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Admission, Registration & Educational Costs

Admissions: Becoming a Rio Hondo Student

Students who are high school graduates or individuals 18 years of age or over who show evidence that they can benefit from instruction may apply and will be admitted to Rio Hondo College. All classes are open to those who meet the necessary prerequisites. No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity sponsored by Rio Hondo College on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or physical or psychological disability.

Who May Apply

You may be eligible for admission to Rio Hondo College if you are:

- A high school graduate or GED recipient
- Not a high school graduate but over 18 years of age
- A current high school student who is recommended by the school principal for advanced academic or vocational classes, has the approval of the student's parent(s), meets the college's special admissions criteria and is LIMITED TO 7 UNITS or 2 classes of non-remedial coursework (if under 18 years).

Student Classification

Students are classified according to the following classifications for the purpose of registration:

New Student: A new student is a student who has never registered at Rio Hondo College.

Returning Student: A returning student is a student who did not register the previous semester but has registered in the past. Students who are returning after an absence of a semester or more (not including summer) must submit an application for admission online.

Continuing Student: A continuing student is a student who attended the previous semester. To be classified as a continuing student with registration priority privileges, a student must maintain continuous enrollment (enrolled in at least one course each semester).

Enrichment Student: An enrichment student is a student who is currently enrolled in grades K-12 or is home-schooled.

- **Enrichment students younger than 9th grade**
Students younger than 9th grade will be admitted if they meet the exceptional student criteria (highly gifted students with an IQ score above 150). These students may only enroll in college level courses (degree applicable courses), must meet prerequisites, and must show documentation of their gifted status and proof of IQ.



- **High School Enrichment Students**
High school students may enroll in classes for college credit. Permission to enroll must be obtained in advance from the high school and a parent or guardian. Interested high school students may obtain information from their counselor and meet with a Rio Hondo counselor to confirm eligibility for courses. Additional information and application forms are in the office of Admissions and Records. Enrichment students are limited to 7 units or 2 classes of non-remedial coursework.
- **International Students**
Students from outside the United States are welcome to pursue higher education at Rio Hondo College. The college values the presence of students from diverse cultures on the college campus.

All international students are subject to non-resident tuition as set by the Board of Trustees. International students must enroll in and complete 12 units each semester and maintain a "C" average in order to remain in acceptable status. An official TOEFL score of 133 on the CBE computer-based exam is required for admission.

Interested students should contact the International Student Specialist in the Admissions and Records Office at (562) 463-7643 for more details.

Residence Requirements

If asked, a student must provide proof of California residency (or in some cases, parent residency) for the past 12-24 consecutive months. If the student is unable to document proof of California residency, he/she may still enroll but must pay non-resident fees. To establish residency, a student must be able to prove eligibility, physical presence, and the intent to remain as a resident (one year and one day prior to the first day of the semester)

or 24 months of physical presence. Federal law precludes some visa types from establishing residency. In addition to other requirements, a student must be able to prove residency for one year and one day prior to the beginning of the semester. Selected exemptions from non-resident fees are provided in law: such as certificated public school employees, agricultural workers, military personnel and their dependents. If you feel that you might qualify for an exemption or have questions about residency, please contact the Admissions and Records Office.

Non-Resident Students – Legal Requirements-Education Code Section 76140 requires that tuition be charged to students who are not residents of the State of California and who attend public community colleges within the state.

The non-resident/international student fee of \$190.00 per unit (subject to change) plus a per unit enrollment fee is charged each semester/ summer session. Tuition charges must be paid at the time of registration.

The Admissions and Records Office should be consulted concerning the determination of residence.

AB540 Students

On October 12, 2001, Governor Davis signed into law Assembly Bill 540 (Stats. 2001, ch.814) which adds a new section to the California Education Code. Section 68130.5 creates a new exemption from payment of nonresident tuition for certain nonresident students who have attended high school in California and received a high school diploma or its equivalent.

1. The new law does not grant residency. It requires that certain nonresident students be exempted from paying nonresident tuition.
2. Students exempted from paying nonresident tuition pursuant to section 68130.5 do not become residents for eligibility purposes for any state-funded program (e.g., EOP&S, Cal Grant programs, or for purposes of a BOG Fee Waiver).
3. Students who meet the exemption requirements and who are unlawful immigrants are not eligible for any federal or state financial aid program. Many private sources have created scholarships specific to students not eligible for traditional financial aid programs.
4. Students exempted from paying nonresident tuition pursuant to section 68130.5 are not eligible for the Governor's Merit Scholar Programs because these scholarships are only available for California residents.
5. Students must meet all requirements in section 68130.5 (a) (1) – (4) to be eligible for the exemption.
 - a. The student must have graduated from a California high school which he/she attended for three or more years. There are no provisions for partial attendance (e.g. two years and 7 months). The law does not require consecutive attendance nor require that the student attend the last three years in California (in the case of four-year high schools).
 - b. Such attendance could be at multiple California high schools. Attendance at continuation high schools, charter high schools and K-12 approved independent education is acceptable.

Attendance at a home school is not acceptable unless the home-schooling was provided in a manner recognized under state law. The law does not distinguish between public and private high schools. There is no time limit

on how far in the past the student might have attended a California high school.

- c. The student must have graduated from a California high school or attained the equivalent thereof (e.g., a GED or a high school proficiency exam).
 - d. Except for nonimmigrant aliens, any nonresident student who meets the first two requirements shall be exempted from nonresident tuition even if he or she is a US citizen or lawful immigrant.
 - e. If the student has filed an application with the INS to legalize status, the student may already be eligible for resident fee status if the student has resided in California for more than one year and one day since the time of INS application. (See Title 5 Section 54045.)
6. Students who are nonimmigrant aliens (the most common being the F series student visas and B series visitor visas) are not eligible for this exemption. (A full description of nonimmigrant alien classifications may be found in paragraph 15 of subsection (a) of Section 1101 of Title 8 of the U.S. Code.) People who entered the country as nonimmigrant aliens but subsequently have gone out of status are not eligible for this exemption until they apply to INS to change their status to something other than nonimmigrant.

Open Enrollment Policy

The policy of this district is that, unless specifically exempted by statute or regulation, every course, course selection, or class, reported for state aid, whenever offered or maintained by the district, shall be fully open to enrollment and participation by any person who has been admitted to the college and who meets such prerequisites as may be established pursuant to regulations contained in Title V.

Unit Limitations

Students are limited to 18 units (15 units for summer sessions) unless they receive approval from a counselor for additional units. Students wishing to enroll in over 18 units (15 units for summer sessions) must meet with a counselor for a unit overload form. High School students are limited to 7 UNITS or 2 classes of non-remedial coursework

Adding/Dropping Classes

Students may add classes (including a change of section of the same course) during open registration dates as listed in the online Class Schedule. The class add must be processed through AccessRio, and students who complete this process are officially enrolled in the class.

If the class and wait list are closed, students must attend class on the first day of instruction and request an add code from the instructor. If the instructor provides an add code, the student can then use the add code to register for the class via AccessRio by the published deadline.

Rio Hondo College has a Drop for Non-Payment procedure. Prior to the start of each semester, there will be Common Drop Dates. The students who do not pay their fees or are not exempt will be dropped. The full procedure, including a list of exempt student groups, is posted on the Admissions web page.

It is the student's responsibility to officially drop classes prior to the drop deadline in a given semester to avoid

receiving failing grades. Please consult the online Class Schedule and click on the CRN number of the course you are trying to drop. These students will find information on critical dates for the course, including drop dates. This section will specifically contain information on the last day to drop classes without receiving a failing grade or the last day to drop classes without receiving a "W" grade. See Course Withdrawal in Section 5 for additional information.

Evaluation of Transcripts

All students enrolled at Rio Hondo College should have official transcripts from their high school on file.

Students with previous college units should have transcripts from all colleges attended sent directly to Rio Hondo College. Hand carried transcripts are no longer accepted. These transcripts can verify completion of prerequisite courses, eliminating the necessity of taking all or part of the assessment tests, and can assist the counselors in working with the student. Official transcripts from other colleges are required for evaluation towards a certificate, associate degree, or meeting general education requirements for transfer.

Transcripts from foreign universities must be evaluated by an approved credential evaluation service. Upon request, transcripts from colleges accredited by one of the regional accrediting associations will be evaluated for students during the first semester of attendance.

Transcripts of military service credits will be evaluated upon request of the student.

All transcripts must be sent directly to the Admissions and Records Office. Transcripts become the property of the college and cannot be returned to the student, copied, or forwarded to another institution.

Student Success and Support Program (formerly Matriculation)

Senate Bill 1456 revised and renamed the Matriculation Act of 1986 as the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. Signed by Governor Brown on September 27, 2012, the program began on January 1, 2013 and will be implemented in stages over a five-year period.

The Student Success and Support Program supports the transition of new students into the college by providing them services that promote academic achievement and successful completion of degrees, transfer preparation, career technical education certificates, or career advancement. Based on student responses to the Rio Hondo College Application for Admission, students self-identify as either matriculating or non-matriculating. Students identified as matriculating are referred to core services: assessment, orientation, and counseling. Students must complete assessment and orientation in order to receive priority registration. They also need to develop an educational plan which can be accomplished by enrolling in a counseling course, attending an educational planning workshop, or by scheduling an appointment with a counselor. Non-matriculating students are exempt from participating in core services, but they are advised to access these services if they decide to pursue a degree or certificate.

The Student Success and Support Program is the process responsible for bringing together the college and a student, who enrolls for credit, into an agreement for the purpose

of realizing the student's educational goals through the college's established programs, policies, and requirements. The primary purpose of the Student Success and Support Program is to enhance a student's success at the college. A student is expected to participate in these services unless the student requests an exemption from a particular service. Exemption forms may be obtained in the Counseling Department. All students are strongly encouraged to participate in the process.

Military Veteran students must participate in all matriculation components as required by the Veterans Administration (VA).

Components of Matriculation

Matriculation is composed of the following steps designed to enhance student success:

1. Admission to the college
2. Assessment of English or English-as-a-Second Language, Math, and Reading skills
3. Orientation to the college's programs and services
4. Counseling and advisement for assistance in defining an educational goal and developing a plan to achieve the goal.

Five Steps to Becoming a Rio Hondo College Student

Step 1: Application

Effective in the Spring 2010 semester, Rio Hondo College began utilizing CCC Apply for application processing. To submit an application for admissions log on to www.cccapply.org/Applications/CCCApply/apply/Rio_Hondo_College.html.

Step 2: Assessment

All new non-exempt students ("non-exempt" refers to students seeking an AA/AS degree, a certificate or transfer) are required to participate in an assessment/orientation/advisement (AOA) process (prior to registration for classes) designed to assist students in reaching their educational and career goals. The purpose of the AOA process at Rio Hondo College is to assess the student's skill level in English, reading and mathematics and provide the student with the necessary resources for a successful college experience. The student's reported information, in conjunction with available high school and/or college transcripts are used to determine course placement and the development of a Student Educational Plan (SEP). The assessment information assists the counselor in outlining a useful and clear educational program for the student's long-range educational plans and the eventual attainment of a chosen career. The AOA process is an effort by Rio Hondo College to provide the student with the finest academic advisement and counseling possible. Students are encouraged to meet with a counselor within the first six weeks of enrollment at the college. The assessment/orientation is available by appointment throughout each semester and during the summer. Non-exempt students who do not complete the AOA process will receive a hold on their registration in the term that follows their first semester at Rio Hondo College. For more information, please contact the Assessment Office at (562) 463-7226 or visit LR-130.

Step 3: Orientation

Orientation to the college is an important part of the matriculation process and should be completed prior to

the first semester of coursework. It provides students with information on college services, registration procedures, course placement, and recommended courses to register for in the first semester. Students will be given an opportunity to participate in a computerized Orientation during their Assessment Test. Students who do not require an Assessment test can still attend a computerized Orientation in the Assessment Center. Check for dates and times at the Rio Hondo web site: www.riohondo.edu and click "Assessment Test Information" for the most accurate information regarding walk-in Orientations. The Assessment Center is located in the Learning Resource Center, room LR130 and the Assessment Office is located in LR141. If you need additional information call (562) 463-7226.

Step 4: Registration

Upon completing steps 1-3, a student can register online at <https://accessrio.riohondo.edu/cp/home/displaylogin> on dates specified online under the admissions and records link.

Registration Appointments – The appointment time established for each student is the date and time the student can begin using the AccessRio online registration system for a given semester.

Students can find their registration appointment times by logging into their AccessRio account under Student, Registration and then clicking on Registration Status.

Step 5: Counseling & Advisement

It is important to make an appointment with a counselor to discuss the student's educational goals and to develop an educational plan before classes begin. For information and/or to make an appointment, please call (562) 908-3410 or go to SS-160.

Student Success and Support Program Requirement

All new students are encouraged to participate in the components of admission, assessment, orientation, and counseling. However, exemptions for these components may be granted if certain criteria are met. (See Matriculation Exemptions.) All new, non-exempt students who are unable to complete the assessment process before their first semester of attendance may enroll; however, they must be assessed prior to registering for their second semester at the college. Students who have not completed the assessment process may be unable to register for certain courses that require prerequisites.

College Responsibilities

In the Student Success and Support Program process, the college has certain responsibilities. The college, to support student success, agrees to provide:

- Processing of applications for admission
- Assessment of basic skills, study skills, and career interests
- Orientation to college programs and services
- Counseling/advising
- Assistance in developing an educational plan
- Follow-up and referral to services

Student Responsibilities

In the Student Success and Support Program process, the student also has certain responsibilities. The student, to support his/her own success, has the responsibility to:

- Express a broad educational intent upon admission
- Provide high school and/or college transcripts and other supporting documentation to assist the counselor in making the best possible placement recommendations
- Declare a specific educational goal by the time 12 semester units are completed
- Meet with a counselor to develop an educational plan within the same semester
- Participate in counseling/advisement
- Attend class, complete assignments, and maintain progress toward a defined goal
- Drop classes he/she no longer wishes to attend.

Student Rights

In accordance with the matriculation agreement, the student has the right to:

- Challenge placement decisions and any prerequisite or corequisite by completing the appropriate form, which can be obtained from the Counseling Department.
- File a complaint of unlawful discrimination if a student feels that assessment, orientation, counseling, or any other matriculation process is being applied in a discriminatory manner. A petition may be obtained from the Office of the Vice President of Student Services. Upon receiving a complaint, the Vice President of Student Services will convene a three-member panel consisting of the Affirmative Action Officer or designee and two members of the Matriculation Coordinating Committee to review the student's petition. The panel shall meet and provide a written notification to the student within five working days.

Matriculation Exemptions

Students who meet one of the following exemption criteria for any of the matriculation components, may obtain an exemption form from the Counseling area. Military students must participate in all matriculation components as required by the VA.

A. Assessment, Orientation, and Counseling

– All students are encouraged to participate in these components; an exemption may be granted according to one of the following criteria:

- Students who are enrolled only in activity, skill building, or personal growth classes (e.g., acting, physical fitness, ceramics) or job skills training (e.g., computer literacy, accounting, brake service), or
- Students who have already completed an AA/AS degree or higher. Military students must participate in all matriculation components as required by the VA.

B. Assessment

– Further assessment exemption may be granted according to one of the following criteria:

- Students who have successfully completed the equivalent of ENGL 035 or ENGL 101 at another community college or university are exempt from taking the English Placement Test.
- Students who have successfully completed the equivalent of MATH 020 or higher at another community college or university are exempt from taking the Math Placement Test.
- Students who have taken a Rio Hondo College-approved assessment test at another college are exempt from taking the appropriate assessment tests.

Those students who have not recently completed the equivalent math and/or English courses and/or recently taken an acceptable assessment test at another college are highly recommended to take the assessment tests at Rio Hondo College for appropriate placement in advanced courses.

C. Orientation

– All students are encouraged to participate in orientation; an exemption may be granted according to one of the following criteria:

- Students who are concurrently enrolled at a four-year college or university, or
- Students who have previously participated in a Rio Hondo College orientation.

Assessment Retest Policy

English, Reading and Math assessment scores are valid for two years. After two years, students are advised to re-test. For more information, visit the Assessment office located in LR-130.

Assessment Placement Appeals Procedure

All students have the right to appeal any placement decision after going through the assessment process. An assessment placement appeal requires written documentation and an explanation of alternative course work, background, or abilities that adequately prepare the student for the course. An Assessment Placement Appeals form can be obtained from the Counseling Department or the appropriate division office (either Communications and Languages or Math and Sciences). Reasons for appealing an assessment placement may include one or more of the following:

- the course recommended is not reasonably available, or
- the student believes the recommended course is not valid or necessary for success in the next course level for which it is required, or
- the student believes the placement results are discriminatory or are being applied in a discriminatory manner, or
- the student has the documented knowledge or ability to succeed in the next level course without taking the recommended course by the appropriate division office.

Upon filing the Assessment Placement Appeals form, the student may enroll in the desired class. If the appeal is not upheld, the student will be required to drop the class. The district will ensure that the appeal process is finished, and the student is notified in writing within five (5) working days. Students wishing to appeal this decision should contact the Dean of Library and Instructional Support or designee.

RHC Prerequisite/Corequisite/Advisory Definitions

The college REQUIRES students to meet prerequisite/corequisite requirements before taking the course in question.

Prerequisites – A course prerequisite indicates the preparation or previous course work is considered necessary for success in the desired course.

Corequisites – A course corequisite indicates another course that must be taken concurrently with the desired course.

Prerequisites/corequisites that are listed in the college catalog include:

- Courses for which specific prerequisite/corequisites have been validated,
- Sequential course work in a degree-applicable program, and
- Courses in which a prerequisite/corequisite is necessary for transfer to a four-year college.

Questions about prerequisites/corequisites are best resolved with a counselor or instructor prior to the first day of class. If students are attempting to meet a prerequisite/corequisite through the assessment process, they may appeal (challenge) their assessment placement results.

Advisories – A course advisory indicates that if students have the designated preparation or previous course work, they are likely to perform better academically in the course or program in question because of that experience or preparation. Unlike prerequisites or corequisites, advisories do not require that students have the suggested preparation; rather, it is strongly recommended.

How to Clear a Prerequisite

If a student believes he/she has met a pre-requisite at another institution, he/she can see a counselor for a pre-requisite clearance. Students must provide evidence of meeting the pre-requisite using documentation such as an academic transcript. See a counselor for details.

Prerequisite/Corequisite Challenge Procedure

All students have the right to challenge any prerequisite or corequisite. A prerequisite or corequisite challenge requires written documentation that should include an explanation of alternative course work and/or background or abilities that adequately prepares the student for the course. A Prerequisite/Corequisite Challenge form can be obtained from the Counseling Department and division offices.

Reasons for challenging a prerequisite may include one or more of the following:

1. A prerequisite/corequisite is not reasonably available (must be made prior to the first week of the semester),

2. The student believes the prerequisite/corequisite is not valid or necessary for success in the course for which it is required, or
3. The student believes the prerequisite/corequisite is discriminatory or being applied in a discriminatory manner, or
4. The student has the documented knowledge or ability to succeed in the course without meeting the prerequisite/corequisite.

Upon filing the Prerequisite/Corequisite Challenge form, the student may enroll in the challenged class. If the challenge is not upheld, the student will be required to drop the class. The district will ensure that the challenge process is finished, and the student is notified in writing within five (5) working days. Students wishing to appeal this decision should contact the Dean, Library & Instructional Support or designee.

Educational Costs

Enrollment Fee – Students who have established legal residence in California must pay the enrollment fee established under state law and subject to change without notice. These fees will be waived at the time of enrollment if the student can demonstrate he/she qualifies under the exempt criteria specified by the State of California. Out-of-state and international students must pay non-resident tuition fees of \$190.00 per unit plus the \$46.00 a unit fee as required under state law (fees subject to change).

College Services Fee – The Associated Students of Rio Hondo College is funded through the college services fee. The fee is \$7.00 for day, evening, and off-campus students during the fall and spring semesters and \$4.00 for summer sessions. The fee is automatically assessed at the time of registration. A waiver form is available in the Admissions and Records Office.

GO RIO Fee – This fee was approved by the Associated Students of Rio Hondo College to subsidize costs of the GO RIO bus program. The fee is \$7.00 for Spring and Fall terms only.

Student Parking Fee – Under provision of Education Code 72247, a Student Parking Fee program has been established. This fee provides for the use of student parking lots, better traffic flow during peak hours, parking lot security, and use of the tram service.

The student parking fee for day and evening students during the fall/spring semesters is \$40.00. The fee for summer sessions students is \$10.00. Motorcycle parking is \$10.50 for fall/spring semesters; \$5.50 for summer sessions.

Student Health Fee – Rio Hondo College provides a health services program, as approved by the Board of Trustees, for students who formally register at Rio Hondo College, are currently enrolled, and pay a \$19 health fee (\$15.00 for summer). Antibiotic medication and women-wellness laboratory tests are available for a nominal fee. Fee-exempted students include those who document religious reasons. A full refund will be made only if requested in writing prior to the semester refund deadline.

Student Representation Fee – This \$1.00 fee provides support for students or representatives who may be stating their positions and viewpoints before city, county, and district government, and before offices and agencies of the state and federal government. Students may refuse to pay this fee on religious, political, or moral grounds by submitting a refusal in writing to the Office of Student Life and Leadership prior to registration.

Books – Students are required to purchase all books and supplies needed for their courses. Book costs will vary from semester to semester. Often purchasing used books can reduce this amount.

Scholarships

A variety of scholarships are available to Rio Hondo College students. For more information, contact the Financial Aid/Scholarship Office at (562) 908-3411 or go online to www.riohondo.edu to view scholarship opportunities.

Student Financial Obligations

Withholding Grades, Transcripts, etc. for Nonpayment of Financial Obligations (59410) – The governing board of a community college district may provide by appropriate rules and regulations that grades, transcripts, diplomas and registration privileges, or any combination thereof, shall be withheld from any student or former student who has been provided with written notice that he or she has failed to pay a proper financial obligation due to the district or a college. (BP 5035)

Enrollment/Fees Refunds

Resident Students

Resident students reducing their course load or withdrawing from all courses during the first 10% of the fall/spring semester may file for a refund in the Admissions and Records Office. During the summer session, resident students reducing their course load or withdrawing from all courses during the first 10% of the session may file for a refund in the Admissions and Records Office. Please check the Rio Hondo web site, under the Admissions and General Information link for specific deadline dates. Any enrollment fee refund request is subject to a once-per-semester service charge of \$10.00.

Non-Resident Students

For non-resident students reducing their course load or withdrawing from all courses, a refund may be requested in Admissions and Records during the first 10% of the fall/spring semester in order to receive a full refund of all out-of-state fees. During the summer session, a refund must be requested in Admissions and Records prior to the end of the first 10% of instruction to receive a full refund of all out-of-state fees. The student will receive a 50% refund of out-of-state fees if the request for a refund is received in Admissions and Records during the third or fourth week of the fall/spring semester or during the second week of the summer session. No refunds will be granted after the fourth week of the fall/spring semester or after the second week of the summer session. Please check the Rio Hondo web site, under the Admissions and General Information link for specific deadline dates.

In the event that law mandates other fees and law does not prescribe the refund policy, the refund of such fees shall be in the same manner as the refund of health, college services, and parking fees.