NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

STUDENT GUIDE

FALL 2016
Welcome to the City College Division of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Center for Worker Education (CWE)! This guide may also be used as a “To Do” checklist.

GETTING STARTED: ENROLLING IN CLASSES AND PAYING TUITION

Am I enrolled in classes?
- I met with my academic advisor and she or he issued class permissions for the classes I want to enroll in
- I have a copy of my CWE Advising Worksheet
- I am aware of which concentration I selected
- I understand which degree requirement each of my classes is satisfying (Each of your courses should fall into one of the following categories: Pathways courses; Required Major Courses; Foundational Courses; Elective courses)
- I used the class permissions and placed my courses in my CUNYfirst shopping cart
- I enrolled in my classes
- All my classes appear on “My Schedule” in CUNYfirst
- If my class permissions expired, I notified my advisor and requested an extension

Did I pay my tuition?
- Pell Grant (part-time and full-time tuition)
- TAP (full-time tuition only; 12+ credits)
- Student loans
- Cash, check, credit card
- My College Payment Plan
- Third party payments (e.g. employer tuition vouchers)

Do I understand the academic rules for receiving student financial aid?
- Student loans are also a form of financial aid
- TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) is a New York State student aid program that requires students to enroll in 12 or more credits every semester to be eligible
- Pell Grant is a federal student aid program, and recipients can enroll on either a part-time or full-time basis to be eligible
- If you applied for the Pell Grant and are selected for verification, you must contact Warren Orange, CWE Financial Aid Coordinator (oran@ccny.cuny.edu; 212-925-6625 ext. 239) or the Financial Aid Office at the City College main campus (212-656-6656; Wille Administration Building, Room 104)
- Financial Aid is first estimated, therefore
You must actually attend classes to be eligible for financial aid
- The financial aid awards posted on your CUNYfirst Financial Aid page are anticipated—that money is not yet “real”
- You must earn satisfactory grades because you have entered into an agreement, and you must maintain a C average (2.0 GPA)

**How do I get a City College photo ID card?**
- On **Tuesday, August 16**, a City College Photo ID Office staff member will process student photo ID cards at **25 Broadway, 7th Floor from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM**
- **After August 16**, you must go to the Photo ID Office in **North Academic Center 1/204** at the City College main campus, Convent Avenue and 138th Street. Call 212-650-5902 for office hours.

- **YOU ARE REQUIRED TO USE YOUR CITY COLLEGE PHOTO ID CARD TO ENTER 25 BROADWAY. THIS IS A BUILDING RULE, AND THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- The barcode on your ID card allows you to remotely access library resources that you will need to complete research assignments for your courses.

**WHEN CLASSES BEGIN**

**Did I receive and carefully review the syllabus for each class I enrolled in?**
- Each course syllabus should contain the following elements:
  - An overview of what you will learn in the course
  - The reading and writing assignments you can expect
  - Due dates for assignments and penalties for late submission
  - How your learning will be evaluated (e.g. quizzes, reading responses, presentations, research papers, case studies, final exams)
  - Your professor’s grading criteria and scale
  - Contact information for your professor (Email address, telephone number, office hours)

**What should I do if I need academic assistance?**
- Get help EARLY in the semester
- Understanding assignments
  - Step One: Re-read your syllabus and any handouts given by your professor
  - Step Two: Approach your professor during office hours or request a brief meeting at a mutually convenient time
- Help with writing assignments
  - Step One: Make an appointment to meet with a Writing Consultant
  - Step Two: Revise your work using the Writing Consultant’s recommendations
- Help with research assignments
Step One: Bring your research assignment guidelines to the CWE Library (Room 7-28) and ask the librarian for guidance on how to search academic sources (e.g., databases of scholarly journals). One of your first information literacy tasks is to learn the difference between scholarly and popular sources.

What should I do if I feel lost or “in over my head”?

- It is normal to experience feelings like this, especially if you have been away from school for a while.
  - Step One: Remember that (1) transferring to a new college is a transition; (2) transferring from a community college to a four-year college is a major transition; (3) many students struggle to adjust during their first semester at a new college, and (4) you are not alone.
  - Step Two: Schedule an appointment with your academic advisor. He or she will often give you a fresh perspective and encouragement. If you feel lost in a course, you should also meet with the professor so you can figure out how you are really doing in the course.
  - Step Three: Consider making an appointment for counseling services. CWE offers free, confidential counseling services to students. Counseling may be appropriate if you are experiencing ongoing stress, anxiety, depression, adjustment issues or other problems and concerns that affect your well-being. You can schedule an appointment at the Front Desk or by calling 212-925-6625, ext. 241 or ext. 0
  - Step Four: If you have fallen too far behind with your assignments or missed too many classes, meet with your academic advisor to discuss official withdrawal from a course. A “W” grade carries no academic penalty (a “WU” or “F” grade=0 in your GPA). THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10 IS THE LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM A COURSE WITH A “W” GRADE.

How can I get help with technology?

- Robert Hernandez, CWE IT Coordinator (robert@ccny.cuny.edu; 212-925-6625 ext. 262) and his assistants can help you with
  - Setting up your Citymail account
  - Blackboard
  - CUNYfirst

Are there computers available for student to use?

- Computer Lab, Room 7-54
- Library, Room 7-28

I am a student with a disability. Is there a Disabilities Services office at CWE?

- Students who attend CWE and are interested in receiving academic accommodations can contact the City College AccessAbility Center/Student Disability Services Office via:
  - Telephone: 212-650-5913
  - TTY/TTD: 212-650-6910
Email: disabilityservices@ccny.cuny.edu
You will be required to make a one-time visit to the AAC/SDS office to formally register: North Academic Center, Room 1/218, Convent Avenue and 138th Street.
You can visit the AAC/SDS website to learn more about how to register and to access the Intake Form: ccny.cuny.edu/accessability/register
Deborah Edwards-Anderson is the AAC/SDS Liaison at CWE; you should contact her soon after you receive notification of your academic accommodations: edwa@ccny.cuny.edu; 212-925-6625 ext. 235.

What kind of student services are available to me at CWE since it is a satellite campus of City College?

- Working in collaboration with key student services staff from both CWE and the main campus, CWE Student Affairs provides access to quality support services that respond to the out-of-classroom needs of the CWE student and alumnus. These services include:
  - Career Advisement: Through individual appointments and workshops, the office helps students to clarify goals and identify pathways to more meaningful and satisfying careers. Attention is also placed on developing career knowledge, skills and competencies critical to professional success.
  - Graduate School Preparation: The office provides one-on-one support and guidance to students thinking about graduate studies. Workshops include: Admissions Preparation, Writing the Personal Statement.
  - Events Acknowledging Excellence: Student Affairs oversees Latin Honors Ceremony and has established a local chapter of Alpha Sigma lambda, the national honors society for adult learners.
  - Scholarships & Awards: CWE students are provided information and assistance in identifying and applying for numerous scholarships offered by CWE and the college. The Office offers one-on-one guidance and information sessions.
  - Emergency Grants and Loans: The office provides information about emergency loans and grants to students seeking tuition assistance.
  - Senior Year Programming: Student Affairs sponsors a Senior Orientation for graduating students in the fall semester. The Orientation provides important information about graduation
requirements and protocols as well as events such as Graduate Salute. SA also offers support services to ensure a smooth transition to career-community-graduate study.

- Civic Engagement:
  To promote awareness of and opportunities to make a difference, develop skills and values toward “purposeful engagement”, Student Affairs provides opportunities to contribute and learn through volunteering and participation in special events.

You may contact Sophia Demetriou, Executive Director for Student Affairs directly at 212-925-6625 ext. 201 or sdemetriou@ccny.cuny.edu

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY IN THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

**What’s the best way to approach my professor if I need to talk to her/him?**

Professors who teach in the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies (CWE) are committed to supporting their students. If a professor has office hours (as indicated on your syllabus), this is an ideal time to stop by and chat. If your professor does not have office hours, consider approaching him or her during your class break to talk or to schedule a conversation at another time. **Reserving your time is always a good practice to ensure you get what you need.** Stopping your professor to talk in the hallway may seem convenient, but it’s not private, may not be the best time, and isn’t conducive to relaxed, thoughtful communication.

**How should I contact my academic advisor?**

Advisors are usually in their offices from Monday through Friday. You can call the Front Desk to schedule a 30-minute appointment with your advisor. Since advisors are members of the College professional staff, they are also responsible for many other aspects of running the Division at CWE, so making an appointment is highly recommended. Walk-in appointments are sometimes available, but always stop at the Front Desk to check first.

**Can I contact my professors and academic advisor by email?**

Yes, and many professors and academic advisors actually prefer to use email because it provides an automatic paper trail for your communication. **You are required to use Citymail for correspondence with your professors, academic advisor, and other CWE staff.** You can usually expect a response to your email within 48 hours. If you don’t get a response in this time frame, you can resend your email, call your professor, or stop by his or her office during office hours.
Keep in mind that the college environment is more formal than “everyday life,” and your communication style is expected to shift accordingly. This is especially so in your email correspondence. Where you might address a friend or family member with “Hey,” you should never do so with your professor or any college staff member. Use “Dear ________” as your salutation. Use titles (e.g. Dean, Professor, Dr., Ms., Mr.) until you are signaled to use first names. Always sign your emails, and do not use the abbreviations or emoticons you would use in a text. Your emails are a form of business correspondence and you should try your best to write with thoughtfulness and emotional restraint.

Finally, accept that email works well for some tasks and less well for others. Email cannot convey the non-verbal cues that help us to understand each other better. There are some conversations that simply work best in a face-to-face environment.

How do I make appointments with an advisor, the Writing Center, the math or Spanish tutor, or counseling services?

You can either stop by the Front Desk to make your appointment in person, or you can call 212-925-6625 ext. 241 or ext. 0.

We ask that you approach the Front Desk staff with patience and kindness, especially during the hour before classes begin when many of you need to schedule appointments. The Front Desk staff is trained and committed to assisting you, but each of them can only assist one person at a time.

What should I do if I receive a grade I feel is unfair?

Your first step will always be to communicate with the professor who graded you. Whenever possible, arrange to have a face-to-face conversation. Try to approach the conversation with an open mind and in a cool emotional state. Prepare for your conversation by reviewing (1) the course expectations as outlined on your syllabus, (2) the assignments you submitted and the grades you received for them, (3) any grading rubrics given by the professor, and (4) your attendance in the course. Regard your meeting with your professor as a learning opportunity—you may receive valuable feedback that will help you develop as a learner and scholar.

If you are not satisfied with your professor’s explanation for your grade, your next step will be to schedule a meeting with the IAS Department Chair, Professor Kathy McDonald (kmcdonald@ccny.cuny.edu; 212-925-6625 ext. 265). You should prepare for this meeting with the same review process you used before meeting with your professor. Be prepared to give a clear, well-reasoned explanation of why you disagree with the grade you earned.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your meeting with the Department Chair, only then would you schedule a meeting with Dean Juan Mercado. You can schedule your meeting with the Dean by contacting his assistant, Kyana Herrera (kherrera@ccny.cuny.edu; 212-925-6625
ext. 247). Dean Mercado also publishes his schedule of open office hours at the beginning of every semester, and copies will be available at the Front Desk and in the Faculty/Staff Office Suite (Rooms 7-58 to 7-69).

We hope this Student Guide answers most of your questions. Please send your feedback and additional questions to Deborah Edwards-Anderson, New Student Orientation Coordinator (edwa@ccny.cuny.edu; 212-925-6625 ext. 235). Congratulations on your admission to the City College of New York, and welcome to the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies at CWE! We wish you a rewarding first semester!

~Dean Mercado, Department Chair McDonald, and the Faculty and Staff of CWE