

ECC FAQs (2008-2009)

Where is El Centro?

We are located at 801 Main Street, on the corner of Main and Lamar Streets. We're half a block from the DART West End Light Rail station. Our campus is easily accessible from all major highways. As a reference point, the college is one block from the West End, and just across Lamar Street from the Bank of America building.

Where can I park?

Paid parking lots are located close to the campus and in the West End with prices ranging from \$4-\$7 a day. Parking meters circle the campus on Main, Elm and Market streets.

I don't have a car. Is there any other way for me to get to El Centro?

Yes. DART trains and buses serve the El Centro downtown campus. To make our downtown location more accessible to students, the Dallas County Community College system has partnered with DART to provide free transit passes to students attending El Centro. DART bus and rail passes are available to students who qualify by taking six or more credit hours in the fall and spring semesters and three or more credit hours during the summer sessions at El Centro. DART is also available to continuing education students enrolled in at least 96 contact hours in a single quarter and 48 in the summer quarter at El Centro. Students who qualify can ride a DART bus or light rail free anytime and anywhere during the semester or session in which you are enrolled.

Where is the nearest DART bus/rail stop?

The DART West End station is one half-block north of El Centro between Market and Pacific streets and Lamar and Pacific streets. DART bus stops are located near the campus. Call **DART** at **214-979-1111** for schedule and route information.

When and where do I get my DART pass?

DART free stickers are distributed to eligible credit students beginning on the 13th class day of the fall and spring semesters. Stickers are also available for eligible students for the Summer I and Summer II terms on the fourth class day. Continuing Education students receive their passes after the third class day. For time and location, call the cashier's office at 214-860-2048.

Students must have a valid student ID with an updated validation sticker that can be obtained from the SPAR department. Students taking 6 or more credit hours in the fall or spring semesters or 3 or more hours in the summer semester at El Centro are eligible for the free sticker. Students enrolled in 96 contact hours in Continuing Education classes in a single quarter and 48 in the 4th quarter, are also eligible for the free DART sticker. DART stickers are valid for all DART rail and bus services anytime during the current semester.

Registration

When can I register?

Registration is held at certain periods of the year in the Advising Center, room A110. Students may register from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday. Students who are eligible to self-register may do so online through eConnect on the college web site at www.elcentrocollege.edu

Please check the current class schedule for registration dates and tuition payment deadlines. Current payment deadlines will be printed on your registration summary. You will be dropped from all classes if your tuition is not paid by the due date.

When you register, you must bring your driver's license, all college entrance test scores (SAT, ACT, TSI, etc.) and transcripts from previous colleges you attended.

Continuing Education registration occurs on the 2nd floor (room A260) from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

Where do I pay my tuition?

You can pay your tuition at the cashier's window on the second floor of Building A (across from the Health Center and the Continuing Education department). Eligible students may also pay online through eConnect.

Where do I get a printout of my classes and/or my tuition receipt?

Credit Students - printouts are available at the Registrar's Office located on the 1st floor of Building A (room A260). For Continuing Education students, printouts are available at the Continuing Education window located on the 2nd floor of Building A. Students may also print their receipt on eConnect.

When is my tuition payment due during registration?

Your payment deadline is printed on your registration summary that you get when you register. Your registration will be voided if not paid by this date and you will be dropped from all classes. You will not be guaranteed reinstatement if your payment is not made by the specific deadline.

Continuing Education courses must be paid in full at the time of enrollment and do not qualify for the installment plan. Continuing Education refunds are as follows: 100% refund if course is dropped prior to the first day, and 80% refund if dropped prior to close of business on the second class day. View the CE tuition policy at

<http://www.dccd.edu/Continuing+Education/Paying+for+College/Refunds.htm>

What if I don't have enough money to pay for my tuition?

Credit students may elect to pay tuition on an installment payment plan. The installment payment plan requires:

- 50% of tuition to be paid prior to 1st class day.
- 25% of tuition to be paid prior to 6th class week.
- 25% of tuition to be paid prior to 11th class week.

A non-refundable charge of \$15 will be assessed to establish the installment plan.

This option is only available through the last Saturday before classes begin and is not available after the first class day. Installment payment plans are now available through eConnect.

How do I apply for financial aid?

Students wishing to apply for any type of financial aid for the upcoming or current school year should go to www.fafsa.ed.gov and complete the appropriate Free Application for Federal Student Aid form. You will need a copy of your prior year tax forms and possibly your parents' forms as well. The entire process may take 3-4 weeks to complete from application through verification (if required). Regardless of the type of aid expected, it is always the student's responsibility to make sure tuition and fees are paid on or before the due date. Students with questions are encouraged to visit the Financial Aid Office or contact us at 214-860-2099.

Classes

Who do I talk to about scheduling my classes?

Academic advisors are available on a walk-in basis (room A110) from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday. The advisor for the Continuing/Workforce Education department is in room A251.

You can pick up a copy of the credit and continuing education class schedules on the display shelves around campus or go online to view current schedules at <http://www.elcentrocollege.edu/AdmissionsEnrollment/Schedule/default.asp>

What can I do if I need to drop or add a course or change my schedule?

You must see an academic advisor in the Advising Center (room A110) to add/drop a course or make a schedule change. After classes begin, you should obtain your instructor's signature or the appropriate Dean's signature on a "Drop Form" in order to withdraw from the class. Please see the current credit schedule for more information on add/drop procedure refunds and schedule changes.

Where can I get tutoring?

Tutoring is available in the Learning Center (room A350) on the third floor of Building A. Services range from self-paced, audio/visual reviews to drop-in tutoring for subjects. One-on-one study skills and coaching are available. The Learning Center serves every student who wants good grades.

What is the difference between a certificate and an associate degree?

A certificate program consists of 15 or more credit hours of particular courses that are required for certification in a particular area. An associate degree program requires at least 60 credit hours of prescribed course work. A full-time student (12 hours per semester) can complete a certificate program in one year or less and an associate degree program in two years.

Other degree programs may differ in the amount of credit hours and time frame such as the nursing program. Students interested in the credit Health Occupations programs should call the Health Occ/Admissions office at 214-860-2272 or stop by room A140 and attend an orientation.

What are credit hours?

Credit hours are units earned upon successful completion of course work.

What is a prerequisite?

A prerequisite is a course requirement or skill that must be fulfilled before enrolling in an accredited program or in a course. Example: English 1301 is a prerequisite to English 1302. A basic understanding of computers and operating systems is a prerequisite enrollment to a CISCO I course, ITCC 1402.

How many hours do I need to take to be considered a full-time student?

You must take at least 12 credit hours in each fall and spring semester and at least 6 credit hours during a summer session to be a full-time student. It is against THECB regulations to take a total of 12 credit hours each during May Term and Summer sessions. Students on financial aid must take a total of 6 credit hours during the May Term and the first summer session, or just the first summer session, to receive financial aid in the summer. Students are not allowed to take 12 hours during May term and Summer sessions. The max for May term is three hours and the max for summer is seven hours.

Does El Centro offer Continuing Education classes?

Yes. El Centro offers Continuing Education classes if you need training programs or just wish to take a class for your own enrichment. You may visit our Continuing Education Office (room A260) on the second floor of Building A, or call 214-860-2147. You can pick up a copy of the Continuing/Workforce Education schedule on the display shelves around campus or you can view online at <http://www.elcentrocollege.edu/AdmissionsEnrollment/Schedule/default.asp>. Some credit classes may also be taken as non-credit classes.

What are Continuing Education CEU's

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is a nationally recognized means of recording, accounting and providing recognition in noncredit education activities. One CEU is defined as "10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction." A CEU certificate is given to each student successfully completing the requirements of the CEU- approved course. Duplicate certificates are available upon request through the Continuing/Workforce Education Registration Office for \$2.50.

I have a daytime job. Does El Centro offer night or weekend classes?

Yes. El Centro offers evening and weekend classes to accommodate your busy schedule. Evening classes are shaded in the credit class schedule. Some Saturday and Sunday classes are available if you prefer taking classes during the weekend.

Essentials

What is the TSI test?

The Texas Success Initiative or TSI, formerly known as TASP, is a body of Texas regulations designed to ensure that students have the academic skills to be successful in Texas colleges and that they receive appropriate remediation if needed. Toward this goal, the state has authorized several comprehensive assessment instruments that may be used to measure college-ready skills in students. The Dallas County Community College District primarily utilize, the Accuplacer Assessment to determine a student's current proficiency in reading comprehension, English writing composition and mathematics. In accordance with the State TSI standards, students who indicate a need for enhancement of these skills are provided credit academic support courses, known as developmental studies, to help them prepare for their college studies.

Where can I sign up to take the Accuplacer test?

You can take the Accuplacer at scheduled times in the Assessment Center (A152) in the first floor lobby in building A. You must have an authorization referral form signed by a counselor or academic advisor before you will be allowed to take the exam. See an Advisor in Room A10.

Where do I get my student ID?

You can get your student ID at the Student Programs and Resources Office (SPAR) in room B270 located on the second floor of building B. You must present your tuition fee receipt and photo ID to receive your student ID. Your student ID gives you access to the library and computer labs. A current student ID is required to receive your free DART pass. College IDs are available for both credit and Continuing Education students.

Where do I get my books?

You can buy all your class textbooks at Follett Bookstore, located at street level between buildings A and B. Some books can also be purchased on-line at www.efollett.com.

Where can I use a computer?

If you need quick access to a computer, you may use the computers located in the first floor of the Student Technology Center. If you need to work on a school project, paper or browse through the Internet, computer/Internet access is available to El Centro students in the college Computer Center (room A435), the Library (room B200) and the Learning Center (room A350). Many instructional departments have established their own computer labs for their students. Your instructor will give you information about departmental computer resources. Your student ID is required for computer access in these areas. Lab or office hours also vary in each area.

Student Life

Where do I eat?

El Centro's Subway restaurant is located on the first floor of Building B and is open Monday through Thursday from 7:15 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Friday from 7:15 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Prices are reasonable. Vending machines are also available in the Student Center.

If you are looking for a full-course meal, you can eat at the popular weekly luncheons hosted by students from the Food and Hospitality Service program each Thursday from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. throughout the semester in the Food Service Dining Room (room C100).

Luncheon tickets are \$12 per person and may be purchased at the cashier's window (room A244). A variety of downtown restaurants, cafes, delis and bakeries are also conveniently located near El Centro.

What activities are available for students?

Some events are held to coincide with ethnically diverse celebrations, such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month and International Day. Other student activities are planned throughout the school year.

You can find out about upcoming events or activities by picking up a copy of This Month at El Centro, the monthly calendar for students, or Nine Stories, a newsletter primarily for El Centro employees and a good source for recent campus news and events. Both issues are distributed on campus on a monthly basis. You can visit the SPAR office (room B270) or view our campus bulletin boards for information about upcoming student events. Our web site, www.elcentrocollege.edu, also contains student activities and event information, as do our electronic message boards in the Student Center.

Are there any clubs or organizations I can join?

Yes. You can choose from a list of at least 25 college-approved student organizations, such as the Student Government Association, the Organization of Latin American Students (OLAS), the Paralegal Association and the Student Nurses Association. Most organizations are open to all students. Others, such as Phi Theta Kappa, a national honor society, require special qualifications for membership. Visit the SPAR office (room B270) for more information on clubs or organizations.

Student Services

What other student services do you have for me?

El Centro provides services and programs for students with special needs. These areas include the Disabilities Services and TRIO program located on the first floor in the Counseling Office (A110). The Adult Resource Center (CM10, mezzanine of Building C, next to the Gym) assists single-parent students with economic need.

Rising Star, located in the building A basement, offers tuition and book assistance, tutoring, case management and field trips for low-income, high-performing high school graduates.

The International Center (CM60) in the Building C mezzanine provides services to students from other countries who must meet special admission requirements to study in the U.S.

Disability Services	214-860-2411
TRIO	214-860-2684
Adult Resource Center	214-860-2427
International Center	214-860-2090
Rising Star	214-860-2726
College Transition Center	214-860-2786
Welcome Center	214-860-2000

College Transition Center

The College Transition Center (CTC) is located in Building A in Room A007. The CTC provides the resources to aid ECC students in preparing and implementing a transfer plan so they can make a successful transition to a four year University. The CTC also provides specific information which is vital to students in completing transfer planning (transfer opportunities, scholarships, equivalency guides, requirements, dates and deadlines).

ECC CTC staff partners with University representatives and counselors to provide a resource for ECC students in order to facilitate the transfer process.

Where do I go if I lose something on campus or need help in an emergency?

You may report your lost items to Campus Police (room A047), located in the basement of Building A or call 214-860-2232. Any items found on campus are turned in to the Campus Police office. In order to prevent such problems from occurring, we advise you to keep your belongings with you at all times.

In case of an emergency, red phones are located on every floor near the elevators and in each classroom to enable you to contact the Campus Police immediately.

How do I express a concern or register a complaint related to El Centro College services?

You may call Dr. Bettie Tully, Ombudsman Office, at 214-860-2105.

1. What is the Rising Star Program?

El Centro College and the DCCCD Foundation believe that everyone should have a chance to realize the American Dream. We also believe a college education through the Dallas County Community College District is an excellent first step toward achieving that goal. Recognizing that there are those who truly lack the personal finances needed for college - even the affordable rates offered by the DCCCD - the Foundation has established the Rising Star Scholars Program. The Rising Star initiative essentially eliminates financial need as a barrier to higher education in Dallas County. The Rising Star program promises the youth of Dallas County that if they stay in high school, graduate, demonstrate a modest level of academic potential and have specific financial need, the Foundation will guarantee them the opportunity to earn a two-year college education from any one of the seven Dallas County Community College District colleges or the Bill J. Priest Institute for Economic Development. Rising Star provides academic support services and up to \$4,000 for tuition and books throughout your DCCCD education. For more information please visit:

<http://www.dcccd.edu/fdn/risingstar/risingstarintro.html>.

2. How do I qualify for Rising Star?

You qualify for the Rising Star Program if you:

- Graduate from a Dallas County public high school or the Dallas Can! Academy.
- Meet guidelines for financial need as established by Dallas County Community College District and verified using the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) guidelines from the Department of Education.
- Meet one of the following:
 - Graduate in the top 40% of your class;
 - Graduate with a “B” average;
 - Pass the required DCCC assessment test to enter any of the DCCC colleges.

3. When do I apply?

First you need to pick a semester you plan to enroll at El Centro College, but for funding purposes you must follow these deadline dates:

Summer – Complete the application process before April 15

Fall – Complete the application process before July 1

Spring – Complete the application process before November 1

4. How do I Apply?

1. Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form.

You may complete this online at www.fafsa.ed.gov or mail the form to: Federal Student Aid Programs, P.O. Box 7001, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864-0071.

If you are a non-citizen, non-resident or undocumented student, you will submit your FAFSA to the Rising Star office.

2. Request two (2) current official high school transcripts from your high school or your counselor – one to go with your Rising Star application and the other to go with your DCCCD college application. Your final official graduation transcript will be required as evidence that you completed requirements for high school graduation and allow funds to transmit.

3. Complete an admission application for El Centro College on campus, online at www.dcccd.edu or mail the form to El Centro College, 801 Main Street, Dallas, TX 75202, Attention: Admissions.

4. Submit the complete Rising Star application to: Rising Star Program, 701 Elm Street, Dallas, TX 75202-3299. You must have your College I.D. number to apply.

Bill J. Priest Institute for Economic Development

Bill J. Priest Institute for Economic Development is a campus of El Centro College, and is located at 1402 Corinth Street, Dallas, TX 75215, a mile and a half southeast of the El Centro College campus at 801 Main Street. Easily accessible, the Bill J. Priest campus offers free parking and state-of-the art facilities. It houses a talented faculty and staff and has a long-standing reputation as the educational leader in workforce training, small business development and contract training.