

UNIT I “Finding Your Way at Hinds Community College”

Topics to be covered in Unit I are:

1. The Attendance-Withdrawal Policy
2. The Refund Policy
3. The Procedure for Changing Schedules
4. The Advising System
5. The Identification Card
6. ACT Scores
7. E-mail address, HCC Debit Card, Blackboard, and My.Hinds
8. Appeal and Grievance Procedure
9. Dress Code
10. Non-discrimination Statement
11. Disability Support Statement.

The Attendance-Withdrawal Policy

Attendance

Attendance in class is a key factor of your success in college. The following policies apply to regular academic, technical, and career credit programs, including Distance Learning (online) courses. It does not apply to non-credit or continuing education activities. Some programs in nursing and allied health programs, career fields, or non-credit programs require different attendance policies which must be followed, and those will be stated in the departmental regulations for the individual program of study.

All instructors will take roll at each class meeting and will maintain an attendance record for each student. Attendance is recorded beginning the first day of the course or the first day a student registers for the course. **The student is responsible for completing all work in the course and must attend 80% of the meetings in each course in order to receive credit for a course.** For Distance learning courses, students must participate in a minimum of 80% of the activities assigned by the instructor in order to receive credit for the course. Students should be aware that beginning with the Fall term of 2011, class attendance will be used as one factor in determining the release of the balance of financial aid.

Students who do not appear for the first class meeting will be turned in as a “No Show” for the semester and will be required to take the course during another semester. Students who have not appeared in class by the second class meeting will not be allowed to remain in the class for the term and will have to take the class during another term. A passing grade in Orientation is a requirement for receiving any degree from Hinds Community College.

Tardies

Failure to report to class at the beginning of the class period equals a tardy. Three “tardies” equal one absence in the regular 3-hour class. Students who miss more than fifteen (15) minutes of the class will be marked absent. A student who leaves the classroom without the instructor’s permission will be marked absent. **[In my class, if you are not here when I call the roll, give out or take up an assignment, or hand out your test, I consider you to be ABSENT!]** Be sure that you are familiar with each teacher’s policy regarding the use of the “tardy”.

Excused Absences

Hinds Community College recognizes two types of excused absences: those for **personal emergencies** and those for **official school activities**. A student **is** allowed to make up the work for excused absences. Student absences may be excused by the instructor for personal emergencies such as illness, death in the student’s immediate family, or for other valid unavoidable circumstances. **It is the student’s responsibility to inform all instructors when absences are due to personal emergency.** Instructors may require written documentation such as verification of illness on a physician’s letterhead. Be sure that you are familiar with the policy of each of your instructors. **[I require documentation.]**

Official absences are those resulting from a student participating in important activities officially sponsored by the College. Students will be provided with an official absence notice by the proper college official. **It is the student’s responsibility to show the instructor the Verification of Official Absence form or letter.** A student will be allowed to make up the class or laboratory work that was missed during an official absence.

Unexcused Absences

All absences not due to personal emergency or official school activities are unexcused. Students who are absent from a final exam without the approval of the instructor will receive a course grade of “F.”

Excessive Unexcused Absences

A teacher will send a *Notice of Absence* when a student has excessive absences if the student has not provided official absences or notices of personal emergency to the instructor. For Distance Learning courses, a notice will be sent from the instructor to the student via e-mail. Excessive unexcused absences are defined as follows:

1. Fall and spring semesters—day or evening class—after the number of times that the class meets in one week plus one, based on a full semester length course. **[Remember that a course such as College Orientation that meets for half the regular semester has a reduced number of allowed absences.]**
2. Distance Learning courses during any term— when the student has two (2) absences for spring or fall term; 1 (one) absence for summer term.
3. Four-week term—after two absences.
Eight week term—after four absences
4. Summer session-evening class-- evening classes, after two (2) absences.

5. Career block— full fall and spring semesters -three (3) days of absences. Four week term - after two (2) days of absences. Eight week term -after three (3) days of absences.

Notice of Absence Procedure

All instructors will take roll at each class meeting and will maintain a daily attendance record on each student. For Distance Learning courses, attendance will be recorded beginning the first day of the course or the first day the student registers for the course. A *Notice of Absence* will be sent to the student via the student's **school** e-mail address when the student has missed the allowed number of absences for the class minus one. **Students MUST activate their Hinds CC e-mail address as failure to activate the school e-mail address does NOT excuse the student from complying with the notice.**

- A **NOTICE OF ABSENCE** may be sent at any time the instructor becomes concerned about a student's attendance.
- A **NOTICE OF ABSENCE** **must** be sent to the student by the instructor when the student has accumulated the number of unexcused absences outlined above.
- A **NOTICE OF ABSENCE** requires the student to contact the instructor immediately to discuss the following options:
 1. Return to the class.
 2. Withdraw from the class with a 'W' during the withdrawal period if all fees are paid.
 3. Withdraw from all classes on dates listed in the College Calendar if all fees are paid (See counselor in Counseling Office).
 4. Be dropped from class with a grade of 'F.'

If the student fails to contact the instructor within the number of calendar days* of the send date of the NOTICE OF ABSENCE as specified below, he/she may be dropped from class with a grade of 'F.'

1. Fall and Spring full-term classes - seven (7) calendar days.
2. Distance Learning Classes - seven (7) calendar days.
3. Summer session four week classes - three (3) calendar days.
4. Eight-week classes (all terms, day and evening) - four (4) calendar days.

The Office of Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs is notified of the assigned 'F' and the last date of attendance for any student receiving Financial Aid or Veterans Benefits and who has earned an 'F' for excessive absences.

Notes:

1. Withdrawal from a class or from school is permitted only during specific time periods during a term. See the calendar.
2. * "Calendar days" do not include school holidays but do include normal two-day weekends.

Note: Failure to notify the instructor within the time period stated on the notice will result in the student being dropped from the class with a grade of "F."

Withdrawal from a Course

Before considering withdrawing from a course, a student should be aware of the following:

1. Students on Financial Aid, Veterans Benefits, Scholarship, or Guaranteed Student Loans should know that dropping a course may lower their benefits, stop their benefits, or cause them to have to immediately start repaying their loan.
2. Students must maintain full-time enrollment (12 hours during the fall and spring semesters) to live in a campus residence hall. During the summer the requirement is three (3) semester hours per summer term.
3. Students who owe the college money for any reason will not be allowed to withdraw.
4. Students withdrawing from either a lecture or a laboratory course must usually withdraw from both at the same time except during the last week of the withdrawal period. (Biology courses are excluded from this requirement.)

Withdrawal dates for each type of class are listed in each year's *Catalog* and on the Hinds web site. The student's teacher can also provide this information to the student.

When a student replaces one course with another course during the Drop/Add period at the beginning of each term, the original course will be removed from the student's record. If the College cancels a course, the course will be removed from the student's record. **Other than during the Drop/Add period and MSVCC courses, a student completes a single course withdrawal on My.Hinds.** Students may withdraw from class and receive a grade as stated below. The times a student may withdraw are also listed below.

1. Fall and spring day and evening regular classes- A student cannot withdraw from a class from the second week of school through mid-term **except** by totally withdrawing from school. A student may withdraw from a class from the start of the eighth week until 7 calendar days before the first day of the final exam schedule. The First Warning Notice and the Notice of Absence may be sent until ten (10) calendar days before the start of the final exam schedule. The Drop for Excessive Absences Notice may be processed until three (3) calendar days before the start of the final exam schedule.
2. Distance Learning—(All terms)- A student's record of performance begins the first day of the course or the first day the student registers for the course. Students may begin to withdraw from on-line courses beginning the day after Drop/Add until the last day to withdraw as listed on the Mississippi Virtual Community College calendar. Notices of excessive absences are emailed to the student's college-provided account up to seven (7) days prior to the last day to withdraw.
3. Summer session four week- A student's record of performance begins with the third scheduled class meeting. After the two-day drop/add period, a student cannot withdraw from a class until the 12th class meeting except by withdrawing from school. A student may withdraw from a class beginning with the twelfth class meeting and until three calendar days before the final exam day. The First Warning Notice and the Notice of Absence may be sent until six (6) calendar days before the final exam day. The Drop for Excessive Absences Notice may be processed until three (3) calendar days before the final exam day.

4. Eight week Classes (all terms, day and evening)- A student's record of performance begins with the third scheduled class meeting. After the drop-add period, a student cannot withdraw from a class until the start of the fifth week of the term except by withdrawing from school. A student may withdraw from a class beginning with the fifth week until three (3) calendar days before the start of the final exam schedule. The First Warning Notice and the Notice of Absence may be sent until seven (7) calendar days before the start of the final exam schedule. The Drop for Excessive Absences notice may be processed until three (3) calendar days before the start of the final exam schedule. See note below.

NOTE: If a Drop for Excessive Absences has been initiated by the instructor prior to the student's request for withdrawal, a grade of 'F' will be assigned; otherwise, a grade of 'W' will be assigned when the withdrawal process is completed.

*Note: Calendar days do not include school holidays but **do** include regular two-day weekends.*

Withdrawal from the College

To withdraw from the College at any time prior to five (5) working days before the first day of final exams for day/evening classes during a regular semester (three [3] days during the summer), a student must contact a counselor who will initiate the withdrawal. Students in Distance Learning courses must contact a counselor to initiate the withdrawal by the date designated on the MSVCC calendar. The grade at the time of withdrawal from the College will be "W" in all classes in which the student has not been dropped with an "F" for excessive absences. It is the responsibility of the student to complete and return the Withdrawal Form to the Counseling Office within twenty-four (24) hours. **Any grades already earned at the time of withdrawal will remain on the transcript.** For example, if a student withdraws after mid-term but has already earned a grade in an 8-week course like Orientation or a *Fast-Track* course, that grade will remain even though the student is totally withdrawing from the college. If no grades have been posted at the time of withdrawal, the student will receive the grade of "W" in each of his/her classes.

Prior to the start of a term, students wishing to officially withdraw will not be liable for fees (other than nonrefundable fees). Students who have paid tuition can use their My.Hinds account to remove themselves from all classes.

Note: Students must withdraw before the first day of classes to receive a 100% refund.

The Refund Policy

Students having made prior payment will be refunded the amount paid less their liability (the amount owed) after the withdrawal. Students suspended for disciplinary reasons are not eligible for refunds or reductions in liability. Refunds will be applied to any outstanding obligations and to any scholarship, grant, or loan received for the semester. The refund policy is as follows:

Tuition and Fees:

- 100% refund if complete withdrawal is initiated during the first week of Traditional/MSVCC courses.*
- 50% refund if complete withdrawal is initiated during the second week of Traditional/MSVCC courses.*

*If a student is taking a combination of Traditional and MSVCC classes, the full refund is given during the first week of Traditional classes, with a 50% refund given during the second week of Traditional classes.

Housing Fees:

- 75% refund before the sixth calendar day after Traditional classes begin
- 50% refund before the eleventh calendar day after Traditional classes begin

Meal Plans:

- Students withdrawing from residence halls during the semester may be refunded all full weeks remaining on the meal ticket period upon properly checking out of the residence halls.

Students who are attending the college on Pell Grants, student loans, Veterans programs, or other assistance programs should read the refund policies listed in the current college *Catalog*. There is a refund policy listed in the catalog that relates to students who are activated to military service while attending the college.

The Policy for Changing Schedules

During the fall and spring semesters, the day student has one full week after the week of Open Registration to make changes to his schedule (the Drop/Add period). Changes can be made in the Counseling Office or in My.Hinds. There is no fee for schedule changes. There is no record of performance in classes which the student drops during the Drop/Add week. Students **are** responsible for making up any work they may miss in a class they add during the drop/add process. The summer semesters has a shorter drop /add period. Dates for dropping and adding classes will be listed in the online College Catalog. The drop/add policy for students enrolled in a distance learning course will be outlined in the information provided by the Distance Learning Office.

The Advising System

Academic counselors and career-technical counselors are available to assist students in course selection and educational planning. Students should seek course advisement through the counseling office. A student may also choose to be advised by an instructor in his/her major field of study.

Each student seeking credit through Hinds Community College must indicate an intended major field of study on the initial application for admission and will be asked to indicate his major and educational intent at each future advising session. If the advisor does not ask for the student's major and intent, the student should take the initiative to tell the advisor. Changing one's major without informing the advisor can cause the advisor to assign the wrong courses to the student. So, be sure you and the advisor are "on the same page" during each advising session. A student who wants to change his college program or major should do so with the help of a college advisor. There is no official "Change of Major" form that must be

completed when a student changes his major; however, the major change can only happen at the time of the next registration period when the student meets with his advisor. Students who are attending school under Veterans Benefits must have their major changes approved by a counselor and with VA approval or they may lose their VA benefits.

Beginning with the summer of 2009, only those students who are registering for their first semester of coursework must see an advisor. After that, advising is an option. Students are encouraged to see an advisor anytime they would like assistance with course selection.

The Identification Card

All students, faculty, and staff are required to wear college-issued identification cards while on the campus. An ID card is issued to each student as a part of the registration process. While there is no charge for the first card, there is a \$10 replacement cost for a lost, stolen, or missing ID card. The ID card must be given to any College official when requested. **The ID card must be worn on a visible location on the student's person [not on a book-bag or under one's clothing] at all times when on college property.** See the *Student Handbook* for more information about the ID card.

ACT Scores

Hinds Community College uses ACT, SAT, or Compass test scores to place students in the right courses. If a student is dissatisfied with his course placement based on his ACT scores, he may sit for the Compass placement test one time before courses are assigned. He should contact the Counseling Office at the campus he is attending for information about doing this. Hinds offers both the national ACT and the Residual ACT. Information about registering for the national test can be secured from any Counseling Office or by visiting www.actstudent.org. National ACT scores may be transferred to other colleges. The Residual ACT is given at each campus of the college on specific dates. Information about entrance and placement tests is available in the current college catalog. **Students should be aware that Hinds Community College awards ACT scholarships to first time entering full-time freshmen only. Summer school enrollment prior to the freshman year and dual enrollment classes do not affect this rule. Once a student loses his ACT scholarship, he may not receive another one.**

Students who enrolled in the college because their ACT scores did not meet eligibility requirements for them to enroll initially at a senior college need to take and pass a 30-hour core established by the Institutions of Higher Learning before they will be eligible to transfer to a state university. That core includes Composition I and II, College Algebra, two laboratory science courses, nine hours of Humanities and Fine Arts and 6 hours of Social Behavioral Sciences. Electives may **not** include developmental courses.

Most Mississippi senior colleges and universities do not award ACT scholarships to transfer students, only first-time entering freshmen. Therefore, unless a student wants to enroll in a nursing program at a state supported senior college or in one of the Hinds CC programs which require a minimum ACT score, there is usually no reason for him to re-take the ACT to try to improve his score. Senior college and university scholarships for transfer students are usually awarded on grades earned at the community college.

Because of privacy laws, personnel at the college are not allowed to give out ACT scores over the phone.

E-Mail Address

The College requires that all students have an active e-mail address, and it must be the one assigned by the college. To activate your college e-mail address, go to <http://www.hindscc.edu/online> and follow the directions on the screen. Your e-mail address will be your first name, then a period, then your last name, then the last 5 digits of your student id number followed by @go.hindscc.edu. For example, if your name is John Smith, and your id number is 1234567, your e-mail address would be: john.smith34567@go.hindscc.edu. Get this done as soon as possible, as the college will only communicate with you through your official college e-mail address. For issues relating to the Go.Hinds e-mail accounts, contact the HCC Support Center at 601-857-3344.

Debit Card

Students are also required to activate their *Easy Refund* card. An *Easy Refund* is a same day deposit of any refund money you might have coming from the college. The college will send your *Easy Refund* card to you through the mailing address you have on file at the college. It is VERY IMPORTANT that the address you have listed with the college is accurate. To activate your card, go to www.HindsDebitCard.com and choose the *Easy Refund* option. There is no charge to you for using this service. Money may also be credited to your card from outside sources. Your card can be used like any other debit card. Students who lose their *Easy Refund* Card will be required to pay a \$20 replacement fee.

Canvas

Students must also learn to sign-in to the Canvas system, as many of your teachers will post your assignments there. **Check there for your weekly assignments in this Orientation class.** To sign-in to Canvas, utilize the following information: User name will be the first initial of your last name plus the 7 digits of your Hinds identification number. Your password will be your first and last initials (capitalized) plus your 6 digit birthday plus the \$ sign. If a student named John Smith, his sign-in would be S1234567 and JS010192\$. For Canvas technical support, contact the Online Support Center at 601-857-3344. All information regarding this Orientation class will be posted on your Canvas page. **Assignments for this class are posted at 10:00 a.m. following the current class and will remain on the Canvas until 8:00 a.m. before the next scheduled class. They will be unavailable to the student after the posted times.**

My.Hinds

Students must also learn to sign-in to the My.Hinds system. That location will allow you to check your grades, your account, your address, etc. To sign-in to that system, utilize your first initial plus your last name plus your 7 digit Hinds ID number. Your password will be your 6 digit birthday. For John Smith, his sign-in would be jsmith1234567 and his 6 digit birthday. For My.Hinds support, contact the Admissions Office at 601-857-3212.

Appeal/Grievance Procedure (Spring 2010)

Concerns not related to instruction:

If a student has a general question or concern that is not related to the classroom, he/she may make a written complaint which must include all pertinent information to the Dean of Students or the operating Dean at the location he/she attends. The College *Due Process* steps will be followed.

Informal concern pertaining to instruction:

Students have a right to appeal any college decision that they believe to have an adverse effect on their pursuit of an education or participation in college programs. If a student has a specific concern about the classroom management or program procedures/guidelines, the following steps should be taken at the campus the student attends:

1. The student, in most cases except for sexual harassment, should discuss the concern with the person the grievance is addressing, the person closest to the situation. If the student has a concern about an e-learning course, he/she should e-mail the instructor or contact the Distance Learning department by e-mail at distancelearning@hindsgcc.edu.
2. If the issue is not resolved, the student should ask to meet jointly with the person the grievance is addressing and the Program Director/Department Chairperson. If the concern is still not resolved, a formal grievance may be made in writing to the appropriate instructional Dean and/or operating Dean.

Formal grievance related to instruction:

3. The instructional Dean and/or operating Dean will confirm that the student has followed the appropriate chain of command which is: student to faculty member to program director or chairperson to District Director (if applicable) to e-learning Dean (if involving a distance learning course) to Assistant Instructional Dean to Instructional Dean.
4. The Assistant Dean of Instruction and/or Dean of Instruction will provide a written review of the complaint.
5. If the issue is still not resolved after the previous steps have been completed, the student may request a formal hearing before the local Student Affairs Committee. The Committee chairperson will respond to the request for a formal hearing within three (3) working days of the written request to set a time for the hearing.
6. If the issue is still not resolved, the student may request the written appeal to be forwarded to the next level, the District Appeals Committee. In the event new information is introduced, it must be reviewed by the local committee in order to be included in the appeal. In all cases, the appeal process will assure due process for both the student and the instructor. The District Dean of Students will administer the process and communicate the findings of the committee. In the event that the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the committee's decision, an appeal may be made first to the campus vice-president and then to the college president.

The form for filing a letter of grievance is located on the Hinds website.

Dress Code (Spring 2010)

Students, faculty, staff and guests of Hinds Community College shall dress in a manner appropriate for an institution of higher learning. Clothing that is in any way controversial, provocative, and/or revealing shall not be worn. If poor judgment is exercised in the manner of dress or grooming, students, faculty, staff and guests may be asked by any college official to leave the campus. Punitive actions may be imposed for the violation.

**Teacher interjection. Some of the types of clothing to which this policy refers include items of clothing that depict sexist or racist messages, clothing that is revealing of private body parts or underclothing, clothing designed as nightwear but which is being worn publicly (pajamas, house slippers, curlers, etc.), or clothing which is excessively "torn."*

Non-discrimination Statement

Hinds Community College offers equal educational and employment opportunities and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability or veteran status in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Dr. Debra Mays-Jackson, Vice President for Administrative and Student Services, 34175 Hwy. 18, Utica, MS 39175; 601-885-7001.

Disability Support Services Statement

Hinds Community College provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Disability Services staff members verify eligibility for accommodations and work with eligible students who have self-identified and provided current documentation. Students with disabilities should schedule an appointment with the designated Disability Services staff member on his/her respective campus to establish a plan for reasonable and appropriate classroom accommodations. For a full list of contact information for each Hinds campus, visit <http://www.hindscc.edu/compliance/Default.aspx>.