

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN ACADEMIC COUNSELING

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begin with a lower-level English class. How can I take English 122 directly?*

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What does a counselor do at DVC?

DVC counselors provide academic, career, and personal counseling to DVC students. There is one counselor for the international students at DVC. If you are not able to see that counselor immediately, you may see a generalist counselor on a space-available basis. If you are not yet admitted to DVC, you must first contact the International Student Admissions and Services (ISAS) office: 925-685-2077, or isas@dvc.edu.

Counselors help students learn how to identify and clarify an academic goal and understand the requirements for meeting that goal. They also help students learn about available campus and community resources to help students be successful in meeting their goals. Counselors are faculty members, thus their primary focus is on teaching students how to be independent learners.

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How can I make an appointment to see a counselor?

Call the Counseling Center at 925-685-1230, extension 2276 or 2278, or schedule an appointment online:

<http://esars.4cd.edu/eSARS/dvc/Counseling/eSARS.asp?WCI=Init&WCE=Settings> Be advised that you might have to wait two weeks or longer to have an appointment, and that counselors expect all students to come to their counseling appointment prepared and ready to learn; that means making a list of questions before the appointment and taking notes during the appointment, using the appointment time wisely, showing up on time for the appointment, and bringing any documents that will help the counselor advise you. If you need to cancel your appointment, do so as early as possible. ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE THE NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION BEFORE MEETING WITH A COUNSELOR. Once you are admitted to DVC, you will receive information about the orientation from the ISAS office.

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I have a question/concern about my passport, visa, I-20, or medical insurance. Where do I go for help?

All immigration-related questions and concerns, as well as insurance and other non-academic questions, should be directed to the International Student Admissions and Services office, located in room 210, Student Services Building. You can visit the international students' website: <http://dev.dvc.edu/international/> or <http://dev.dvc.edu/international/resources/>

Call 925-685-1230, extension 2077, or email isas@dvc.edu (please allow two to three business days to receive a response).

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How do I know which classes to take?

1. Identify your academic goal as specifically as you can (e.g. "transfer to SFSU and major in Business" or "get an associate's degree in Mechanical Drafting from DVC" or "study English and American culture then return to my country").
2. If you plan to transfer to a California State University or University of California campus, see www.assist.org to determine which DVC classes, if any, to take for your major. After you run the report, the CSU/UC required courses will be on the left side, while their DVC equivalents, if any, will be on the right. If no courses show, then either that major is not articulated with DVC, or it is an upper-division major. **Read the entire report very carefully; most of your questions can be answered in the report, and the contact information of the department is usually within the report; you can contact the department with further questions.** If you plan to transfer to a private or out-of-state university, click [here](#) for more information.
3. If you plan to receive an associate's degree and/or certificate from DVC, see the DVC Catalog and Addendum, available in the bookstore or online at <http://www.dvc.edu/pdfs/catalog.pdf> and <http://www.dvc.edu/pdfs/addendum.pdf> for specific major requirements and DVC General Education requirements.
4. Use the [assist.org](http://www.assist.org) report and/or the DVC Catalog to determine what your General Education requirements are. Most majors at most CSU and UC campuses will accept IGETC to fulfill General Education requirements; you can find the IGETC handout at <http://www.dvc.edu/org/departments/counseling/pdfs/09-10-IGETC.pdf>. There are other useful forms and handouts at <http://www.dvc.edu/org/departments/counseling/forms.htm>.
5. If you are undecided about your academic goal, remember that all universities in the U.S. will require some general courses, such as English Composition, Critical Thinking, College Math, Natural Sciences including lab, Social Sciences, and Arts/Humanities. Use the [IGETC](#) handout as a guide for choosing transferable courses. You can also use www.assist.org to explore CSU and UC majors.
6. In any case, be sure to check course descriptions in the [DVC Catalog](#) for information about enforced and recommended prerequisites for each course, and also for CSU/UC transferability.
7. After you have identified some appropriate classes to take, use [WebAdvisor](#) or the [Schedule of Classes](#) to build a schedule. **Be sure to confirm course prerequisites in the DVC Catalog, and dates/times of the courses you want**

to take in the Schedule of Classes, and keep in mind the reason you are choosing each class.

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How can I compute or predict my Grade Point Average, or GPA?

Use the online GPA calculator to understand and compute your GPA:

<http://www2.dvc.edu/counseling/GPA1.htm>

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All of the classes I want to take are already full! What should I do?

If the classes you want to take are full:

1. Check the status of the class on WebAdvisor daily to see if someone has dropped, leaving an opening for which you can register.
2. If the class has a waiting list that still has openings on it, add your name; if an opening occurs, the department will contact you and ask if you want to register for the class.
3. If the class is still closed on the first day, attend anyway, taking a Schedule Request form (available at <http://www.dvc.edu/pdfs/Schedule-Request.pdf>) . Ask the instructor if you can take the class; if the instructor consents, get his/her signature on the form, then take it to the International Student Admissions and Services office. If your name is on the Waiting List, you might get priority consideration for any open seats in the class.
4. Look for other classes to take, such as General Education courses or elective classes. Remember that international students **MUST** enroll in at least 12 units each semester in order to maintain legal status while in the U.S.

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More students are enrolling in California community colleges while fewer classes are being offered, due to the bad economy and state budget cuts. Classes at DVC fill up VERY quickly, and students **MUST** be flexible in their expectations. If the classes you want are full, there is nothing that counselors, instructors, or administrators can do to create more classes for you. If you would like to take action, please consider contacting the California legislators for Contra Costa County to voice your concerns:

<http://www.dvc.edu/news/announcements/closedclasses.htm>

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How many units can I transfer with a "Pass" grade?

The University of California (UC) system will accept a maximum of 14 UC-transferable units with a "Pass" or "Credit" grade. The California State University (CSU) system limitations vary by campus; refer to www.csumentor.org for details. Private and out-of-state institutions will have varying rules. Refer to the websites of the institutions you are interested in attending for details.

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I have units/exam scores from another institution that I want to use to clear the prerequisite for a class I want to take at DVC. How do I get permission to do that?

You must submit a Prerequisite Form, available online at http://www.dvc.edu/pdfs/Prerequisite_Form.pdf, along with documentation proving that you have completed the prerequisite (e.g. copy of transcript, exam score report, etc.). The instructions for submitting the Prerequisite Form are on the front of the form. If possible, include English course descriptions for the classes you took at other institutions.

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I think I will make a D or F in a class! What should I do?

There are two ways to receive academic renewal: First, you can retake the class; your second grade will be used in your GPA, not the first D or F; both the CSU and UC systems honor this policy, so they will not count the first grade, either, and it will most likely not affect your admissibility to the university. Second, if you do not want to repeat the class, you may apply for Renewal Without Repetition; you must first complete at least 20 units with grades of C/P or higher, and you may only request this type of renewal once. Before deciding, meet with a counselor to discuss your options.

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I plan to transfer to a private or out-of-state university. How can I know which courses to take at DVC?

DVC is part of the public higher education system in California, which also includes the CSU's and the UC's. Since private and out-of-state universities are not part of California's public system, DVC courses are not well-articulated with those universities, thus it is the student's responsibility to determine which courses to take at DVC. Counselors can help students make their decisions, but ultimately it is the student who owns the responsibility for those decisions.

One helpful website for researching private and out-of-state universities is www.collegesource.org, which has a feature for searching majors offered at institutions in all fifty U.S. states and links to the websites and catalogs of those institutions.

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How often can I take the Math and English assessment tests?

You can take the Math assessment test twice per semester, with a one-week waiting period between the first and second attempts. The Math department will no longer consider prerequisite challenges since the test can now be taken twice per semester. You may take the English assessment test only twice during your time at DVC, with at least one week between the first and second times.

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I disagree with the grade that I received from my instructor. How can I resolve this dispute?

The DVC Catalog clearly outlines the proper procedures for dispute resolution with instructors and other faculty or staff members of DVC. Refer to the Catalog for more details: <http://www.dvc.edu/pdfs/catalog.pdf> Consult a counselor for further explanation, if necessary. [\[Return to top\]](#)

How can I find important dates and deadlines online?

At this link: <http://www.dvc.edu/org/info/calendars/> Click on “Admissions/Registration Calendar” for refund, drop, and other such deadlines. Other useful calendars are found at this link.

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How can I find out admissions statistics for the University of California campuses?

Visit <http://stafffinder.ucop.edu/> and click on one of the options on the main page.

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How can I know which CSU's are still accepting applications from international transfer students?

Go to www.csumentor.org, click on the “Apply Online” tab, then click on “International Admission Applications (Undergraduate and Graduate).” On the next page, click on “Which campuses are still accepting applications?” On the left drop-down menu, select “International,” and on the right drop-down menu, select the term for which you wish to apply. The next page will show a list of the CSU campuses with notes. Be sure to read the special notices on the right: Open Majors, Closed Majors, and Campus Notice for complete details. The DVC Transfer Center offers assistance in completing and submitting the CSU application. The Transfer Center is located in the front of the Counseling Center.

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When am I supposed to pay my fees?

You are expected to pay all of your fees immediately after registration. However, it is acceptable that you wait until your semester schedule is finalized before paying. International students do have a definite deadline for paying the international student insurance fee. Contact the International Student Admissions and Services office for details: 925-685-1230, extension 2077, or email jsas@dvc.edu

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How can I apply for a scholarship?

Refer to the DVC Scholarship office for details and procedures on applying for scholarships: <http://www.dvc.edu/org/departments/foundation/scholarship/>

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How can I find out about student clubs and organizations at DVC?

Visit the Student Life office, in the Student Union Building, or refer to their website: <http://www.dvc.edu/org/departments/student-life/index.htm>

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How can I find a job on campus?

There is no central database for student job openings on campus, although the Career and Employment Services office may be able to offer some guidance. Visit them on the first floor of the Student Services Building, or refer to their website:

<http://www.dvc.edu/org/departments/career-employment/index.htm> Some campus offices/services that commonly employ student workers are the Cafeteria/Food Services, the Library, the Bookstore, Central Services, Grounds & Maintenance, and various administrative offices around campus. If you are a second-year student, you can confer with the Career and Employment Services office about Cooperative Education, in which you might work off-campus with the permission of the International Student Admissions and Services office. This opportunity is not available to first-year students.

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I need to drop below 12 units this semester. What should I do?

BEFORE YOU DROP ANY UNITS, consult with the International Student Admissions and Services office. Remember, F-1 international students are REQUIRED BY LAW to complete a minimum of 12 units each fall and spring semester.

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I just found out that I will fail my class, and the deadline to drop has already passed! What can I do?

If the deadline to drop with a W has already passed, there is nothing you can do to recover your grade before the semester ends unless your instructor provides options. However, refer to the question about academic renewal for more information about excusing a D or F grade from your GPA. In the future, refer to the online GPA calculator to guess what your GPA might be based on grades you expect to earn: <http://www2.dvc.edu/counseling/GPA1.htm>. Also, refer to the online calendar for important dates and deadlines, such as the deadline to drop with a W (for “Withdrawn”).

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Will a “W” grade affect my admissibility to a university?

That depends on the university. The CSU’s and the UC’s do NOT look negatively on W grades, although if you have many W’s on your transcript, you should explain why. The policies and practices of private and out-of-state universities vary, so contact those universities directly to determine their philosophy about W grades. W’s do NOT affect your GPA.

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I have college units from my home country. How can I determine how those units will apply toward my academic goal?

First of all, please note that NO foreign-earned units can be used to fulfill General Education requirements at DVC or in the CSU and UC systems. However, if you would like to use foreign-earned units toward other requirements at DVC, you must submit an official evaluation of your units from an authorized credentials evaluation agency. Refer to www.naces.org for a list of suggested agencies. DVC can use that report ONLY for DVC’s purposes. When you transfer, you must submit official copies of your foreign transcripts, including an official English translation, to the universities, and they will make their own determination about your foreign units. DVC counselors are unable to make those determinations on behalf of the universities.

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I want to take English 122, but my English assessment results indicate that I have to begin with a lower-level English class. How can I take English 122 directly?

The DVC prerequisite policy applies to English 122 in the same way that it applies to any other course at DVC. You must first either pass English 116 and 118 with a C/P or better, or score acceptably on the English assessment test, or provide documentation that proves you have met the prerequisite for English 122 in another way. If you have such documentation, speak with someone in the Assessment Center.

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Why can't I take only classes that are transferable and required for my major?

DVC is regionally accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges; we must enforce strict academic standards in order to maintain our accreditation. If we were not accredited, then our units would not transfer to other regionally accredited institutions such as those in the CSU and UC systems. Thus, in order to meet the prerequisite requirements for some courses, students are often required to complete units that may not transfer. Also, all majors require some coursework outside of the major department, thus students will take courses that might not be in their primary field of interest. This is the culture of the U.S. educational system of liberal arts education, so all students in all majors at all U.S. institutions are expected to adhere to these expectations.

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