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# COMMUNITY COLLEGE INFORMATION

*Admission to a community college is open to anyone who is a high school graduate, has a high school equivalency certificate, or is 18 years old or older.*

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There are over 100 community colleges in the state of California, all offering three different types of programs. It is important to start reviewing these options as you begin your decision-making process. This can determine which community college campus you select and certainly the courses required to meet your specific goal.

## **OPTION 1: Certificate Program**

Students who select a specific occupational program, complete courses from the list in the college catalogue for that skill area. Examples include Automotive/Transportation Technology at MSJC, Certificate in Diagnostic Medical Sonography at MSJC, Certificate in Paralegal Studies at Palomar College, Administration of Justice at Irvine Valley College, culinary arts at Orange Coast College, etc. General education courses are not required; the focus is earning a certificate to prove proficiency in your occupational area. The certificate programs range from 18-30 units. It is necessary to research which college offers your program.

## **OPTION 2: Associate Degree Program**

A community college “degree” program is also available. The Associate Degree is granted upon completion of 60 college units, general education courses, a major and a 2.0 grade point average. Each community college has their list of required general education courses. Majors are completed from lists provided in the catalogue. Students should select a campus offering the major of their choice, so researching community colleges will be necessary.

## **OPTION 3: Transfer Program**

Lower division university course requirements can be completed at a community college. Students may then enter a four-year college as a junior to complete their bachelor’s degree. Students must have 60 transferable units, complete the general education courses, maintain the grade point average required for the campus they select, as well as meet prerequisite coursework for their major.

**MATRICULATION SERVICES:** California’s community colleges have instituted a required procedure that will help assure students of receiving any assistance they may need. Matriculation includes placement testing in English, college reading, and mathematics. Orientation helps students read the catalog and class schedule, understand the transfer process, and select appropriate classes. The advisement portion of matriculation allows students to work directly with counselors to plan their programs for the current semester. There are five steps to enrolling at the Community College:

1. **Apply:** pick up application in Career Center and submit by June. Early Bird applications to Saddleback College are due in March. Check other community colleges for early matriculation programs.
2. **Testing: make an appointment for placement testing as soon as application is submitted.**
3. **Orientation/advisement:** after testing is completed, make an appointment **for** orientation/advisement.
4. **Registration:** you will be given an appointment card for registration. You may register on that date or any time afterward.
5. **Counseling:** make an appointment for counseling to discuss career goals, transfer programs, or to update your program.