or use online tools to familiarize yourself with your new college or university—request maps, directories, tour information, and other essentials before starting classes.
* Register for courses at your transfer institution.