

EARLY COLLEGE PARENT GUIDE

Dear Parent:

Congratulations! Your student has been admitted to Montgomery College's Early College program. We want to share some information that will help you in support your student in this college program. We want to make sure your student succeeds. If you learn about the program, show support, and encourage your student to be independent, you will help make this a rewarding experience.

Your role is to support your student—and you can do this by:

- Regular communication with student.
- Finding and keeping track of their grades and homework.
- Understanding and encouraging students to use academic support systems.
- Allow your student to be responsible for their grades and homework.

If you have any questions during the time your student is enrolled in the program, please contact your student's **Early College coordinator**.

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What is Early College?

The Montgomery College (MC) and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Early College (EC) program is offered at each MC campus, and provides qualified students the opportunity of earning an Associate Degree in a specific content area. Participating students will finish their 11th and 12th grade years of high school while, at the same time, complete their first two years of college as a full-time MC student. They will graduate with an associate's degree (tuition free) from MC and a Maryland State High School diploma.

Why is Early College a great opportunity?

Students are able to accelerate the path to degree completion and entrance into the workforce, and save money on college tuition. The cost of tuition, fees and textbooks for all courses required for the MC degree and Maryland high school diploma are covered.

How to Support Your Early College Student

- Understand your student may be feeling stressed in adjusting to the new learning environment in college.
- Understand that college is more difficult than high school.
- Encourage your student to seek help from one of the College sources mentioned above when experiencing problems.
- Tell your student that they have to contact their professor/embedded coaches/Early College coordinator or any other MC staff/faculty member if/when they have questions/concerns.
- Talk to your student about being independent and involved inside and outside the classroom. Here are some questions you should be asking your student:
 - Are you going to class?
 - How are you communicating with your professors and classmates?
 - Are you studying for your college classes at least two hours for every one hour of class meeting time during the week?
 - Are you reviewing the material from class weekly?
 - Are you balancing study time with leisure time?
 - Are you starting homework early?
 - Are you turning in homework on time?
- Encourage your student to do the best they can to succeed—and let them know that you will always support them.
- Encourage your student to keep in touch with their high school counselor and visit the high school website on a regular basis.

Early College Orientation

A four-day program held in early summer that will help your student to learn how college is different from high school.

Early College Math Prep Program

Students entering most of the Early College degree programs will be required to attend a July math preparatory program. The purpose of this program is to increase the student's knowledge and skills to get ready for the mathematics course(s) they will be required to take in their degree program. By the end of the three- to four-week math program, students must show that they are ready to enter their first mathematics class by taking a test.

Montgomery College Registration

All MC registration activity is completed through the Early College coordinator

Viewing Your Student's Class Schedule

Your student can see their class schedule by logging in to their MyMC account. Click "My Classes" and then click "View My Class Schedule."

Your Student's Account

Student accounts must be paid prior to registration for each term as well as before MC graduation. MCPS and MC will cover the cost of tuition, college fees, and textbooks. Students are required to pay for all fees that are not related to their registration, including official transcripts, parking tickets, and library fees



Pay My Bill

Students can check their account balance and pay their bill by logging onto MyMC: mymc.glb.montgomerycollege.edu. Scroll down page to "Students Tools" and look for the pay my bill icon.

Early College students do not qualify to use the FAFSA form to apply for federal or state financial aid for this program.

Students who are approved to take an extra elective or college course outside their college pathway—or not required to fulfill a high school diploma requirement—will be responsible for the tuition and fees for that course.

Classroom and Student Conduct

Students have certain rights and responsibilities under the Montgomery College Student Code of Conduct. Academic conduct should reflect the highest level of honesty and integrity. Your student's behavior should be civil, courteous and respect of all members of the college community, their property, and the property of the College and that of the larger community. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct, a violation of the Sexual Misconduct Policy, or a behavioral concern should be submitted on an incident report.

Instructional Materials

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) covers the cost of the instructional materials for college courses. The Early College program will provide the MC Bookstore with a list of students. The week prior to the start of the term, your student is responsible for going to the bookstore on the campus where their Early College program will be held to get their required materials. Items such as pens, paper, notebooks, and binders are not covered by the program.

Grades

Your student will receive a fall semester midterm grade in late October and during the spring semester just after the MC spring break. Your student can access that grade through their MyMC account. Access to midterm and final grades are online in MyMC by selecting “My Grades.” The expectation for students in the Early College program is that they will earn grades of C or higher in all classes.

Final grades are typically available seven to 10 days following the end of each semester. The College does not mail grade reports—and grades are not provided via phone or email. Midterm and final grades are the only grades professors are required to post. **You should talk to your student about grades they have received on quizzes, tests, assignments, and at midterm. You can find those grades on their blackboard account.**

Montgomery College grades will appear on the MC transcript as well as the MCPS transcript. The grades earned in MC classes will be calculated into your student’s MCPS cumulative grade point average (GPA) as well as their weighted MCPS GPA as are MCPS Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

The expectation is for your student to earn grades of C or higher in all classes.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

As a parent or guardian, you are used to having access to your student’s education records through the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). According to the act, when your child turns 18 or enters college (at any age), those rights related to educational records transfer to the student. The Early College program provides students with the opportunity to sign a FERPA release form so the College can share information with the parents. Click on the following link to read more about student privacy at the college level. montgomerycollege.edu/admissions-registration/student-resources/student-privacy-ferpa.

Resources Available to Your Student

Early College Coordinators

The Early College coordinators are located on the college campus and are assigned to work directly with students in a specific Early College degree program. EC coordinators:

- Assist students with program specific college advising and ensure that students are on track to complete all MCPS diploma requirements.
- Help with course registration for each term.
- Connect students to campus, college, and community services.
- Monitor academic progress within each semester and serves liaison with the student’s college professors.
- Deliver biweekly academic seminars on content areas including, but not limited to, time management, study skills, resume writing, college essay writing, and the college search process.
- Maintain the individualized student academic advising plan.
- Work with students on their four-year college search and application process.
- Serve as a liaison with MCPS and the students’ home high school counselor.

Faculty Office Hours

Your student’s professors will provide information on their in-person office hours as well as a Zoom link to attend faculty office hours.

We encourage students to email their professors if they have questions—and to meet with their professors when they need help.

Embedded Coach Sessions

To support your student, the program offers embedded coaches—or tutors—who work with professors to provide support in English, mathematics, and science courses. Embedded coaches provide targeted coaching relevant to coursework, assignments, and exam preparation. We strongly encourage your student to attend these sessions.

Biweekly Early College Seminars

Your student is expected to attend a one-hour biweekly Early College seminar throughout each semester. These sessions are designed to support academics through guidance in fine-tuning study skills as well as offering assistance with the college application process.

Learning and Resource Centers

Workshops at Montgomery College are here to ensure student success as you pursue your academic goals. Montgomery College offers a variety of services and supports through our discipline-specific Learning Centers to help students meet the rigors of academic coursework. Access information on the various Learning Center Resources at: montgomerycollege.edu/academics/support/learning-centers. Data shows students who use the Learning Centers early and often are more successful than those who do not.

How to Apply for Disability Support Services

Your student can apply for accommodations for college classes through MC's Disability Support Services Office (DSS). DSS leads the effort to promote full participation and equal access to educational opportunities, programs, and activities. DSS provides accommodations and support services for students with documented disabilities, and educates the larger College community on disability related issues. To apply for accommodations for college classes, students should go to: montgomerycollege.edu/counseling-and-advising/disability-support-services. Click on "New Student Intake" to complete and submit the intake form.

Navigating MyMC

The MyMC portal provides students, faculty, staff, and alumni with information and sign-on access to various College applications, including registration, checking grades, and requesting transcripts. Students also access their Montgomery College email through MyMC. Your student may share MyMC login credentials with you.

What Is Blackboard?

Blackboard is MC's online course management system and it is where you can interact with professors, post assignments, take assessments, view grades, and much more. The course syllabi can be downloaded from Blackboard.

Blackboard provides:

- Day-to-day grades (midterm grades posted around the eighth week of semester)
- View syllabus (quiz/exam/assignment due dates)
- View assignment due dates

What Is Starfish?

Starfish is a tool that connects students with their Early College coordinators as well as other members of their MC success network. Students will use Starfish to schedule appointments with their EC coordinators. This tool also houses the individual student's Early College academic plan.

Montgomery College Academic Calendar

Students taking MC classes follow the MC academic year calendar. Please note MC follows a different holiday schedule and spring break schedule than MCPS. Your student is expected to attend Montgomery College class sessions during the week of the MCPS spring break, as well as other days such as professional days when MCPS may not be in session. To view the complete MC academic calendar, visit: montgomerycollege.edu/academics/academic-calendar

Montgomery College Delay or Closure

We want you to sign up for MC Alert. MC Alert is the communications system Montgomery College uses to send emergency text alerts, notifications, and email messages and/or mobile device, as well as digital signage on College property. All MC students, faculty, and staff email accounts are automatically registered on the MC Alert system via MyMC. You can register to receive these same alerts through the following link: smart911.com/smart911/registration/registrationLanding.action

Transfer and Application Process to Four-Year Institutions

- Most four-year institutions will require your student to use the freshman application process; however, we urge students to check with the individual institution on their application process for Early College students. Once accepted, the four-year institutions will review the student's MC credits for transfer credit.
- Early College students are not eligible to use the Maryland Transfer Advantage Program (MTAP).
- There is no guaranteed admission to any four-year institutions.
- The Early College Coordinator will work with students on their four-year college search and application process.

Whom to Contact with Questions or Concerns?

We encourage you to have your student communicate with—and ask questions of—their professors. It is part of the experience of taking college classes. If an issue or concern is unresolved, then your student or you can reach out to their Early College coordinator. We want students to know that, as college students, they need to advocate for themselves.

But when parents call, professors reassess the situation. If you call on behalf of your student, professors will regard your student as lacking the kind of independence and maturity normally expected of college students.

If your student is incapacitated because of a major illness or family emergency, you can contact their Early College coordinator and they will notify your student's professors.