

Why Community College?

Almost 6.6 million students—46 percent of all college students—are enrolled at a community college.

Community college is college, and it requires prerequisite skills best gained in high school. While community colleges provide higher education for all, they nonetheless have standards that students must meet to advance academically.

Entrance requirements can vary

Generally, community colleges are open enrollment, which means that any high school graduate is eligible to attend. But some programs are selective with limited enrollment. They usually have a separate application and specific admission requirements such as SAT® or ACT scores.

Selective programs are primarily found in these fields:

- Nursing
- Allied health
- Law enforcement
- Engineering technology
- Computer technology

Students might have to take a placement test

Even programs that are open enrollment do not automatically register students for college-level classes. In order to determine if remedial coursework is necessary, most community colleges require placement tests, such as:

- The College Board's [ACCUPLACER®](#)
- ACT's COMPASS
- State-specific tests like Florida's College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)
- The college's own tests

The [SAT](#) or ACT may also be used for placement purposes. At some community colleges, students who achieve certain SAT or ACT scores may be exempt from taking placement tests in reading, writing, or math.

If transfer to a four-year college is the goal, course selection is crucial

Most community colleges offer a transfer program designed to steer students toward an associate degree acceptable for transfer to a college or university with junior status.

But successful transfer ultimately depends on whether the courses taken meet the requirements of the particular major and the particular four-year college the student selects.

It's crucial that students understand at the outset why some community college courses transfer and others do not.