Frequently Asked Questions
Taking Courses Outside of Your Academic Requirements

Can I receive federal financial aid for courses that fall outside of the requirements for my CCC degree or certificate?

- No. Federal regulations prohibit CCC from awarding financial aid for classes that do not count toward a student’s CCC degree or certificate. Most CCC programs require elective credits; courses that apply to your remaining electives or other academic requirements can be used to determine your financial aid eligibility.
- For students using federal financial aid, this means that while you can certainly take courses outside of your academic requirements, financial aid eligibility determinations cannot include the courses that do not apply. This may result in your financial aid award being reduced.
- Your financial aid award is applied directly to your tuition bill. If your award amount is reduced, your tuition charges may still be fully covered. Every student’s situation is unique, so pay attention to the emails you receive in your CCC student email account and work with both Advising and Financial Aid to make the best decisions for you.

I received an email saying that I’m registered for a course that doesn’t apply to my degree or certificate. What should I do now?

- First, speak with a college advisor. An advisor will ensure that your academic program plan (the degree or certificate you’re pursuing) is entered in our system correctly and that it matches your goals. An advisor will identify the classes that are required for your CCC degree or certificate and can help you decide which classes are best to meet both CCC requirements and the transfer requirements of four-year universities you may be considering.
- If you use financial aid, you should speak with your Financial Aid Office to see how taking a class outside of your requirements will affect your financial aid package. Some students will not have any impact to their awards, while others will see their aid packages reduced.
- Regardless of your method of payment, be aware that taking courses that don’t apply to your certificate/degree can result in longer time to graduation and a higher cost. Speak with an advisor to see if there’s a similar course you can take that will apply to your academic requirements.

How do I know which classes are required for my degree or certificate?

- All students have access to their degree audit in the student portal. Your degree audit shows the classes that are required to earn your certificate or degree, including how your previous coursework applies to requirements and the classes you still need to complete. Taking classes that do not apply to these requirements may result in your financial aid award being reduced.
  - You can find your degree audit by logging in at my.ccc.edu, clicking My Academic Plan > Academic Planning > Degree Audit.
- You will get a weekly message sent to your CCC student email if you register for a course that falls outside of your academic requirements.

What if I want to take classes to prepare to transfer or because they sound interesting?

- You can always register for any classes that you want! However, federal regulations prohibit CCC from using courses that fall outside of your academic requirements to determine your aid eligibility. This means that you may have to pay out of pocket for some or all of your tuition if your classes do not apply to your CCC requirements.
- To determine if your financial aid package will be adjusted based on your registration, speak with the Financial Aid Office immediately.
I use financial aid and am planning to take a course (or more) that doesn’t apply to my degree or certificate. How can I tell if I’ll owe a bill for my tuition?

- Your financial aid package is dependent on many factors, one of which is how many credits you’re taking that apply to your academic requirements.
- For the most complete information about your financial aid package, speak with the Financial Aid Office at your college.

Will federal financial aid cover courses that are required for my transfer college/university?

- It depends. Once you complete the requirements for your CCC degree or certificate, federal financial aid will not cover additional courses that you might need for your transfer destination. You may still want to complete additional courses at CCC, but you will be responsible to pay for them.
- Careful planning with an advisor early in your time at CCC can maximize your financial aid eligibility and ensure that you take classes that apply to both your CCC requirements and the requirements of your intended transfer destination.

I am taking remedial classes that are not part of my academic requirements. Will I receive financial aid for these classes?

- Yes. The federal government considers these preparatory classes for successful completion of college level courses. However, financial aid will pay for a maximum of 30 credit hours of remedial courses.
- Note that Foundational Studies classes are not eligible for financial aid.
- Speak with your Financial Aid Office for details on how remedial coursework can affect your financial aid award.

Will financial aid only pay for classes that appear in My Planner?

- Not necessarily. My Planner is a tool that contains the recommended sequence of courses you should take in order to graduate in as little time as possible, according to your academic plan. Many of the courses in My Planner are recommendations for one class within a set of requirements; additional courses that meet the same requirement can be selected from the course list.
- Check your degree audit in your student portal to determine which academic requirements you are still missing: these classes can be used to determine your financial aid eligibility.

How will I know if the classes I’m registered for will be covered by financial aid?

- The best way to maximize your financial aid eligibility is by taking classes that are required for your academic program at CCC. You can check how the classes you registered for are applying to your requirements by reviewing your degree audit.
  - You can find your degree audit by logging in at my.ccc.edu, clicking My Academic Plan > Academic Planning > Degree Audit.
- If you have any questions about which classes are required for your degree or certificate, speak with a college advisor.
- Check with your college’s Financial Aid Office if you have questions about how your financial aid award may be adjusted based on your enrollment.