

Tips for Registering for and Succeeding in College Classes



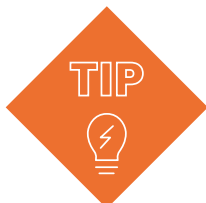
Research your professors.

Read student reviews on ratemyprofessors.com to learn more about professors and find those who match your learning style.

Understand unit load.

The chart below explains how much time you are expected to commit to your academics based on your unit load. Consider any additional demands or responsibilities, like work or children, when selecting your course load.

Unit (Course) Load	Lecture / Class Time <i>(instructional time spent in class)</i>	Study Time <i>(e.g., reading, reviewing notes, writing essays, studying for exams, etc.)</i>	Total Academic Time Per Week
1 unit	1 hour	2-3 hours	3-4 hours
3 units = about 1 class (part time)	3 hours	6-9 hours	9-12 hours
6 units = about 2 classes (half-time)	6 hours	12-18 hours	18-24 hours
12 units = about 4 classes (full-time)	12 hours	24-36 hours	36-48 hours
15 units = about 5 classes (full-time)	15 hours	30-45 hours	45-60 hours



Unit load impacts financial aid. Students enrolled in fewer than 12 units will receive less money.

There's more than one way to be a full-time student at a community college.

- ◆ Though taking at least 12 units is considered full-time for financial aid, students must take at least 15 units per semester (or attend summer school) to graduate with an associate degree within two years. Here are some options:
 - A **“traditional”** schedule has four to five classes that meet throughout the whole term.
 - A **“staggered”** schedule has different start and end dates for courses throughout the semester.
 - A **“stacked”** schedule has two classes starting at the beginning of the term and two at the middle of the term.
- ◆ Students eligible for disability services may qualify for a reduced course load which allows them to take fewer classes and remain eligible for programs like EOPS or College Promise Programs that normally require full-time enrollment.

Student Academic Portals, Course Syllabi, and Attendance Policies

- ◆ **Check your academic portal often to view your course syllabi and other important course information** (e.g., Canvas, Blackboard). You should begin checking your academic portal two to five days in advance of the start of a class to ensure that you are prepared for the first day of class.
- ◆ **Review your course syllabi and ask questions as needed.** Students are expected to read the course syllabi carefully and take responsibility for attendance and assignment deadlines. A student who says “I did not know” will often be referred back to the course syllabus.
- ◆ **Review your class attendance policies.** Missing too many classes can result in being dropped from the class, which can also impact financial aid and academic standing. If you are experiencing personal hardship that is making it hard to meet the class policies, talk to your professors.

Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress

A student needs to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue receiving financial aid. Key steps to maintain SAP are:

- ◆ **Do not drop classes without speaking with both an academic and financial aid counselor.** Students typically need to complete 67% of the units they enroll in. For example, if a student enrolls in 12 units, they need to pass at least eight units.
- ◆ **Pass classes with a C or higher.** You need to maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher to keep most financial aid.
- ◆ **Take classes that are approved on your education plan.** Students must complete their program within 150% of the published time frame. For example, if it takes 60 units to complete an associate degree, a student cannot take more than 90 units to complete the degree.

See the *Financial Aid Guide for CA Foster Youth* for more tips on maintaining financial aid at jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/.



Student Spotlight:
Understanding Satisfactory Academic Progress

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