ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does the Gateway to College program work?

Once you have been admitted to the Gateway to College Program, you will be enrolled in a small learning community at **Mount Wachusett Community College.**

- A learning community consists of 20-22 students, all of whom take their first semester foundation classes together, in preparation for the transition to the traditional college curriculum.

- First semester Foundation courses include reading, writing, math, First Year Seminar, and a health class from the MWCC Complementary Health Care curriculum.

- First semester foundation courses earn both high school credit credits and a combination of transferable and non-transferable college credit.

- Students can expect to receive homework in each subject area on a daily basis.

After successfully completing the first semester, students will transition to the comprehensive college campus.

- Students enroll in Mount Wachusett Community College courses and continue to earn both high school and college credits, while working toward a high school diploma and an Associate degree or certificate.
- Courses taken after the foundation semester are selected with the guidance of a Resource Specialist, based upon each student's high school completion plan, desired 'pathway' and educational goals.

What can I expect to achieve by enrolling in the Gateway to College Program?

Students are given the opportunity to earn their high school diploma and Mount Wachusett Community College credits toward an Associate degree or certificate.

How long will it take to earn my high school diploma?

Most students will be enrolled in the Gateway to College Program for one to two years. The length of time it will take to earn a diploma will vary according to the student's course load and credit needs. Students may remain in the Gateway to College Program until they earn a high school diploma or until they reach the age of 21. Graduates are encouraged to continue their college studies at MWCC to further their education.

What are the typical characteristics of a Gateway to College student?

Gateway to College is for students who…
…have not earned a high school diploma.
…are at least 16, no older than 21.
…live in Massachusetts.
…are motivated and willing to work hard.
- This includes GED/HiSET and home schooled students.
- This includes currently enrolled students.
- This includes students who left high school.
- This includes students who are behind on credits, not on track to graduate or not satisfied at their current high school.

The typical student is willing to make a long-term commitment (which could be up to two years) to attendance of classes, completion of school work, completion of a high school diploma and progression toward a college degree or certificate.

What is expected of Gateway to College students?

Students are expected:

- To attend 100% of their classes.
- To come to class on time with their materials and to complete all class work and homework assignments. College classes typically do not allow make-up work or extra credit, so it is important for students to expect and complete homework every day.
- To spend 3-4 hours each day on homework (outside of class time). (Students who have a full-time job are strongly encouraged to consider the time demands of the program.)
- To earn a minimum of a 'C' average in each class taken.
- To adhere to all Mount Wachusett Community College policies and procedures.

What is the cost of the Gateway to College Program?

Gateway to College is a scholarship program. The scholarship pays for college tuition, fees, and first semester books, in addition to remaining textbooks throughout the program as long as a student maintains a semester GPA of 3.0 or higher. Gateway students are expected to pay a one-time $100 fee upon acceptance into the program. There may be additional fees if a student earns less than a grade of 'C' in any class and has to repeat a college credit-bearing course for in order to meet high school diploma requirements.

What kind of support will help me to be successful in the college setting?

Students who are accepted into the program will be assigned a Resource Specialist. The Resource Specialist provides support and access to services which are helpful to students. Students also have access to MCAS support and free tutoring services. Resource Specialists provide the following services:

- Transcript reviews and academic advising.
- Assistance with completion of enrollment and registration materials.
- Referrals to resources such as tutoring, counseling, student activities, health services and more.
- Personal guidance including assistance with problem solving, time management and stress management.

If I have been on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) while in high school, will I receive the same support services from the Gateway to College Program at Mount Wachusett Community College?

Applicants who have an IEP or 504 will need to self-identify their specific needs with the MWCC Disabilities Coordinator in order to determine if the campus can provide the appropriate accommodations. In many cases, the college campus environment is conducive to students who need access to tutoring, smaller class sizes and the support of a Resource Specialist.

If I am enrolled in high school and do not want to withdraw until I know that I have been accepted to the Gateway to College Program, can I still be considered for the program?

Absolutely. An applicant who is currently enrolled in high school should consider staying in school to continue earning credits until acceptance and the start of classes with the Gateway to College Program. Once an applicant has been accepted, he/she will be enrolled in the Ralph C. Mahar Regional High School, which is MWCC's partner high school for the Gateway program.

How do I apply for the Gateway to College Program?

Students may contact the Division of Access and Transition at (978) 630-9248. An application packet can also be downloaded from the MWCC website at mwcc.edu/access.