The Houston Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the associate degree.

The Houston Community College seeks to provide equal educational opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability. This policy extends to employment, admission, and all programs and activities supported by the College.
Special Thanks

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Foreword

The HCC Faculty Handbook (hereafter referred to as the “Handbook”) has been prepared by the Houston Community College Office of the Vice Chancellor for Instruction as a reference tool for all instructional faculty. This handbook contains links to institutional policies and instructional procedures.

This handbook is divided into five sections. Any questions of interpretation concerning any section, or subsection should be addressed to college Deans.

Section One: Welcome and Overview. This section briefly introduces the reader to Houston Community College as a provider of public higher education. Included herein are such items as a brief history of HCC, the mission, vision and values statements, as well as information about the organization of the District, the Board of Trustees, accreditation and the Faculty Association. This section also includes links to HCC primary publications.

Section Two: General Topics for all HCC Faculty. This section contains primarily Human Resources information including EEO policies, hiring practices, employment policies, faculty evaluations and @ Your Service.

Section Three: Instructional Operations. This section describes various policies and procedures concerning faculty’s role in the classroom. Information concerning campus operation and department and/or division operations are also included in this section. Included herein is information concerning: syllabi, class rolls, grade sheets, classroom evaluations, grade changes, academic advising and academic freedom.

Section Four: Students Rights, Responsibilities and Services. This section contains information about faculty’s role with respect to students. Information found here includes the issues of: confidentiality, disruptive behavior, grade appeals, and ADA compliance.
Section Five: Opportunities for Training and Professional Development.
This section contains information about the The Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence and the Certification in Instructional Technology.

SECTION ONE: WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Brief History of HCC

Houston Community College (HCC) was created in 1971 by the Houston Independent School District (HISD) and in August of that year, some 5,700 students signed up for the first fall semester. By 1977, HCC had grown to over 24,000 students and had earned full accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

As a result of state legislation, HISD dedicated a specific portion of its property tax levy in 1984 to HCC for facilities, equipment, and operating expenses. In 1989, HCC established its own Board of Trustees and its own taxing authority. Also in 1989, HCC annexed its first territory outside of HISD to the taxing district, adding the Stafford Municipal School District.

In 1990, HCC restructured as a multiple college district, although it maintained a singular accreditation. A Chancellor serves as the Chief Executive Officer with a central district administration and the Colleges are directed by Presidents with college-based faculty and staff. The district initially included regional colleges at Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest locations and a College Without Walls to address distance and continuing education. Later operational changes included the dismantling of the College Without Walls in 1995 and the creation of HCC-Coleman College for the Health Sciences in 2004, located in the Texas Medical Center.

In addition to its taxing district (HISD and Stafford), HCC’s service area was established in 1995 as a result of state legislation to include additionally, the Alief, Katy, Spring Branch and parts of the Fort Bend independent school district (ISD). Enrollments continued to expand throughout the 1980s and 1990s and topped the 50,000 mark by the early 2000s.

HCC passed a successful bond election in 2003 that resulted in the expansion, renovation, and expansion of multiple facilities. Currently, HCC consists of six colleges with 22 campuses with its primary Administrative Center located at 3100 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002.
In November 2008, voters in the Alief ISD approved annexation to the HCC taxing district. In the following November of 2009, voters in the North Forest ISD did the same although annexation was rejected at that time by voters in the Spring Branch ISD.

For 2009-2010, the HCC budget was $258,692,574 with $70 million derived from state appropriations, $86 million derived from tuition/fees, $99 million derived from ad valorem taxes, and $3 million derived from other local income.

The Houston Community College District is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is currently planning for reaffirmation of its accreditation in 2012.

1.2 HCC Vision, Mission and Values

1.2.1 HCC Vision Statement

Houston Community College will be the most relevant community College in the country. We will be the opportunity institution for every student we serve – essential to our community’s success.

Vision Defined

HCC is embarking upon a critical time in its history with a bold, yet attainable vision for the future. Our vision is focused on three key concepts – relevant, opportunity, and essential. To ensure that the organization achieves its vision and the critical pathway articulated in its strategic plan, it is imperative to clearly define the key themes articulated in the vision.

Vision Definitions

**Relevant** is defined as being closely connected to having demonstrable bearing on the matter at hand. HCC will be relevant in the way it uniquely meets the current and future needs of the region, its communities, residents and students.

**Opportunity** is defined as a situation or condition favorable for attainment of a goal. HCC will be an opportunity institution, offering students the ability to learn, improve and ultimately achieve their goals.
Essential is defined as absolutely necessary; indispensable. HCC will be essential to the community’s success through the services it provides and the value it brings to the growing and diverse Houston area.

1.2.2 HCC Mission Statement

Houston Community College is an open-admission, public institution of higher education offering a high-quality, affordable education for academic advancement, workforce training, career development, and lifelong learning to prepare individuals in our diverse communities for life and work in a global and technological society.

1.2.3 HCC Values Statement

Every successful organization is guided by a set of values. Over the next few years, we will work to not only understand but also incorporate these values into our work, our actions and our relationships inside and outside this institution.

Houston Community College will be an inviting and healthy place to work and learn. Core values guide our interactions with students, the internal and external communities we serve, and each other. These principles give focus to our primary purpose of serving students and facilitating their success as citizens in a free and prosperous society.

Freedom – The essence of education is the cultivation of an open environment that promotes a rigorous, untiring life-long pursuit and expression of truth and free exchange of ideas.

Accountability – A responsible individual is committed to doing one’s duty and taking the right actions.

Community-Mindedness – The bonds of our community are care, open communication, cooperation, and shared governance.

Integrity – Personal and community well-being demands a commitment to honesty, mutual respect, fairness, empathy and doing the right thing at all times.

Excellence – Our will and spirit are to achieve the best in teaching, learning, community building, and stewardship.
1.3 Organization of HCC

Each of the current six (6) colleges within HCC (Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest, and the Coleman College for Health Sciences) is organized similarly with a President, Deans of Academic Instruction, Workforce Instruction, and Student Services, and a College Operations Officer. The organizational structure at the colleges may also include an Executive Dean. To view a more detailed listing of the District and College Administration, click on the HCC Organizational Charts from the HCC website. To access the link, go to HCCS.edu, Faculty and Staff, then HCC Organizational Charts.

1.4 Governance and Funding

Community colleges are local governmental units headed by locally elected boards of trustees. Board trustees, who are unsalaried, meet periodically to set general policy for the college. Community college boards select an executive officer, called a chancellor or president, who oversees the day-to-day operation of the college. Funding for community colleges comes from a number of sources, including student tuition and fees, local property taxes, and state funds provided for instructional costs on a student contact-hour basis.

1.5 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the official governing body of the Houston Community College. The Board is composed of nine members who are elected from single-member districts and who serve without remuneration. Board Members are elected to staggered six-year terms. The Board has final authority to determine and interpret the policies that govern the District. More information about the current board members can be found on the District home page.

The Board of Trustees meetings are open to the public and are held monthly. Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at the District Administrative Building, 3100 Main, 2nd Floor auditorium, Houston, Texas 77002, unless otherwise announced. The Committee of the Whole meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month. Other meetings such as committees, workshops and special meetings are held on an as-needed basis. Public notices of all meetings are posted at the Administrative Building, the Harris County Courthouse and on the HCC home page (HCCS.edu) by clicking on “About
HCC” and then on “Board of Trustees.” Also, Board minutes can be found at this website. For information on board meetings, please call 713.718.5025 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday for assistance.

### 1.6 The Faculty Association and the Faculty Senate

The HCC Faculty Association consists of the entire faculty of Houston Community College in Houston, Texas. Every full- and part-time faculty member, counselor, and librarian is automatically a member of the association and is represented by delegates and officers elected from each of the regional colleges to the HCC Faculty Senate (formerly called the Faculty Association Council - FAC). There are no dues or fees required for Faculty Association membership.

The HCC Faculty Senate is an HCC district-wide consultative body whose voting representatives are elected annually from the Faculty Association membership at the six (6) colleges, in proportion to the number of faculty at each college. Meetings are held on the second Friday of every month at 1:30 in Room 151 at Central College, located at 1300 Holman, unless otherwise notified. All faculty are encouraged to participate in these meetings and the activities of the HCC Faculty Association.

### 1.7 Accreditation

Houston Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the Associate Degree.

Persons interested in reviewing the official accreditation document(s) may do so by contacting the Office of Institutional Research located at 3100 Main, phone number 713.718.8625.

To review individual program accreditation, approval, and licensing documents, the department chairperson’s office for the particular program may be contacted. See catalog or class schedule for telephone numbers.

### 1.8 Course/Program Approval

The Texas Workforce Commission has approved HCC college/university parallel course offerings and programs in workforce education. The Texas Workforce Commission has approved HCC programs for military veteran educational benefits.
1.9 HCC Catalog, Academic Calendar and Student Handbook

1.9.1 The HCC Catalog – will be published on a two year basis and updated on a regular basis via the Web edition. The current HCC Catalog, 2009-2011 is available at:

http://www.hccs.edu/portal/site/hccs/menuitem.5fc1e5d66248062f3227a2ced07401ca/?vgnextoid=5e4df8a147b6f110VgnVCM100000054710acRCRD&vgnextfmt=default

1.9.2 HCC Class Schedules and Academic Calendars

Class Schedules

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/future-students/class-schedule

Academic Calendars

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/academic

Final Exam Calendars

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/final-exam

Archived Calendars

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/archived-calendars

1.9.3 Student Handbook

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/student-handbook
SECTION TWO: General Topics for all HCC Faculty

2.1 Conflict of Interest

Employees must remember they are employed by a public institution. Their actions, either professional, financial, or political, shall not conflict with their official HCC duties, nor appear to do so.

The President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent will determine if there is a conflict of interest and will ask employee to stop the activity in question, if appropriate, after consulting with the Director of Human Resources and/or HCC General Counsel.

Vendor Relationships/Purchasing
All HCC employees are expected to use good business practices in complying with the Conflict of Interest Policy to avoid conflicts of interest related to the purchasing of supplies, services, and equipment by the Institution. An employee who purchases supplies, services and/or equipment with a potential or real conflict and obtains signature authority is required to describe in writing to the College President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent, how this conflict would be managed. The President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent will either approve the purchaser's plan or disapprove it, after consulting with the Director of Human Resources and/or HCC General Counsel.

Dual Employment
Employees are prohibited from performing a second job/assignment during his/her regular work hours at HCC. Work for an employer other than HCC must be performed on the employee's own time and shall not conflict with the employee's full-time employment with HCC. Employees are required to report immediately any potential conflict of interest arising out of other employment to the College President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent with a copy of the report sent to the Director of EEO/Employee Relations Department. The report shall include length of employment, work schedule, and employer. Employees may not, without prior approval of their College President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent, use HCC facilities, equipment, and supplies to perform services for which any other organization, client, or employer directly compensates them.

Contract Services
Employees may not hold an employment status as an employee and be a contractor for HCC within the similar scope of duties.

Failure to Report
Failure to report a conflict of interest will result in disciplinary action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, loss of signature authority, loss of position, and/or criminal prosecution. Appeal of these actions can be made following the procedures of the HCC Employee Complaints and Grievances Policy, C:22.

Advisory Committees/Community Board Memberships
Employees who are members of external boards and/or external advisory committees are expected to recuse themselves when addressing matters that may affect HCC.

Additional References
Please refer to the Finance and Operations policies for further information on conflicts of interest.

2.2 Human Resources Information

2.2.1 Hiring Practices

From HCC Procedure C.3.2 Hiring Practices - Full-time Employees (Staff & Faculty)

The following procedures outline the steps involved in the hiring process for full-time positions and temporary full-time positions for staff and faculty (includes all auxiliary/grant-funded positions). Those involved in the hiring process can access a menu of helpful links at: http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/hiring-information-for-managers

The menu includes: Tutorial for Hiring Managers, Quick Tips for Using the Online System, PeopleAdmin Reference Guide for Hiring Managers/Request Originators and the Screening Committee Guidelines. Full-time positions can only be approved and hired by the appropriate Hiring Authority defined as Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, President and administrative equivalent. Hiring authorities will assure that all external new hires will be selected from a diverse pool of candidates. It is the responsibility of the Hiring Authority to ensure a fair and impartial evaluation of all applicants for the position. The Hiring Authority shall be responsible for the final selection.
Screening Committees are required for all full-time faculty positions plus non-faculty positions on the Executive Salary Structure beginning with grade E10 and above, including "grant" or "soft money" positions. A Screening Committee is not required for other exempt positions below salary grade E10. For "non-exempt" positions (i.e., those subject to overtime pay) Screening Committees should not be used. However, if needed for either exempt positions below grade E10 or non-exempt positions, the Hiring Authority may choose to utilize a screening committee to assist in the screening process, provided the Hiring Authority maintains process control and retains the decision making authority.

Information about screening committee guidelines are found on the HR Employment web page,

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/hiring-information-for-managers/screening-committee-guidelines

Hiring Process for Full-Time Positions
Step 1
The Hiring Manager, Director or Department Chair informs the Hiring Authority of the need for approval to fill or replace a vacant position prior to requisitioning through the Online Employment System. The Hiring Authority can authorize postings for all new positions and replacements in accordance with the Position Management process through the office of the Director of Financial Control and Auxiliary Services. For auxiliary/grant-funded positions, the Hiring Authority must seek approval from the Grant Budget Office.

All full-time staff and faculty positions must be requisitioned through the Online Employment System. Before beginning a requisition online, the Hiring Authority (or designee) must have a current job description from the Human Resources Compensation Department. If there are changes that need to be made, contact the Human Resources Compensation Department before submitting the requisition online.

Step 2
Once the position is originated online, it is forwarded electronically to the next level of approval (Dean, Director or College Operations Officer).

Step 3
The Dean, Director, or College Operations Officer (COO) may make edits in line with the approved job description in the HR Compensation Department. Once completed and approved, he or she will electronically forward the
requisition to the next level of approval. This may be the Executive Director or Hiring Authority depending on the department.

Step 4
The Hiring Authority electronically forwards the requisition to Position Control. Requisitions for faculty positions must be reviewed for appropriateness within the faculty hiring guidelines developed by the Presidents and maintained by the Vice Chancellor of Instruction.

Step 5
Position Management will approve or disapprove the requisition. If all criteria are met, the requisition will be submitted to the Human Resources Department.

Step 6
The Human Resources Employment Department will review the requisition and post the job vacancy announcement. All regular, full-time staff positions, with the exception of positions equivalent to Grade E-10 and above and to hard-to-fill positions shall be advertised for internal applicants only for seven (7) consecutive days. If there is a sufficient number (3 or more) of qualified applicants, the hiring authority is encouraged to make an internal selection. If there are less than three (3) qualified applicants, the Hiring Authority may submit a written request for the position to be advertised externally. If a position is posted externally, it will be open for a minimum of ten (10) business days. Once the job posting closes, the Hiring Manager, Hiring Authority and appropriate individuals will be notified by Employment Services to initiate the hiring process. They should follow the Online Employment Site For Hiring Officials (www.hccsjobs.com/hr). Also, the HR home page provides a training menu and tutorial for first time users under Hiring Information for Managers.

Step 7
Hiring Authority Responsibility
Complete and acquire appropriate signatures for the Personnel Action Form (PAF). Attach all required transcripts* for staff/administrative positions, if the selected applicant did not attach transcripts online.

Prepare the memo to Human Resources, which should include the selected candidate and the rationale for selection.

Complete two (2) Employment Reference Checks

For faculty positions, the Dean completes the Verification of Compensation Level form to verify the pay grade level.
It is the responsibility of the hiring authority to ensure that the paperwork is accurate, complete and hand-delivered to HR Employment Services Department.

If there is no screening committee, the HR Employment Services representative should check off the Employment Completion Checklist when the hiring authority returns the paperwork to HR Employment Services. If the paperwork is incomplete, it will be returned.

*Official transcripts will be required upon employment.

Step 8
Salary offers are determined by the Compensation Department based on relevant factors such as experience, education, internal equity with existing employees and market data prior to being submitted to the HR Employment Services Department. The HR Employment Services Department will notify the hiring authority of the recommended salary and start date. All job offers are conditional upon successful completion and approval of the fingerprinting and criminal history background check, and drug test if the position has been identified as safety and security sensitive.

Hiring Process for Temporary Full-Time Positions
For staff and faculty, the use of Temporary status for full-time employees and positions is intended for short-term situations or for certain long-term circumstances, such as sabbatical or medical leave replacement.

The use of this status is for hiring temporary full-time personnel against regular full-time budgeted positions that are on the position management list and is limited to 120 days. No later than this 120 day period, the job must be requisitioned and posted through the online employment process. When the position is filled, the temporary employee will be released from the assignment.

In certain circumstances, such as sabbatical and medical leave replacements, the term may be for a longer period of time, but cannot extend beyond the fiscal year for the individual.

Any request for an exception requires the approval of the Chancellor or his/her designee. However, the 120-days and the end of year limitations do not apply to CTCE, grant-funded, and auxiliary-funded positions as these positions are temporary due to restricted funding.
To hire or rehire an employee (Faculty or Staff) under the status of Temporary Full-time, the Personnel Action Form (PAF) must be completed, and signed by the Chancellor or his/her designee prior to submission to the office of Employment Services. (If the assignment will be for a period of less than 4½ months (short-term), the employee would not be eligible for benefits and would not be required to attend the General New Employee Orientation. If the assignment will be for a period of 4½ months or more (long-term), then the employee would be eligible for benefits and would be required to attend the General New Employee Orientation.

The justification for the rehire of all Temporary Full-time (short-term or long-term) assignments must be provided to the Chancellor or his/her designee and attached to the PAF.

An end date is required on the PAF for all Temporary Full-time positions for the appropriate processing to occur and for benefits eligibility to be determined.

Job Applicant Procedures

Step 1
Internal HCC Job Applicant:

Log on to HCCS Homepage at the following link: www.hccs.edu

Click on Jobs @ HCC. This link provides information about the online job application process. Applicants are encouraged to read all of the instructional material especially the information provided under the Quick Tips Link.

Internal applicants must be employed in their non-exempt position for a period of six (6) months to be eligible for movement to other positions and a period of one (1) year to be eligible in their exempt position for a period of one (1) year to be eligible for movement to other positions.

Internal applicants who are on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) or Corrective Action are not eligible to be considered for job vacancies prior to the successful completion of their PIP.

Jobs are initially posted a minimum of seven (7) consecutive days for internal applicants.

Step 2
External Job Applicant
Log on HCCS Homepage at the following link: www.hccs.edu

Click on Jobs @ HCC. This link provides information about the online job application process. Applicants are encouraged to read all of the instructional material especially the information provided under Quick Tips.

Jobs that are not filled from the internal posting will be reposted a minimum of ten (10) business days for internal/external applicants.

**From HCC Procedure C.3.2.1 Hiring Practices – Part-time Employees (Staff and Faculty)**

**Step 1 - Hiring Supervisor**

For New Staff
When a department is in need of a new part-time employee to handle any seasonal heavy workload, assist in a project to meet deadlines, or any other unexpected circumstance, the manager should consult with the assigned HR Generalist to review the list of approved part-time positions and job descriptions, and to discuss process requirements. With the information obtained from the HR Generalist, the department head or hiring supervisor develops the employment package containing all the necessary documents and/or forms. (PTR, copy of on-line application, Employment Eligibility Form I-9, copies of identification and social security card, Salary Reduction Form, Direct Deposit or Cash Pay Form and W-4 form, etc.).

A complete list of required documents can be found on the Processing Checklist - Staff at the following link: http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/hiring-forms-part-time.

The Hiring Supervisor or his/her designee conducts reference checks on at least two (2) of the past employers. One of the references must be for a position that is relevant to the position for which the applicant has applied.

Before releasing the paperwork to the Budget Authority, the hiring supervisor is required to include an approval email from the Employee Records department regarding drug testing results (if the position is on the list of safety and security sensitive positions), and/or fingerprinting results.

It is the responsibility of the hiring supervisor to notify his/her employee of the drug testing (if applicable) and fingerprinting/criminal background check requirement.
A. Drug Testing
For drug testing, the hiring supervisor will complete a Drug Testing Service Request/Employer Authorization Form. The supervisor will provide the employee with a deadline date and will include the date at the top of the form. The deadline to take the drug test must be three (3) business days from the date the job offer was made. The applicant must complete the drug testing requirement (if applicable) before he/she can begin working. Once the form is completed, the supervisor will fax the form to the lab facility and the Employee Records department. The supervisor will attach the Drug Testing Authorization form and the confirmation sheet to the applicant's new hire paperwork. The applicant will be required to take a copy of the completed form with him/her to the lab facility or a drug test will not be administered. The supervisor will not release the new hire paperwork to the Budget Authority until he/she receives an email from the Employee Records department stating the employee's drug testing results have been approved.

B. Fingerprinting/Criminal Background Check
The new employee must complete the fingerprinting requirement before he/she can begin working. Upon making the conditional job offer, the supervisor will submit an email to employeeerecords@hccs.edu with the following information: new employee's name, date of birth, current/valid email address of new employee, anticipated start date, and job title. The Employee Records department will send an email to the employee with detailed fingerprinting instructions and a deadline date. The deadline date is five (5) business days from the email notification date. The supervisor will not release the new hire paperwork to the Budget Authority until he/she receives an email from the Employee Records department stating the employee's fingerprinting results have been approved. The supervisor will attach the email to the applicant's new hire paperwork.

For Former Staff
The Part-time Recommendation Form is required along with additional employment documents. A list of required documents can be found on the Processing Checklist - Staff at the following link: http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/hiring-forms-part-time.

The drug testing (if applicable) and/or fingerprinting/criminal background check requirement applies to Former Staff if the employee had not completed the HCC requirement previously. See steps A & B above.
For New Faculty
When a department is in need of a new part-time instructor or faculty member to teach a class, or a continuing education course, the Hiring Supervisor consults with the assigned HR Generalist in his/her college. Upon selecting the right candidate the department prepares all the necessary documents or forms required for a new hire or returning faculty member (re-hire) to initiate the hiring process.

A complete list of required documents can be found on the Processing Checklist - Faculty at the following link: http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/hiring-forms-part-time.

The Hiring Supervisor or his/her designee conducts reference checks on at least two (2) of the past employers. One of the references must be for a position that is relevant to the position for which the applicant has applied.

Before releasing the paperwork to the Budget Authority, the hiring supervisor is required to include an approval email from the Employee Records department regarding drug testing results (if the position is on the list of safety and security sensitive positions), and/or fingerprinting results.

It is the responsibility of the hiring supervisor to notify his applicant/employee of the drug testing (if applicable) and fingerprinting/criminal background check requirement.

A. Drug Testing
For drug testing, the hiring supervisor will complete a Drug Testing Service Request/Employer Authorization Form. The supervisor will provide the employee with a deadline date and will include the date at the top of the form. The deadline to take the drug test must be three (3) business days from the date the job offer was made. The applicant must complete the drug testing requirement (if applicable) before he/she can begin working. Once the form is completed, the supervisor will fax the form to the lab facility and the Employee Records department. The supervisor will attach the Drug Testing Authorization form and the confirmation sheet to the applicant's new hire paperwork. The applicant will be required to take a copy of the completed form with him/her to the lab facility or a drug test will not be administered. The supervisor will not release the new hire paperwork to the Budget Authority until he/she receives an email from the Employee Records department stating the employee's drug testing results have been approved.

B. Fingerprinting/Criminal Background Check
The new employee must complete the fingerprinting requirement before he/she can begin working. Upon making the conditional job offer, the supervisor will submit an email to employeerecords@hccs.edu with the following information: new employee's name, date of birth, current/valid email address of new employee, anticipated start date, and job title. The Employee Records department will send an email to the employee with detailed fingerprinting instructions and a deadline date. The deadline date is five (5) business days from the email notification date. The supervisor will not release the new hire paperwork to the Budget Authority until he/she receives an email from the Employee Records department stating the employee's fingerprinting results have been approved. The supervisor will attach the email to the applicant's new hire paperwork.

For Former Faculty
The Part-Time Recommendation Form is required each semester, or any time an assignment change occurs.

A complete list of required documents can be found on the Processing Checklist - Faculty at the following link: http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/hiring-forms-part-time.

Step 2 - Budget Authority

The employment package is submitted to the Budget Authority to be reviewed for funding approval. Any changes in funding requires Budget Authority approval.

Step 3 - COO
Completed paperwork is forwarded to the Dean/Director/COO to approve or deny the request. Availability of funds in the budget as well as usage of the correct budget number will be verified. For grant funded positions, the COO interfaces with the Grant Accounting Department to verify availability of grant funds.

Step 4 - HR Generalist
The HR Generalist receives all the documents and forms in the employment package from the Budget Authority and reviews for accuracy, completeness and compliance to established policy, procedures and regulations.

The HR Generalist forwards the employment package to the President, Vice Chancellor and/or administrative equivalent for approval.

Step 5 - President's Office
The President's Office or designee forwards the approved employment package to the Human Resources Employee Record's Department (for New Hire Staff/Faculty paperwork), or the Compensation department (for Former Staff/Faculty paperwork).

Step 6 - Compensation
After review of required documents, Employee Record's forwards the new hire employment paperwork to the HR Compensation Department for employee set-up and data input.

Step 7 - Benefits, Payroll, Employee Records (Staff)
The appropriate materials from the employment package are sent from the HR Compensation Department to the appropriate departments for processing.

Step 8 - Credentialing (Faculty only)
Paperwork is sent to the Faculty Credentialing Office for certification of faculty to teach at HCC.

Step 9 - Benefits, Payroll, Employee Records (Faculty)
The appropriate materials from the employment package are sent from the HR Compensation Department to the appropriate departments for processing.

For more comprehensive step-by-step procedures, please refer to Hiring Process Information, Process Part-Time Recommendations, etc. at [http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/hiring-information-for-managers](http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/hiring-information-for-managers).

The College District Human Resources Department, in conjunction with appropriate administrators, will maintain a list of positions that are security sensitive. Applicants for positions in this category are required to undergo a criminal history background check and fingerprinting, as well as a pre-employment drug test. For specific details regarding pre & post employment criminal history, fingerprinting and drug testing procedures, see HR Procedure, C:3.2.3.

### 2.2.2 @ Your Service

Instructors may view and edit their personal information here. This where you register for training and view your pay stubs. Instructions for logging on to the @ Your Service site are located at [http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/-your-service](http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/-your-service)
2.2.3 Nepotism

From HCC Procedure C.4.1 Nepotism:

Supervision
All employees shall not participate in, directly or indirectly, decisions involving a direct benefit (e.g., initial employment or appointment, retention, promotion, salary, course of work assignments, research funds, leave of absences, etc.) to a person related within the third degree of consanguinity or second degree of affinity as defined by the state nepotism statute.

Transfer of Employee
When two employees marry while working in a supervisory/subordinate role, one of the parties will be transferred to another position for which he or she is qualified. This determination will be made by the President or Vice Chancellor in consultation with the Human Resources Department and individuals involved. In the event a position is not available, one of the individuals shall be deemed to have resigned his or her employment effective as of the date of the marriage. This determination will be made by the President or Vice Chancellor, in consultation with the Human Resources Department and the individuals involved. This decision will be based on the business needs of the department or HCC.

Failure to Report
The consequences for an individual who fails to report to the appropriate supervisor a relationship of the first, second, or third degree of consanguinity will result in discipline up to and including termination.

Household
No employee shall initiate or participate in, directly or indirectly, decisions involving a direct benefit to members of their immediate family or household. Household includes individuals regularly sharing the employee's residence.
2.2.4 Equal Opportunity Employment

From HCC Procedure C.2 Equal Employment Opportunities
HCC will seek qualified persons for each position based on the criteria of job-related standards of education, training, experience or personal qualifications.

Any questions concerning employment discrimination should be directed to the Office of Institutional Equity.

2.2.5 Employment Status

From HCC Procedure C.5 Status, Assignments and Duties

All HCC employees who do not hold written employment contracts authorized by the Board are employed at-will and have no entitlement to continued employment. At-will employees are hired by the Chancellor or designee. At-will employees, including adjunct faculty and staff, may be released or terminated at any time, for any reason or for no reason, but not for an illegal reason.

Only the Chancellor or designee has authority to communicate an offer of employment. Oral representation by college personnel other than the Chancellor or designee are not binding on the Board or the System. The Chancellor shall designate in writing those individuals who are authorized to communicate employment offers.

Applicants pending employment with HCC that require a written contract (as identified by the Chancellor) must be approved by the Board of Trustees prior to beginning their employment.

Faculty applicants pending employment with HCC that require a written contract will receive a conditional job offer to begin their assignment immediately pending final approval by the Board of Trustees.

All other applicants (non-contract) are employed at-will and may begin their assignments immediately without Board approval. The HCC Human Resources, Employment Services Department is authorized by the Chancellor as a designee for making official offers for employment at HCC.

HCC employees are classified as defined above. These classifications are intended to be descriptive and shall not be used to create rights or entitlements not otherwise provided in these policies. In particular, use of these descriptions is not intended to alter the at-will status of any employee.
2.3 Credentials and Records
Instructors are required to meet or exceed the current standards of the College Delegate Assembly of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

2.4 Gifts
Any employee who deals with contracts, purchases, payments, claims, or other monetary transactions shall not solicit or accept any benefit from a person who does business with the college or may likely do business in the future.

2.5 Curricular Materials
No faculty or staff member shall realize a profit from the sale of curricular materials to students enrolled in the employee’s class when those materials have been developed solely for use by students enrolled in the class.

2.6 Intellectual Property

2.6.1 From the HCC Policy Manual:
http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/policies-procedures-hcc/e-2-academic-resources/e-2-4-intellectual-property

Board Policy E:2 Intellectual Property
The intent of this policy is to safeguard the interests and mission of the College while encouraging creative thinking and activity by HCC employees. For purposes of this policy, the term “intellectual property” refers to inventions, discoveries, patents, patent applications, scientific or technological developments, and copyrightable instructional materials such as books, articles, study-guides, artistic works, movies, and television programs.

Most published scholarly works written by members of the faculty are the property of the author. In instances where the College pays the full or a substantial part of the costs of production and/or publication, such as work produced as part of the employee’s designated workload, arrangements concerning the ownership of the copyright and the division of any royalties must be submitted to the HCC Committee on Copyright and Intellectual Property according to procedures established by the Chancellor.

Intellectual property unrelated to an individual’s employment, appointment or association with the College that is conceived, created or developed on an individual’s own time and without the College’s support, funds provided by
or through the College, use of College resources, facilities (excluding libraries), equipment, and/or materials shall be deemed the exclusive property of the creator(s)/inventor(s), and the College shall have no interest in or claim to such property.

Intellectual property not considered instructional material that is conceived, created, or developed or that results from research supported by a grant or contract with an external agency or by private gift to the College shall be deemed the property of the College unless applicable laws or governmental regulations specifically provide otherwise.

A reasonably complete and detailed disclosure of intellectual property for assigning ownership rights to the college and/or requesting a fair and equitable arrangement for joint ownership for the mutual benefit of the faculty and the College, sharing of royalties or reimbursement to the College of its costs and support must be submitted to the HCC Committee on Copyright and Intellectual Property prior to beginning the work creating intellectual property. Disclosure of reimbursement figures will be made to all affected employees.

Faculty are free to publish and invent and, subject to the terms stated in the above Board policy, to benefit from publishing and invention. Faculty, however, are not to allow their writing or inventing to interfere with their regular assigned duties unless prior arrangements have been made. In addition, faculty are required to make a disclosure of intent to publish or invent prior to beginning the work. The College District policy on intellectual property defines the equities of ownership for the following categories: Independent Works; College District-Supported Works; Joint Works; and Trade Secrets.

A new HCC Committee on Copyright and Intellectual Property has been created and a new HCC Handbook on Copyright and Intellectual Property is available online at: http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/copyright-and-intellectual-property-handbook

2.6.2 Equity and Management
An employee who creates a copyrightable or patentable work with College District support may have an equity interest in the work or in a business entity involved with the work. However, this interest must be disclosed to the College President/Vice Chancellor responsible for the area and an agreement concerning the same must be stipulated in the written agreement as specified by College District policy. The employee is prohibited from holding an executive position in the business entity.
2.7 Employee Evaluations

2.7.1 Full-time Employees

HCC has adopted the PEP (Performance Excellence Program) for evaluating the performance of all full-time HCC employees, including faculty.

The purpose of the employee performance evaluation shall be to:

1. Raise the quality of instruction and educational service to the citizens of the community.
2. Raise the standards of the College District as a whole.
3. Help the employee to grow and improve.
4. Determine the employee's future employment with the College District.

Evaluation of employees, both professional and nonprofessional, shall be a cooperative and continuing process with formal appraisal periodically following established procedures for the evaluation process. All full-time employees shall be formally evaluated a minimum of six (6) weeks prior to the Board meeting when renewal of employment for the following contract year will be recommended by the Chancellor.

College District administrators shall evaluate every full-time employee on a strictly job-related basis according to the terms of the evaluation instruments. The employee has the option to submit a reaction statement if, in the employee's opinion, additional information pertinent to the evaluation is needed. The employee may not appeal an unfavorable evaluation through the grievance process, as performance evaluations are not a grievable item. However, employees may prepare a reaction statement in response to an unfavorable appraisal; if the employee/supervisor performance appraisals cannot be reconciled, the reaction statement will be made a part of the employee's formal personnel record.

Additional Information about the Performance Excellence Program is available at http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/performance-excellence-program-pep
2.7.2 Adjunct Faculty

All adjunct faculty members must be observed and evaluated regularly, using standardized appraisal instruments specifically for adjunct appraisals.

For additional information about adjunct faculty evaluations, contact your direct supervisor (Department or Division Chair).

2.8 Full-time Employee Complaint Process

From HCC Procedure C.22.1 Employee Complaints and Grievances

HCC supports positive employee relations and harmonious working conditions. The Employee Complaint Process provides employees an orderly process for the prompt and equitable resolution of disputes with the exception of issues governed by Titles VI, VII, or IX, Sexual Harassment, or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To file a complaint of discrimination or retaliation relates to Titles VI, VII, or IX, or the ADA, see HCC Title IX Grievances and Other Discriminatory Complaints.

Informal Resolution
HCC encourages informal resolution of employee complaints outside of the formal complaint process. Prior to filing a formal complaint, employees will informally meet with their immediate supervisor to attempt resolution. The employee or the supervisor may request that the assigned Human Resources Generalist also attend this meeting. Employees are encouraged to contact their Human Resources Generalist for additional suggestions about how to resolve a complaint informally.

Complaint
For the purposes of this procedure, the terms "grievance" and "complaint" are the same and can be used interchangeably. If the grievance/complaint cannot be resolved informally, an employee may file a formal written complaint using the Employee Formal Complaint Form ("Complaint Form") with the HCC Director of Human Resources and provide a copy to his or her second level supervisor See Employee Formal Complaint Form HR-117. The form must clearly identify an issue regarding work related issue(s). The formal complaint must be filed within ten (10) business/work days of the date the employee knew or with reasonable diligence should have known of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint.
The form should also clearly identify the basis for the complaint, including a description of the complaint as well as any relevant actions or events giving rise to the complaint. and identify a remedy that a supervisor may lawfully grant. The complaint may not involve a challenge to an existing policy. A complaint related to Title VI, VII, IX, Sexual Harassment or the ADA should follow the reporting process outlined in HCC Title IX Grievances and Other Discriminatory Complaints. A form may be rejected or returned on the grounds that it does not identify a valid dispute of work related issue(s) or that no remedy has been identified. An employee may not grieve performance evaluations under this policy/procedure. The process for contesting a performance evaluation is outlined under HCC Employee Evaluations.

Human Resources Generalist

An employee with a complaint is encouraged to contact the Human Resources Generalist assigned to his or her college or department before making an informal or formal complaint, and at any time during the complaint process, to obtain guidance regarding the complaint process and procedures.

Employee

The employee is responsible for filing a good faith complaint and has an obligation in the process to comply with all timelines and not to unnecessarily delay the formal complaint process. The employee also has an obligation to cooperate with the Administration in seeking successful resolution to the complaint.

Supervisor

The supervisor at each level is responsible for complying with the complaint procedures and timelines. A supervisor or administrator responding to a complaint shall provide a thorough written response to the employee in the appropriate section of the complaint form (or as an attachment) and shall attach a copy of relevant documents used in reaching a decision. The supervisor is also encouraged to contact the Human Resources Generalist assigned to his or her college or department before responding to an informal or formal complaint, and at any time during the complaint process, to obtain information regarding the complaint process and procedures.
Consolidation of Complaints

The Director of Human Resources, or designee, may consolidate multiple complaints at any level of the process if he or she determines the complaints are sufficiently similar in nature to permit their resolution in one complaint proceeding.

No Separate or Serial Grievances

An employee is prohibited from bringing separate or serial grievances regarding the same event or action. Costs of any complaint shall be paid by the party incurring them.

No Retaliation

Neither the Board nor the Administration shall retaliate against any employee for bringing a complaint under the complaint policy and procedures.

Representation

Employees may be represented by an attorney (or other representative they may choose) in the complaint process. Employees are required to give reasonable notice to the supervisor hearing the complaint that they will be bringing a representative to the complaint conference. Failure to provide such notice may result in the conference being postponed. Scheduling this representation is the responsibility of the employee. The Administration will not grant the employee additional time to hear the complaint in order to have representation present at the complaint conference. The employee shall pay any and all costs related to their representation.

Terminations or Nonrenewal

A recommendation from the Administration to the Chancellor regarding the termination or non-renewal of an employee will not be stayed or put aside as a result of the employee filing a formal complaint.
Timelines

The primary purpose of the complaint resolution process is the resolution of concerns in an expeditious manner. The timelines set forth at each level of the process are maximums and, whenever possible, the decision-maker should render a decision or resolution within a shorter period of time. A variance in timelines may be granted by the Human Resources Generalist assigned to the college or division, and must be documented with a statement explaining the variance. The parties may always agree to extend or shorten timelines. A supervisor may request more time from the HR Generalist if necessary to complete an internal investigation or fact-finding process.

Calculation of Timelines

All timelines shall be counted in business/working days, the first day commencing on the next business/working day after the motivating event that formed the basis of the complaint. The timelines shall not include system-wide designated holidays. The timeline for the complaint process will commence on the first business/working day after the Director of Human Resources receives the formal complaint.

Non-Compliance with Timelines

At Step One and Step Two of the formal complaint process, if a decision or resolution has not been rendered within the allotted timeline, an employee may immediately appeal his or her complaint to the next level of the complaint process. A supervisor may request more time from the HR Generalist if necessary to complete an internal investigation or fact-finding process. If the response will be delayed, the supervisor shall provide the employee with notice of the estimated date on which the response will be made. The employee may not file a separate complaint for failure to comply with established timelines. If an employee filing the complaint fails to meet a timeline, the complaint will be considered withdrawn and may not be re-filed or re-opened.

Complaint Conferences

All conferences shall take place during normal System business hours, unless otherwise agreed by the parties. All participants, including witnesses, shall be released from regular duties and shall suffer no loss of pay or other benefits if, and only if, they receive prior approval from their immediate supervisor. In no instance shall regular classroom instruction be interrupted.
Withdrawal of Complaint

An employee may withdraw a complaint at any time. Once withdrawn, a complaint may not be reopened. A complaint shall be considered withdrawn if an employee fails to pursue the complaint or otherwise is deemed to be unreasonably protracting the process. If an employee files a complaint and fails to meet a timeline, the complaint is considered withdrawn and may not be re-filed or re-opened. If at any step of the complaint process the employee is granted the relief he or she has requested, the complaint is deemed resolved and may not be appealed to the next step.

Formal Complaint Process

The formal complaint process shall consist of steps one through three. The formal complaint process is closed to the public. No members of the public may attend except designated representatives.

Step One: Complaint Conference
An individual who has been unable to resolve a concern/dispute about work related issue(s) through the informal process, may file a complaint form within ten (10) business/working days from the date of the alleged action/decision that forms the basis of the complaint. The complaint form shall be filed with the HCC Director of Human Resources with a copy to the second level supervisor. The second level supervisor shall schedule the Step One Conference within ten (10) business/working days of receipt of the complaint. After the Step One Conference, the supervisor shall respond in writing to all written complaints or concerns within 10 business/work days of the date of the conference.

Step Two: 1st Appeal Complaint Conference
In the event the employee is not satisfied with the decision/resolution of the second level supervisor or if a decision/resolution is not rendered within the allotted timeline, the employee may appeal the decision to the next level (third level) supervisor within ten (10) business/working days of decision/resolution. The third level supervisor shall schedule the Step Two Conference within ten (10) business/working days of receipt of the complaint. After the Step Two Conference, the supervisor shall respond in writing to all written complaints or concerns within ten (10) business/work days of the date of the conference.
Step Three: 2nd Appeal
In the event the employee is not satisfied with the decision/resolution of the second level supervisor or if a decision/resolution is not rendered within the allotted timeline, the employee may appeal the decision to his or her President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent. The President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent shall schedule the 2nd Appeal Conference within ten (10) business/working days of receipt of the complaint. After the 2nd Appeal Conference, the Administrator will respond in writing to all written complaints or concerns within 10 days of the date of the conference.

Variances
The President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent has the option to send the complaint to a mediation, or to an external hearing officer as deemed appropriate to the situation. The General Counsel must be consulted for approval if the President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent is to request an external hearing officer. Costs of external services will be borne by the HCC college or division involved.

Option A: Mediation
The President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent also has option to request that the parties participate in non-binding mediation. The party against whom the complaint is filed shall also be allowed ample time to present his or her position. The Human Resources Department will maintain a list of at least five (5) qualified mediators who may be available to facilitate an internal mediation. The mediation should be completed within thirty (30) business/working days, unless otherwise agreed by the parties. If the parties reach agreement in mediation, the Level Three administrator will review the settlement agreement for compliance with HCC policy. If the agreement is accepted, the complaint is resolved. If the parties do not reach agreement in mediation, the Level Three Administrator will hear the complaint. All matters discussed in mediation are confidential and all persons participating will sign a confidentiality pledge prior to the mediation.
Option B: Hearing Officer

With the consent of the General Counsel, in certain circumstances, an external hearing officer may be used to render a disposition. The hearing officer will be selected by the General Counsel from a list of approved hearing officers maintained in that office. The hearing officer will hold a conference with the complainant; review the record and interview witnesses deemed necessary. The hearing officer will provide factual findings and make a recommendation for disposition of the complaint to the President, Vice Chancellor or administrative equivalent, and that person will review the recommended disposition for compliance with HCC policy. If the disposition is accepted, the complaint is resolved.

Original Complaint Form

Once the complaint has been closed, the complaint form and all appropriate attachments are to be sent to the Director of Human Resources by the appropriate college/division administrator.

2.9 Additional Information

2.9.1 Additional information concerning employment policies and procedures is available in the HCC Policy and Procedures Online Handbook at http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/policies-procedures-hcc

2.9.2 Additional information specifically for adjunct faculty is available at http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/part-time-info-center
SECTION THREE: INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS

3.1 Faculty Teaching Responsibilities
The primary role of a faculty member is to instruct, evaluate, and advise students and to facilitate students’ instruction. While carrying out these roles, a faculty member serves as a liaison between students and administration in communicating instructional policies and procedures pertaining to students.

3.2 Faculty Workload
The standard workload for each of the three major faculty groups: instructional (academic, workforce, and continuing education/corporate training), librarian, and counselor, consists of a 40-hour workweek. Faculty work responsibilities are divided as follows: Teaching/Learning Support 70%; Academic Advising 10%; Professional Development 10%; Institutional & Community Service 10%.

3.2.1 Alternative Instructional Assignment Policy
Houston Community College District provides faculty time to complete certain assigned tasks that cannot reasonably be accomplished as part of the regular assigned responsibilities of full-time faculty. Alternative instructional assignments should be directly related to the mission of Houston Community College District. Examples of appropriate alternative instructional assignments include developing new programs, revising college curricula, or chairing district-wide discipline committees. Alternative assignments may be given to either full- or part-time instructors. Alternative instructional assignments must be approved by the appropriate instructional dean and documented on the Alternative Instructional Assignment Approval Form. Except in unusual circumstances, alternative instructional assignment requests should be made at least thirty days before the start of the semester. Alternative instructional assignments for full-time faculty may be given as overloads rather than as part of an instructor’s regular schedule. Time spent on alternative instructional assignments must be documented; the typical alternative assignment should account for twice the number of hours as the number of equated hours of the class assignment it replaces.

3.2.2 Instructional Overload Policy
Fulltime faculty members are limited to two courses of overload during the long semesters and one course of overload each summer term. Deans have the authority with the approval of the President to grant an exception to this policy. All exceptions must be documented and maintained in the Deans’ Offices and made available for review by the Presidents.
3.2.3 Workload Guidelines for Adjunct Faculty
Adjunct faculty may teach up to 10 equated hours during the long semesters (fall and spring) and each summer term. This normally means three lecture courses (9 hrs) or two science/art lab-based courses (10 hrs). The guideline includes both first-start and second-start classes, which run concurrently. Deans have the authority with the approval of the President to grant an exception to this policy. This exception should be exercised only in emergencies and when departments/colleges face a critical shortage of adjuncts. Adjuncts may teach additional courses in the winter or spring mini-term that do not count towards the initial 10 equated hrs limit.

3.3 Evaluation of Students’ Performance
Instructors are expected to evaluate the work of students enrolled in college-level credit courses at least four times during a semester, or as called for by the Discipline Committee, supervise the course, and assign grades. Evaluations may include tests, homework assignments, pop quizzes, in-class essays, out-of-class essay assignments, term papers, projects, presentations, journals, and other assignments. Instructors are urged to require that students complete at least one written assignment for evaluation during the semester.

A good system of evaluation will:

a. Aid students in knowing what is expected of them and help prepare them for the specific kind of evaluation to be given.
b. Allow students a number of opportunities to be evaluated so that one poor performance does not automatically result in a failing grade.
c. Give students feedback on their progress several times throughout the term.
d. Use more than one mode of evaluation so that students have an opportunity to exhibit learning in more than one way.
e. Determine final course grades in a fair and objective manner.

3.3.1 Final Examinations
Final exams must be given in accordance with the published exam schedule. Final exams must not be given to any student in advance of the scheduled time without the authorization of the appropriate instructional supervisor. Some subjects may have department-wide, comprehensive final exams. Faculty teaching in these subject areas will be notified by the instructional supervisor concerning exams. Instructors are responsible for proctoring all their examinations, except in the case of Distance Education instructors who are required to proctor examinations under distance education examination schedules.
3.3.2 **Grading System**

The College District uses the following grading system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Good 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Fair 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Passing 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-0</td>
<td>Failing 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I*</td>
<td>Incomplete 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP**</td>
<td>In progress 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W***</td>
<td>Withdrawn 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*I ("Incomplete") is a conditional grade used to indicate that the student has not completed the course. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor or to submit requisite work (projects, papers, make-up examinations) to complete the course and be assigned a grade. A grade of incomplete which has not been made up by the end of the following “long” semester (i.e. fall or spring semester) will be converted to an “F.”

**IP ("In progress”) may be assigned once in certain developmental courses and must be noted in the Grading Option column of the Official Grade Roster Report. Students must re-enroll the next semester to receive credit. A grade of IP does not affect a student’s grade point average (GPA); however, failure to satisfactorily complete the course during the second semester will result in an F for the course.

***W ("Withdrawn") is assigned when the student officially withdraws from the course. In order to receive a W, a student must officially drop a course.

3.3.3 **Grade Changes**

Following the end of the semester, it is occasionally necessary to change a student’s grade because of instructor error in computing grades, students turning in required assignments late or to satisfy requirements of a grade of “Incomplete”, or similar circumstances. To accomplish this, the instructor must complete a Change of Grade form, which is available within the Student Service area of the HCC website (hccs.edu) in the Faculty Center where the online roll and class rosters are located. To effect a change of grade, the instructor completes the Change of Grade form and submits it to the instructional supervisor for approval; the instructional supervisor approves the change and forwards the signed change of grade form to the
Dean of Instruction; the Dean of Instruction approves the change and forwards the form to the Office of Student Records; and the Office of Student Records completes the change of grade.

3.3.4 **Incompletes**
Instructors may assign a grade of “I” (incomplete) on the Official Grade Roster Report and via PeopleSoft 8. In such cases, instructors must have some expectation that the student will finish the work within the allotted time. The rules of the College District allow the student who receives an “Incomplete” until the end of the following long semester (fall or spring) to complete the course work and erase an “I”. After the deadline, the “I” automatically will be changed to a grade of “F”. In the case of an incomplete, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor to arrange to complete the missing work. However, instructors are responsible for working with students receiving “Incompletes” to afford them an opportunity to complete their work. Instructors must grade the completed work and compute final grades. Instructors can then remove the student’s “Incomplete” and assign a grade by completing a Change of Grade form. The form must be submitted to the instructor’s supervisor for processing prior to the deadline.

The decision to assess an “Incomplete” for student’s course work belongs to the instructor. When making such a decision, instructors are encouraged to consider the implications of assigning an “I” to a student. There must be some indication from the student that he or she intends to complete the required work within the time allotted by policy. In the case of a student missing the final exam or failing to turn in a final paper, it is a customary practice that most instructors will award an “Incomplete” if the student has been attending class regularly and has successfully completed a substantial portion of the course work. Instructors are discouraged from giving the grade of “Incomplete” to a student who stopped coming to class several weeks before the final exam without an appropriate reason for the absences or to a student who has missed several major assignments in the class and has not provided the instructor with any indication of when he or she will make up the work.

3.4 **Guidelines for Academic Advising at HCC**
Academic advising is considered one of the components of the faculty workload. Academic advising at HCC will consist of faculty advising students in regular and planned processes/activities throughout the year, within and outside of classes, during office hours or other assigned times, and agreed upon by a faculty member and his/her department chair as part of the faculty member’s workload. The advising processes/activities will assist prospective and current students in learning about educational and career
opportunities within the faculty member’s field; planning course selections and other academic activities; and reviewing academic progress in completion of goals. Further, faculty advisors will be expected to be knowledgeable about the range of educational programs and services available to students at HCC so they may refer students as appropriate and in a timely manner.

Examples of advising activities are listed below. This list of examples is not intended as an exhaustive list of examples of academic advising activities.

a. Presentations on a particular academic field or program its subject matter, objectives, opportunities for further study (transfer opportunities), opportunities for work (co-ops, part-time, work-study) and careers, special clubs and activities available, support services, scholarships;

b. Presentations on the above subjects to classes, student groups, high schools, or community groups;

c. Creation and maintenance of a web site dedicated to the types of information specified in bullet one;

d. Interaction with individual students or groups of students outside of class during regularly scheduled office hours or at other times during which students are given information about how to be a successful student or are given information about HCC support services. This type of interaction could also take place via the telephone or e-mail.

d. Sponsorship of a student club or activity designed to promote HCC student academic and social engagement.

3.5 Absences and Substitutes
It is the responsibility of all full-time and adjunct faculty members to contact their supervisor when they will be absent from class. Whenever possible, the faculty member should arrange for a substitute. Class should be canceled only in case of an emergency.

3.6 HCC Policy and Procedures
It is the responsibility of each faculty member to become familiar with and abide by HCC policies and procedures. The District’s Policy and Procedure Handbook is located at http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/policies-procedures-hcc
3.7 Academic Freedom

From the Policy Manual of HCC, E: 2.1 http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/policies-procedures-hcc/e-2-academic-resources/e-2-1-academic-freedom

Each faculty member will have freedom in the classroom to discuss the subject he or she teaches. Additionally, each faculty member is expected not to introduce into his or her teachings controversial matters that have no relation to the classroom subject. Faculty members shall, when speaking, make clear that their opinions are not necessarily those of the District. At the same time, faculty members shall strive to be accurate in their statements and to be willing to listen to and show respect for others who express different opinions.

Institutions of higher learning exist for the common good. The common good depends upon a free search for truth and its free expression. Therefore, it is essential that HCC faculty be free to pursue scholarly inquiry without undue restriction and to voice and publish their conclusions concerning the significance of evidence they consider relevant. The faculty member must be free from the corrosive fear that others, inside or outside the college community, may threaten his or her professional career because their vision differs from that of others. Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject being taught to the full extent permitted by law. Furthermore, faculty members are free from institutional censorship or discipline when they speak, write, or act as citizens of their nation, state, and community. The concept of academic freedom must be accompanied by an equally demanding concept of responsibility, shared by the Board, administrators, and faculty members. Exercise of professional integrity by a faculty member includes recognition that the public will judge the member’s profession and the College District by the faculty member’s statements. Therefore, faculty members should strive to avoid creating the impression that they are speaking or acting for the College District when speaking or acting as private citizens. Faculty members should be judicious in the use of controversial material in the classroom and should only introduce such material when it has a clear relationship to the subject matter of the course being taught.

3.8 College/Campus Information

3.8.1 Guest Speakers

Many instructors augment their courses by using guest speakers. Although the College District welcomes the use of an occasional guest speaker, instructors are expected to discuss plans to use a guest speaker with their instructional supervisor.
3.8.2 Field Trips
Because of possible concerns about legal liability, instructors must inform and discuss any field trips with their instructional supervisor in advance. If permission is given, the instructor must fill out the appropriate forms. **Instructors are NOT allowed to transport students in their own personal vehicles.**

3.8.3 Care of the Classroom
At most instructional sites, faculty share classroom space with other instructors. It is the responsibility of the faculty to ensure that classrooms are left in good condition. No drinking or eating is allowed in any of the classrooms, and all HCC facilities are smoke-free. Instructors should ask students to confine these activities to appropriate areas. As a matter of professional courtesy to the next group utilizing the room, instructors should erase the boards upon the completion of class. Also, if the instructor and/or students rearranged the classroom seating (desks/chairs/tables) during class, the instructor should see that the seating is placed in its original position before leaving the classroom.

3.8.4 Children in the Classroom
The College District does not allow children to be present in the classroom or left unattended on HCC property. Some of the colleges within the College District offer child care or financial help for child care. Students should check with the Student Services Office at their home college for information concerning child care services.

3.8.5 Class Times
HCC classes begin at the time listed in the course schedule. Instructors are responsible for beginning classes on time. College District policy stipulates that for every hour of instruction, students must be allowed a ten minute break or the instructor may dismiss class before the end of the scheduled class period to accommodate for the break period. For example, if the class time is listed in the schedule as beginning at 8:00 and ending at 9:00, then the instructor should dismiss class no later than 8:50 to accommodate for the ten minute break per hour of instruction policy.

3.9 Department/Division Operations

3.9.1 Syllabi
Instructors are required to prepare a course syllabus and give a copy to each of their students during the first week of the term. This syllabus may be delivered directly to students on paper, or may be posted on a website connected to the course, such as the Learning Web. Instructional supervisors
may supply instructors with model syllabi for use or adaptation. Instructors must provide their supervisors with a copy of their course syllabi as directed.

**A course syllabus is expected to contain the following information:**

a. Instructor's Name (Please provide contact information for students on how and when they might reach you, via either a telephone number or an e-mail address, and the days, times, and locations for office hours);

b. Course Description (Title, number, and name of course and catalog description);

c. Prerequisites (if applicable)

d. Core curriculum objectives met by the course (if applicable)

e. Time and Days of the course

f. Course Goals (includes core competencies, incorporation of SLOs)

g. Textbook Information

h. Lab Requirements (if any)

i. Course Content (course outline with topics)

j. Course Calendar with Due Dates for Assignments and Testing

k. Attendance and Withdrawal Policies

l. Grading Policy

m. Course Requirements (Number of Tests, Term Projects, Assignments, Essays, Portfolios, Service Learning)

n. Make-up policy

o. Students with Disabilities: Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester.

p. Academic Honesty: All Houston Community College District students are required to exercise academic honesty in completion of all tests and assignments. Penalties for academic dishonesty (cheating on a test, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration on an assignment) may include a grade of O or F for the particular assignment, failure in the course, and/or recommendation for probation or dismissal from the college District.

q. Information related to the possible consequences for repeating the course more than once.

r. Other relevant student information (such as clubs, tutoring labs and hours available, web resources available to students, etc.)
3.9.2 Student Evaluation of Instruction

Once each Fall and Spring semester, students are given an opportunity to offer their perceptions of faculty. These student evaluations are processed by computer and results returned to faculty and the appropriate instructional deans by the end of the semester. The purpose of the student evaluation of instruction is to assist the instructor and to gather information useful in modifying the course. Every class is evaluated by this Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEOI) survey during the fall and spring semesters.

In addition to the SEOI, HCC participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), one of the most important instruments by which students at HCC can assess the college’s instructional program and student services. The CCSSE is administered once a year to a random selection of classes.

Faculty are required to allocate class time to carry out the SEOI and, if selected, the CCSSE, according to the instructions for administering these surveys.

3.10 Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee functions as an advisory committee to the Vice Chancellor for Instruction. The purpose of the committee is to monitor the integrity of curriculum offerings, the consistency of content among colleges, and the overall quality of programs in order to ensure that the educational program adheres to the stated purpose and objectives of the Houston Community College District.

3.10.1 Committee Service

The primary responsibility for the improvement of the College District’s educational program resides with the faculty. Various committees within College District function to achieve this objective. Instructors serve on a variety of department, college, or District-wide committees. The faculty member must specify such committee service on the Faculty Assignment Form.

3.10.2 Discipline Committees and Workforce Programs

Faculty control over curriculum and instruction is carried out by discipline committees in the academic disciplines, and workforce program departments in the workforce-related courses. These institutions exist to ensure disciplinary coherence and excellence across the District, represent disciplines in the larger context of the District, lead the District into new and
innovative programs and instructional methodologies, and act as the District’s experts in matters concerning their disciplines’ curricula.

3.10.3 Duties and Responsibilities of the Discipline Committees and Workforce Program Departments
The Discipline Committee / Workforce Program Department shall meet at least once each semester and perform the following duties and responsibilities:

a. Selection of required curriculum materials assigned by one or more members of the discipline;

b. Determination of minimum curriculum, and minimum academic standards of instruction, testing, and materials;

c. Creation, review, and maintenance of Curriculum Guides and other curriculum materials;

d. Recommendation to the Curriculum Committee of new or revised courses;

e. Recommendation to the Academic Deans of course specific maximum class sizes when required for safety, instructional, or other reasons;

f. Initiation and oversight of program reviews of the discipline;

g. Provision of expert advice to college officials on safety standards in labs and other instructional issues as requested;

h. Hearing of instructor certification appeals;

i. Participation in HCC activities relating to the process of evaluation and ranking of faculty (if applicable);

j. Participation in instructional decision-making at the District level;

k. Conduct of ongoing reviews of all alternate instructional calendars and instructional delivery systems;

l. Supply basic information to the District administration for discipline web pages.

3.10.4 Discipline Committee Membership
All **full-time faculty members** who are **credentialed** in and who have **taught** (or are scheduled to teach) the particular subject at HCC, identified by the four-letter course prefix (e.g. PSYC), are members of the discipline committee. There are four exceptions to the above definition of a discipline:

(1) The **Foreign Languages** discipline consists of all foreign languages taught at HCC, although they have different prefixes (CHIN, FREN, GERM, JAPN, RUSS, SPAN);

(2) **Developmental English** is a discipline, although it has the same prefix (ENGL) as the English Discipline.

(3) **Developmental Math** is a discipline, although it has the same prefix (MATH) as the Math Discipline.

(4) **English for Foreign Speakers** is a discipline, although it has the same prefix (ENGL) as the English Discipline.

Permanent administrators who meet the above qualifications are not formally part of the discipline committee and have no right to vote in decisions. However, individual disciplines may choose (by a majority vote) to allow qualified administrators to attend and otherwise fully participate in the activities of the discipline committee on a voluntary basis. In no cases shall administrators vote.

Faculty members who are **temporarily** serving in Interim or Acting positions, or who are temporarily serving as directors or other administrators, but who will be returning to faculty positions, **are** full members of the discipline.

Adjuncts are not formally part of the discipline committee and have no right to vote in decisions. However, individual disciplines may choose (by a majority vote) to allow adjuncts to attend and otherwise fully participate in the activities of the discipline committee on a voluntary basis. In no cases shall adjuncts vote.

The Vice Chancellor for Instruction (VCI) will send a letter to each faculty member notifying them of the first District-wide meeting each semester of the Discipline Committee / Workforce Program. A complete list of all members of the Discipline Committee / Workforce Department should be compiled by the Chair of the Discipline Committee / Workforce Program at the August meeting of each year. However, it is the responsibility of those
members who do not attend the first meeting to contact the Discipline / Workforce Chair so that the Chair may add their name to the list.

Participation in the activities of the Discipline Committee is a part of every full-time faculty member’s duties, and as such, will be incorporated into their yearly evaluation.

3.10.5 Instructional Conference Days

On the first Friday following the Fall and Spring semesters’ reporting dates of the full-time faculty, a District-wide meeting known as the Instructional Conference Day shall be convened. On both the Fall Instructional Conference Day and the Spring Instructional Conference Day, each discipline committee / workforce program department will meet according to a schedule that best allows faculty who belong to more than one discipline the opportunity to attend two of them. After these meetings are concluded, there will be one joint meeting of the VCI, the Academic and Workforce Deans, the Discipline / Workforce Chairs, and the Academic Department Chairs, for the purpose of discussing discipline issues generally. No other meetings, events, speakers, shall be convened on Instructional Conference Day unless they directly pertain to discipline committees or workforce programs and in this case only upon the conclusion of the above meetings.

3.11 Graduation

Graduation is held in May. A separate Student Awards and Recognition Ceremony is held by each College at the end of the Spring Semester. Attendance at graduation exercises is both an obligation and a privilege of full-time faculty. All full-time faculty, therefore, are expected to take part in the graduation exercises dressed in appropriate academic attire. Cap and gown rental order forms will be distributed early so that faculty can indicate whether they wish to rent cap, gown, or hood or supply their own. A bulletin of details of the exercises will be issued well in advance of the ceremony. Adjunct faculty are also invited to participate in the graduation exercises.

3.12 Required Record Keeping

3.12.1 Instructional Records

Keeping accurate and complete records is a vital part of the instructor’s job. Faculty will encounter a number of important documents concerning class rolls, attendance, and grades. Faculty are responsible for safeguarding the privacy of student records. Faculty members should not disclose information about students, including grades, attendance records, Social Security numbers, phone numbers, addresses, or other personal information, except
to appropriate College officials or as required by law. Requests for information by parents of dependent children or other individuals should be referred to the Office of Student Records or the local Dean of Student Services. Likewise, students are not required to disclose personal information during classroom exercises or on polls conducted in the class.

To locate forms for instructional recordkeeping, go to the HCC home page, click on “Student System Sign-in,” a page will appear on which you will enter your userid and password to log in, then click “Self Service,” then “Faculty Center.” In this area, you will also find the online roll.

3.12.2 Attendance Reports
Instructors are required to take daily attendance online using the Attendance Roster. This roll must be submitted electronically by the official day of record for the semester. The day of record will be located above the online roll sheet.

3.12.3 Grade Records/Submission of Final Grades
Faculty will submit final grades using two methods: (1) Completion of the online Grade Roster (see above for location) and (2) completion of Roster Summary/Grade Sheet (you will be able to print this document which is located in the Faculty Center (see above) Grades must be submitted using both methods.

3.13 Important Instructional Initiatives

3.13.1 Achieving the Dream

“Achieving the Dream is a multiyear national initiative to help more community college students succeed. The initiative is particularly concerned about student groups that traditionally have faced significant barriers to success, including students of color and low-income students.”

from the Community Colleges Count Website at http://www.achievingthedream.org/ABOUTATD/OVERVIEW/default.tp

For more information about Achieving the Dream at HCC, visit http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/at-a-glance/district-offices/institutional-research/achieving-the-dream-developmental-education-initiative
3.13.2 Learning Communities

Learning communities consist of two linked classes of different disciplines in which course content and instruction is provided by a team of at least two instructors.

For more information about Learning Communities go to the following website:

SECTION FOUR: STUDENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES and SERVICES

4.1 Student Handbook
The HCC Student Handbook is located online at:
http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/student-handbook

4.2 Confidentiality, Discrimination and Harassment

4.2.1 Confidentiality
HCC follows all national, state, and local regulations related to student records and any other information concerning HCC students.

4.2.2 Harassment and Discrimination
HCC is committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each individual. Discrimination and/or other harassment based on the age, color, ethnic background, disability, family status, gender, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or other immutable characteristic of individuals or any other subgroup stereotyping or grouping within the Houston Community College community is unacceptable.

HCC shall provide an educational, employment, and business environment free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that is not tolerated by HCC.

4.3 Student Attendance, Absences, and Tardiness
Faculty should insist that their students attend class regularly, and they must clearly state in their syllabi how they will calculate absences and consistently follow their set policy. Absences must be noted on the daily attendance records provided online. For the purpose of calculating absences, HCC Instructional Policy does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.

4.3.1 Excessive Student Absences
For the purposes of this section, “excessive absence” means any number of absences which exceeds 12.5% of the total hours of instruction (lecture & lab) of a course.

It is the responsibility of a student to drop a course for nonattendance. The instructor has full authority to either drop a student for excessive absences, or subtract points for the same from the student's total points earned, but is not required to do so. Any such action by the instructor must be according to a formula published in the course syllabus and administered consistently.
throughout. This includes the option of giving students an earned grade of "F" who do not drop a course after accumulating absences in excess of 12.5 percent of the total hours of instruction (lecture and lab). Instructors must maintain complete and accurate attendance records to document all penalties imposed for nonattendance.

When feasible, instructors should warn students before their total number of absences may lead them to be dropped. In addition, faculty should use the Early Alert System to notify counselors of students with chronic attendance problems who are at risk of being dropped. When the excessive absences are caused by special circumstances, such as serious illness, injury, or family tragedy, faculty are encouraged to work with students to determine how and when the missed work can be completed.

4.3.2 Administrative Withdrawals for Excessive Absences
Faculty can withdraw students who have excessive absences by submitting, on or before the official drop date, a completed Program Adjustment Form. The Program Adjustment Form may be obtained online from the Faculty Center located within the Self Service Section of the following website: https://hccsaweb.hccs.edu:8080/psp/csprd/?cmd=login&languageCd=ENG
The policy for determining excessive absences for the purpose of administrative withdrawal is that students may be dropped after missing more than 12.5 percent of the total hours of instruction (lecture and lab). In a three credit-hour lecture class, students may be dropped after more than six hours of absence accumulated. In a four credit-hour lecture/lab class, students may be dropped after more than 12 hours of absence accumulated. In Accreditation and Certification classes, departments and programs governed by accreditation or certification standards may have different attendance policies. Instructional supervisors are responsible for explaining special policies that are applicable to the instructor’s teaching area.

4.3.3 Tardiness
The District does not have a policy on students arriving late to class. Instructors who wish to penalize students for coming late to class may do so as long as the policy is reasonable, communicated clearly in the class syllabus, and enforced uniformly and consistently.

4.3.4 Religious/ Holy Day Absence
In accordance with the Texas Education Code, the College District shall allow a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious/holy day to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who is excused under
this section cannot be penalized for the absence, but the instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination with a reasonable amount of time.

### 4.4 Student Grade Appeal

The responsibility for determining and awarding grades resides primarily with the faculty. Students have the right to appeal final grades only, and then only on the grounds that the final grade was calculated incorrectly, or that the method of calculating the final grade did not follow the instructor’s syllabus or was in violation of college policy. If a student is dissatisfied with a grade awarded while a course is in progress, the student may discuss the matter with the instructor. At this point, however, the instructor’s decision is final.

Students, faculty, and administrators are encouraged to resolve grade disputes informally. A student who remains dissatisfied with his/her final course grade must follow the following procedure to appeal a grade.

#### 4.4.1 Right to Appeal

Students have the right to appeal final course grades only. Students who wish to appeal their final course grades must initiate the appeals process in writing no later than 30 calendar days after the beginning of the semester (Fall or Spring) after the disputed grade was received. Students who fail to file a grade appeal within the time limit may ask the appropriate academic or workforce dean to allow an exception but such an exception must be based on extraordinary circumstances. The student then completes the Student Course Grade Appeal Form and submits it to the appropriate department chair or instructional dean.

#### 4.4.2 Resolution/Faculty Grade Appeal Panel

Upon receipt of the notice of formal grade appeal, the dean, department chair, or designee should contact both the student and the instructor involved in an attempt to resolve the dispute informally. If the dispute remains unresolved, the dean, department chair, or designee shall give the instructor a copy of the Student Course Grade Appeal Form and ask the instructor to prepare a written response to the appeal. The department chair or designee should continue to pursue an informal resolution if he or she believes an informal resolution is possible. If such attempts at informal resolution fail, the dean, department chair, or designee shall appoint a Faculty Grade Appeal Panel consisting of at least three full-time instructors from the instructional area involved or a
related instructional department or division. The dean, department chair, or designee will appoint one of the members of the panel to serve as chair.

The chair of the Faculty Grade Appeal Panel is responsible for ensuring that the grade appeal process is completed in a timely fashion. Unless there are exceptional circumstances (as determined by the appropriate academic or workforce dean), the appeal process must be completed before the end of the semester in which it is filed. The chair of the Faculty Grade Appeal Panel is also responsible for ensuring that the instructor has at least one week to prepare a response to the grade appeal and that both the student and the instructor have at least a week advance notice of the time and location for appearing before the Faculty Grade Appeal Panel.

4.4.3 Evidence
The student and the instructor must prepare evidence for the panel’s consideration, including the instructor’s syllabus with the method of grade calculation, any other documents that explain or clarify grade calculation, and any other written instructions concerning a disputed assignment. Both the instructor and the student have the right to appear before the panel in person to present their points of view and answer questions. If one party requests the opportunity to appear before the panel, the other party must be notified of that fact and given the opportunity to appear as well. At its discretion, the panel may request and consider any input it deems relevant, including the input of third parties.

4.4.4 Final Resolution
The panel will decide either to let the student’s original grade stand or to change the grade. The panel chair must prepare a written report stating the panel’s decision and the justification for that decision. A copy of that report must be mailed to the student, the instructor, and the instructional supervisor. If the panel’s decision is that the student’s grade be raised, the instructional supervisor will prepare and submit a Change of Grade Form. If either the student or the instructor believes that the grade appeals process was not properly followed, either party may request a review by the Dean of Instruction. The Dean must only review the procedures followed by the instructional supervisor and the Grade Appeals Panel to ensure compliance with College District policy. The Dean must not review the facts of the dispute.
or the conclusion of the panel. If the Dean concludes that the process was conducted properly, the panel’s decision stands and is final. If the Dean decides that the process was not followed properly, the Dean will direct that the appeals process be re-initiated and completed using the proper process.

4.5 Scholastic Dishonesty: Definition
Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

4.5.1 Cheating on a Test
Cheating on a test includes:
- Copying from another student’s test paper;
- Using materials during a test not authorized by the person giving the test;
- Collaborating with another student during a test without authority;
- Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an un-administered test;
- Bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered.

4.5.2 Plagiarism
Plagiarism means the appropriation of another’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own written work for credit.

4.5.3 Collusion
Collusion means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.

4.5.4 Scholastic Dishonesty: Disciplinary Actions
Students guilty of academic dishonesty can be given a grade of “F” or “0” for the particular test or assignment involved. In extreme cases or for repeated violations, guilty students can be assigned a failing grade in a course or recommended for probation or dismissal from the College District. The instructor’s policy must be clearly stated in the syllabus.

4.5.5 Controlling Scholastic Dishonesty
The College District requires that instructors take the following steps to control scholastic dishonesty:
a. Include a policy on scholastic dishonesty in class syllabi defining scholastic dishonesty and identifying possible disciplinary action for offenders. The following is an example of a scholastic dishonesty policy an instructor might include in a syllabus:

"Plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collusion are prohibited by College District policy and the rules of this class. Plagiarism involves using the ideas or words of another person (either in whole or in part) without crediting the source. Cheating involves fraud and deception for the purpose of violating legitimate testing rules. Unauthorized collusion means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit. A student guilty of a first offense will receive a grade of "F" on the assignment involved. For a second offense, the student will receive a grade of "F" for the course."

b. Take steps to prevent cheating by designing out-of-class assignments that are difficult to plagiarize, controlling preparation and dissemination of tests, and monitoring students taking tests in the classroom. Also, be cautious about allowing students to take unsupervised make-up examinations.

4.6 Students with Disabilities

4.6.1 Disability Law

The Disability Support Service Office (DSSO) at each College in the District is responsible for arranging reasonable accommodations for all qualified students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to all programs and activities at HCC. The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) (signed into law in 1990) applies to all colleges and universities receiving any type of federal financial assistance. In effect, it implements section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It provides that: - "No otherwise qualified individual with disabilities in the United States . . .Shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

4.6.2 Instructional Accommodations

If a student requests an instructional accommodation due to a disability, the instructor should refer the student to the appropriate Disability Services staff for a formal Letter of Accommodation. This letter identifies the approved instructional accommodations for the HCC student with a disability. It is important that faculty members make no special adjustments for students
with disabilities without an official Letter of Accommodation that they would not make for any other student with a similar request. Instructors must include a statement on their course syllabi regarding the HCC Students with Disabilities Policy.

4.6.3 Additional Information
More information concerning students with disabilities, go to:

http://www.hccs.edu/portal/site/hccs/menuitem.5fc1e5d66248062f3227a2ced07401ca/?vgnextoid=07bdf8a147b6f110VgnVCM100000054710acRCRD&vgnextfmt=defaultnobreadcrumb

4.7 Student Discipline/Conduct

According to its policy on student conduct, the District views college-level students as adults who subscribe to a basic standard of conduct which requires that they not violate any municipal, state, or federal laws. At the same time, HCC has a duty and corollary disciplinary power to protect its educational purpose through the setting of standards of conduct and through the regulation of the use of District property. A student's membership in the community of scholars is a privilege and carries with it obligations to participate in and contribute to the educational mission of the College and to avoid any behavior that is contrary to that mission. Therefore, no student may disrupt or otherwise interfere with any educational activity being performed by a member of the College District. In addition, no student may interfere with his/her fellow students’ right to pursue their academic goals to the fullest in an atmosphere appropriate to a community of scholars.

Student conduct and responsibilities are described in the HCC Student Handbook (http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/student-handbook) Students are expected to use these policies as guidelines for their behavior. An instructor may establish additional reasonable behavioral guidelines for his/her class. Any student failing to abide by appropriate standards of conduct during scheduled College activities may be asked to leave that day's class or activity by the instructor or another College official. The student has the right to return to the next class/activity. If the problem persists, the instructor should consult with the appropriate Dean(s) concerning disciplinary action. If a student refuses a well-founded request to leave the classroom voluntarily, security can be summoned to remove the student so that the scheduled activity may resume without further disruption. In cases of serious problems, the faculty member should report the incident to his or her instructional supervisor. If a faculty member who is having a disciplinary problem with a student feels that the student is a threat to the faculty member’s safety and/or the safety of the other
students, the faculty member should immediately alert Campus Security. Further disciplinary action may be pursued according to District guidelines presented in the HCC Student Handbook. The above policy does not diminish the student's freedom to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. However, students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Free inquiry and free expression, both by the instructor and the student, are indispensable to the pursuit of truth and the development of students. Students must exercise their liberty with responsibility.

4.8 Counseling & Testing Services

4.8.1 Early Alert System

The HCC Early Alert Initiative is a college-wide effort to successfully retain students who are at risk of failing, withdrawing or dropping a course. This joint effort between Instruction and Student Services identifies students that are performing poorly in the classroom so that effective support services can be provided to the student.

Accessing the "Early Alert" Form

1. Faculty log into Peoplesoft at:

   https://hccsaweb.hccs.edu:8080/psp/csprd/?cmd=login&languageCd=ENG

2. Once logged in you will be linked to the Learning Management page.

3. The Early Alert form is located on the left hand side of the page.

4. Complete all sections of the form as needed and e-mail to your College’s Student Services Office.

4.8.2 Academic Counseling

Each College within the District provides students with counseling services. Students in need of counseling should be referred to the Counselors at your college. The District Counseling Services is located at:

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/future-students/counseling-services-home
4.8.3 Online Student Services

Distance Education Counseling Services offers student services, including academic and personal counseling, for students enrolled in, or interested in enrolling in, Distance Education courses. Contact this Office for information about Distance Education at HCC.

Distance Education Counseling Services are available at:

http://de.hccs.edu/portal/site/de/menuitem.2b6e81332bdb11b9759b8e10507401ca/?vgnextoid=0eba3e2b7f95a110VgnVCM2000001b4710acRCRD&appInstanceName=default

4.8.4 Academic Testing

Academic Placement Testing, as well as GED testing are available through the counseling offices at all colleges in the District. Testing information is available at: http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/counseling-testing

4.8.5 Texas Success Initiative

During the 2003 session, the Texas Legislature repealed the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP) and replaced it with the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). The TSI requires assessment of all new students, individualized success plans for those students whose skills are not at college level, and minimum state standards indicating students' "college readiness" for pursuit of certain certificate and all degree programs.

Each college is required to report on the academic success of its students and the effectiveness of its developmental education programs. Additional information related to the Texas Success
Initiative is available at:
http://www.hccs.edu/portal/site/hccs/menuitem.a12520d901466b1f3227a2ced07401ca/?vgnextoid=57b0badfbcecf110VgnVCM2000001b4710acRCRD&vgnextchannel=7f41badfbcecf110VgnVCM2000001b4710acRCRD&appInstanceName=default

4.8.5 Tutoring

Each college within the District offers academic tutoring. The academic dean’s office should be contacted for specific information related to academic tutoring at a specific college.

4.9 Student Clubs and Activities

The Student Life Offices at HCC provide activities, such as clubs and sports, that are educationally sound, reflect the non-traditional nature of the community college and support and enhance the mission of the institution. HCC encourages a climate that enhances the self-esteem of all students.

For more information, go to http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/current-students/student-activities-organizations
SECTION FIVE: OPPORTUNITIES for TRAINING and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 HCC Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE)

The mission of HCC’s Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence is to serve as the premiere training and support organization for faculty development which results in producing an excellent teacher in every classroom to ensure student success.

The TLE Program is the core curriculum that supports all teaching faculty and instructional leadership, both part- and full-time, in enhancing their teaching knowledge and skills. Adjunct faculty must complete the Adjunct Faculty Success Program to qualify to complete the TLE Program.

For additional information and instructions for enrolling in CTLE courses, visit this website:

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/center-for-teaching-learning-excellence/teaching-learning-excellence-program

and for the Adjunct Faculty Success Program:

http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/faculty-staff/center-for-teaching-learning-excellence/part-time-faculty-success-program

5.2 HCC Certification in Instructional Technology (CIT)

HCC’s Instructional Media Center and the college Curriculum Innovation Centers offer basic and advanced certifications in Instructional Technology. The purpose of the Certification is to prepare faculty to integrate instructional technologies into their teaching practices. To complete the Basic Certificate, forty (40) hours of classes must be completed. To complete the Advanced Certificate, forty (40) more hours, plus a Portfolio Review, must be completed.

For more information about this program, visit