

# **2016-17 MVHS Early College Handbook**

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***This handbook is subject to change. Please refer to the ATC Catalog ([www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu)) for program requirements and the most up-to-date information.***

## **Welcome and Overview**

### **What is Early College?**

Early College enables eligible high school students to take college courses beginning in the summer prior to their sophomore year in high school and receive both high school and college credit for those courses. Students who successfully complete the program will graduate from high school with both a high school diploma and an Associate in Arts degree from ATC. (The opportunity for students to earn an Associate in Science degree is under consideration). All MVHS rising sophomores have the opportunity to apply to participate, provided they meet the requirements. In all cases, students must have permission from a parent/guardian and the high school in order to participate. The Early College and dual enrollment programs are essentially the same in that students take college courses and earn college credits immediately. The Early College program offers the advantage of enabling high school students to obtain an associate degree by the time they graduate from high school. The Early College courses differ from Advanced Placement (AP) courses in that students earn college credits upon successful completion of the course without the need to pass an AP exam in order to generate college credit.

Most approved college courses are worth three credits and last one semester. The summer term starts in May (with the exception of the first summer term, which will begin on June 13, 2016) and ends in August. The fall semester starts in August and ends in December, and the spring semester starts in January and ends in May.

### **Program Description**

The Midland Valley High School (MVHS) Early College will offer a unique educational experience for students. The program offers students the opportunity of acquiring college credits while in high school by completing Aiken Technical College (ATC) courses. Through the Early College program, students will be able to earn their high school diploma while concurrently completing credits toward an Associate in Arts degree. The Early College program is predicated on collaboration between MVHS and ATC in an effort to increase educational attainment in Aiken County.

### **Program Goals**

The goal of this program is to provide qualified students with access to college-level curriculum prior to exiting high school. Participants will be able to earn an Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree by the time they graduate from MVHS. Provided all scheduled courses are completed successfully, this program also serves as a pathway for allowing students access to a higher level of education at an accessible cost. Students exiting this program will be able to transfer courses to four-year institutions to complete a Bachelor's degree.

## **Selection Process**

## Placement Testing

Students must have the minimum test scores listed below for 2016-17 participation:

- COMPASS Reading (85) and COMPASS Writing (90) **OR** an acceptable writing sample score. The writing sample is only administered to students with a COMPASS Reading score of at least 85 **and** a COMPASS Writing score from 81 to 89.
- PSAT: 500 (Reading/Writing combined) for tests administered after October 2015

Students who do not have the minimum acceptable PSAT score may take the free COMPASS test available at the ATC Testing Center on campus. Students must test into the college-level (non-remedial) courses on COMPASS in order to be admitted to the Early College program. Students who took the COMPASS test at MVHS and would like to retest for a higher score on one or both parts of the test may retest at ATC for a fee of \$25.

Students participating in the Early College program will be required to take a math placement test prior to enrolling in math courses. Students must meet the minimum college (non-remedial) score to be placed in the proposed math courses (MAT 110, MAT 111, MAT 120, MAT 122).

## Interviews

All students who apply for the program will participate in a mandatory interview. Interviews will be conducted by MVHS staff and will include, the student, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), and possibly an ATC representative. The purpose of the interview is to determine if students are both academically and socially equipped to take part in the Early College program. It is imperative that the student as well as his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) are committed to successfully completing the program.

## Teacher Recommendations

Completed applications must include a minimum of two teacher recommendations. It is the goal of the interview team to gain a complete view of student performance. Teacher recommendations will provide information about students that cannot be gleaned from test scores and data. Students should contact Ms. Elesha Ellison, Early College Counselor, at MVHS for more information about obtaining teacher recommendations.

## Acceptance Letter

Final acceptance will be determined by the interview team in early May. Students who are accepted into the Early College program will receive an acceptance letter. The letter will include orientation dates and times, registration and summer course information. It is important that students and parents participate in the student orientation. Vital information will be given at this time.

## Qualifications for Continuation

**Students must continue to prove themselves academically eligible to move forward in the program. Any student who does not complete the initial summer courses with a grade of "B" or higher in both courses will not be permitted to continue in the Early College program. The Early College courses are college-level courses that will affect a students'**

**ability to qualify for the LIFE scholarship. Students who do not maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher in college level coursework are ineligible for the LIFE scholarship. Students are subject to the College’s standards of academic progress. Additionally, MVHS staff will monitor students’ academic progress. Both MVHS and ATC will provide access to support services for students in an effort to help students succeed. Application and Registration**

### **Application**

Qualified students will complete the MVHS Early College application, which will be provided at the student/parent information session and is available through the MVHS Guidance Office.

### **Exceptional Ability Recommendation**

Early College participants must demonstrate exceptional academic ability by meeting all standard ATC placement requirements, obtaining two teacher recommendations, successfully completing an interview, and satisfying course prerequisites.

### **School and Parental Permission**

As part of the application process, students must obtain high school and parent/guardian permission prior to participation in the Early College program. Those providing permission must ensure that students are aware of the implications of generating an official college transcript.

### **Registration Timeline**

Early College course registration will occur prior to each academic semester (summer, fall, and spring). For the 2016-17 cohort, registration will most likely occur in May for the summer term, in August for the fall semester, and in December for the spring semester.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

According to the ATC grading policy the grade of “W” (withdrawn) is used as follows: (a) a student withdraws after the end of the add/drop period but on or before the midterm date or (b) a student withdraws from classes after midterm because of extenuating circumstances and is passing those classes in which he or she is enrolled. “W” is not used in GPA calculations, earns no credit hours, and carries zero grade points for each credit attempted. The grade of “WF” represents “Withdrawn Failing” and may be used when a student is failing and formally withdraws from a class after midterm. “WF” is used in GPA calculations, earns no credit hours, and carries zero grade points for each credit hour attempted.

### **Refund Policy**

The College provides tuition refunds only during the designated “Add/Drop” period at the beginning of each academic semester. The “Add/Drop” period is usually a five-day period that begins on the first day of the academic semester and ends after the fifth day of the academic semester. During the “Add/Drop” period, a student may drop a course and receive a refund. After the “Add/Drop” period, a student may withdraw from a course (see “Withdrawal Policy” above) but is financially responsible for the course.

## Checklist

The following checklist includes most of the key steps Early College participants must complete:

- Meet placement testing requirements
- Attend a student/parent information session
- Complete an Early College application
- Obtain two teacher recommendations (See Ms. Elesha Ellison for details.)
- Complete a FAFSA Waiver form
- Complete an Information Release form
- Complete a Permission form
- Complete a competitive selection interview
- Attend a student/parent orientation session
- Pay tuition and fees by the deadline
- Purchase books and supplies
- Obtain an ATC Student ID
- Access the MyATC Portal
- Attend class on the ATC campus during the summer and senior year

## Program Curriculum

### Associate in Arts

The Associate in Arts degree prepares the student to transfer to a four-year college or university to study in the areas of fine arts, education, humanities, social sciences or business. With the assistance of an academic advisor, a student may plan a program of study to meet the requirements of the college to which the student wishes to transfer. The Associate in Arts degree requires 61 semester credit hours distributed according to the following categories:

#### *General Education (35 credits)*

- Communications/Humanities/Fine Arts: 15 credits
- Physical Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Mathematics: 14 credits
- Social Behavioral Sciences: 6 credits

#### *Major Requirement (15 credits)*

#### *Electives (11 credits)*

Total credits required: 61

### Associate in Science

ATC offers an Associate in Science degree for students interested an academic major in the areas of natural/physical sciences, mathematics, engineering or business. *The opportunity for students to earn an Associate in Science degree through the Early College program is under consideration.*

The Associate in Science degree requires 61 semester credit hours distributed according to the following categories:

***General Education (39 credits)***

- Communications/Humanities/Fine Arts: 15 credits
- Natural Sciences and Mathematics: 18 credits
- Social Behavioral Sciences: 6 credits

***Major Requirement (15 credits)***

***Electives (7 credits)***

Total credits required: 61

### **Course Transferability**

College transfer courses are widely accepted for academic credit in South Carolina and other states; however, the acceptance of transfer credits is strictly the responsibility of the receiving institution. Therefore, students are encouraged to contact the institution they wish to attend for guidance. Many of these institutions will accept transfer credits for official transfer courses as well as many other courses taught at ATC. Students must earn a grade of “C” or better in order for courses to transfer.

The SC Commission on Higher Education (CHE) publishes a list of 86 courses that transfer between and among the public colleges and universities in SC. All courses required for the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees at ATC are from the CHE list of transferable courses. For more information, visit the CHE website [www.che.sc.gov](http://www.che.sc.gov).

The SC Transfer and Articulation Center (SCTRAC) is another online resource. Through the website [www.sctrac.org](http://www.sctrac.org), students and parents may search for course equivalencies between and among public colleges and universities in South Carolina.

### **Course Schedule**

Early College students are expected to enroll in two collegiate courses per academic semester until they complete their junior year. Beginning with the summer term after the junior year, students will complete three courses per semester as follows:

- Summer 2016: Two courses (six\* credit hours)
- Fall 2016: Two courses (six credit hours)
- Spring 2017: Two courses (six credit hours)
- Summer 2017: Two courses (seven credit hours)
- Fall 2017: Two courses (six credit hours)
- Spring 2018: Two courses (six credit hours)
- Summer 2018: Three courses (ten credit hours)
- Fall 2018: Three courses (nine credit hours)
- Spring 2019: Three courses (nine credit hours)

\*One of the two courses required in the summer of 2016 is College Skills (Col 103), which is a transition course that does not count toward the requirements for the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science. The College will waive tuition during the summer of 2016 for the COL 103 course, which is designed to help students be successful in collegiate coursework.

See Appendix A for a detailed description of the Early College course sequence.

Course meeting times:

- Courses offered on campus at MVHS are tentatively scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> periods, 12:30 to 2:15 p.m.
- The two courses offered during the summer of 2016 on campus at ATC are tentatively scheduled to meet Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, from 8:00 to 9:50 (PSY 201) and 10:00 to 11:50 (COL 103). Those summer courses will begin on June 13, 2016.

### **Course Descriptions**

Course descriptions for all ATC courses are available in the online ATC Catalog, accessible via [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu).

### **Location of Course Offerings**

Early College courses will be offered at MVHS during the fall and spring semesters. During the summer term, courses will be held on campus at ATC. During students' senior year, some courses may be taken on campus at ATC.

### **Hybrid and Online Courses**

As the Early College program is further developed, some hybrid and/or online course options may be available. Unlike traditional courses, which meet face-to-face in a classroom and/or lab, hybrid courses include limited face-to-face meetings and require online participation through a learning management system. Online courses are accessed exclusively through an online learning management system. Tests and final exams in online courses are usually proctored in a secure testing environment.

## **Program Expectations and Policies**

### **Learning Environment**

The subject matter in college courses offered for dual credit will be taught on a collegiate level. Students will read, view, discuss, and write about material and topics that are controversial or contain adult subject matter, including works related to warfare, atrocities, cultural practices that some may find disturbing, and/or belief systems different from the students' own. Students are expected to explore the material and engage in appropriate dialogue with seriousness. MVHS nor ATC are expressing an endorsement of any views when exploring subject matter.

### **Transportation Requirements**

Summer courses will be taken on the ATC campus. Summer courses are tentatively scheduled to meet three days per week on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. All Early College participants must attend class each day. Students are required to have transportation to and from classes during these terms. Fall and spring courses during the

sophomore and junior years will be offered on the MVHS campus. Some senior year courses may be offered at ATC.

## **Academic Calendar**

The College's academic calendar typically begins later and ends sooner than the MVHS academic calendar. MVHS and ATC will collaborate to enable the Early College courses to align as closely as possible with the MVHS academic calendar while satisfying the ATC requirements for course meeting times. More information about the College's academic calendar is available at [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu).

## **ATC Catalog and Handbook**

Students admitted to the Early College program are responsible for complying with all policies and procedures included in the ATC Catalog and Student Handbook, which is available via [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu). Students and parents are expected to be familiar with ATC policies, procedures, and resources.

## **Attendance**

Students are responsible for adhering to the ATC attendance requirements for satisfactory progress, as outlined in the ATC Catalog. ATC attendance requirements are provided in the syllabus for each course.

## **Code of Conduct**

- ***ATC Student Code***  
Students participating in the Early College program must adhere to the ATC Student Code, which sets forth the rights and responsibilities of students. Included in the Student Code are guidelines for adjudicating instances of academic dishonesty, disruptive behavior, and other violations of the Student Code. The Student Code is included in the ATC Handbook, which is available via [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu).
- ***ATC Honor Code***  
The *ATC Honor Code* is as follows: "As a member of the Aiken Technical College community, I am committed to the ideal and practice of honorable behavior. I will conduct myself in a civil manner, respect the rights and property of others, and support the College's values and educational mission. I will maintain personal and academic integrity in all aspects of campus life. I recognize the dignity of all individuals and will respect and learn from the ideas represented in our collective diversity. I will uphold the Aiken Technical College standard of excellence." The ATC Honor Code also includes an academic integrity pledge for academic work. The academic integrity pledge will be included in course syllabi.
- ***Aiken County Code of Conduct***  
In addition to adhering to the ATC Student Code, all Early College participants will also be held to the Aiken County Student Code of Conduct. Students who violate the Aiken County Student Code of Conduct are subject to removal from the program. Attendance requirements will be determined by ATC.

## Complaints

Complaints about academic or instructional matters should be routed through the ATC course instructor, academic department chair, academic dean, and (if needed) ultimately to the Vice President of Education and Training. Complaints about non-academic matters should be directed to the ATC Vice President of Enrollment Management.

## Midterm Grades

Students will have access to a midterm grade to help them determine their academic progress in a course. The midterm grade will be available near the midpoint of each semester.

## Final Grades

Student performance in dual credit courses will directly affect high school records and graduation requirements. All final grades will be included on students' permanent collegiate transcript. In accordance with S.C. state policy, students will earn one unit toward the high school diploma for each three-semester hour college course they successfully complete, with the exception of COL 103.

South Carolina school districts are required to enter the earned numeric grade on the student's high school transcript. In calculating the student's GPA, all earned letter grades for college-level dual credit courses are weighted the same as high school AP courses. College letter grades will be converted to the mid-range of the school grading scale. The table below shows differences in the current grading scales.

ATC Grading Scale	SC Uniform Grading Scale
A 90-100	A 93-100
B 80-89	B 85-92
C 70-79	C 77-84
D 60-69	D 70-76
F Below 60	F Below 70

If changes are made in the SC Uniform Grading Scale, the conversion of ATC letter grades to numerical grades for high school will change accordingly.

## Student Records

Early College courses are offered through ATC and will result in the generation of a permanent ATC academic transcript. This ATC academic transcript will reflect all courses taken and the resulting grade. Students will be expected to provide an official academic transcript to all other institutions the student may attend after high school graduation. The status of a student's academic standing based on the ATC academic transcript may affect eligibility for acceptance and/or financial aid at other institutions.

## **Confidentiality of Student Records**

ATC complies fully with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). This law guarantees the privacy of student educational records and protects the student's right to access those records. Visit [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu) for more information regarding FERPA.

Because Early College students are completing courses that will affect their high school transcripts, parents, high school guidance counselors and administrators have the right to information regarding the students' course work and attendance. Requests for information regarding a student's academic success or records must be made in writing to the ATC Registrar unless an "Information Release Form" (see Appendix B) is on file with the ATC Registrar's Office.

## **Utilization of ATC Portal and Email**

Students admitted to ATC will be issued a user account for access to the MyATC portal and email. Students are expected to utilize their MyATC portal and email account as the official means of communication with the College.

## **Support Services**

### **MVHS Academic Support**

Academic support will be embedded in the Early College program. During the fall and spring semesters students will attend Early College courses on Monday–Thursday. On Fridays students will report to a mandatory tutoring session with MVHS teachers.

- ***Tutoring***  
MVHS will provide tutoring for students during school hours. Students will have access to teachers that are knowledgeable in the content that students will be learning in their Early College classrooms.
- ***Media Center***  
Students will have access to the MVHS media center on Fridays, afterschool, and during study halls. Students are encouraged to use this resource often.
- ***Computer Labs***  
Computers will be available for students to write papers, conduct research and to complete projects and assignments.

### **ATC Academic Support**

In addition to academic support services provided on campus at MVHS, Early College participants have access to ATC on-campus resources.

- ***Academic Success Center***  
The mission of the Academic Success Center (ASC) is to enhance student learning by offering support services to students in a friendly, customer-oriented environment. More

information about services provided, location, and operating hours on the ATC campus is available at [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu).

- **Library**  
The ATC Library serving students, faculty, staff and community patrons. More information is available online at [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu).
- **College Skills Course**  
The College Skills course (COL 103) will enable Early College participants to acquire a solid understanding of the expectations of collegiate course work. The COL 103 course description is as follows: “This course may include selected topics such as career planning, study skills, stress management, tutoring, group guidance, and other subjects to facilitate student success. It is designed to help students gain confidence in their ability to learn and succeed in college.”

## Academic Advising

- **Individual Graduation Plans (IGPs) at MVHS**  
All students are required to participate in an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) meeting each year beginning in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. During these meetings, Early College students will receive guidance from career specialists and career counselors in choosing the appropriate courses for the upcoming year as well as choosing courses at MVHS and ATC that will assist in the career goal that has been set by the student. While advising at MVHS and ATC are critical and required, it is the responsibility of the students and his/her parent to determine if coursework will transfer to the four year institution of their choice.
- **Dual Enrollment Advising**  
All ATC students are assigned to an academic advisor who provides one-on-one assistance and guidance regarding setting and achieving educational goals. The dual enrollment advisor for MVHS Early College students is Ms. Erynn Black. She may be contacted by phone at (803) 508-7263 and/or by email at [black@atc.edu](mailto:black@atc.edu).

## Orientation

An orientation designed specifically for new students (and their parents) participating in the Early College program will be held each year. This orientation will include representatives from MVHS and ATC. Information covered during this meeting will include topics designed to equip parents to provide support and to help students be successful.

## ATC Counseling and Career Planning Services

The mission of Counseling Services is to support students by empowering them to address barriers to success. ATC maintains a staff of professional counselors who are available both day and evening to counsel any student confidentially regarding academic, professional, personal or social concerns. Counseling Services staff members also provide assistance for students affected by emergency situations.

The College provides counseling and career planning services free of charge for all students upon request. Utilizing various assessment instruments, career exploration resources, and educational program information, counselors help students establish career goals. ATC encourages all students to utilize career services resources.

For more information about counseling and career planning services, contact the Enrollment Services Center at (803) 508-7263.

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

- ***MVHS***  
MVHS will provide accommodations for students with Individual Education Plans or Section 504 Plans. Team meetings for Early College students will require the attendance of an ATC staff member.
- ***ATC***  
ATC provides special services to students with disabilities. Our goal is to improve the educational development of all students by offering an accessible and supportive campus environment. The Director of Counseling Services coordinates the provision of services for students with disabilities. In order for a student to receive accommodations based on a disability, the student must submit documentation from a qualified professional. The Director of Counseling Services will review the documentation, determine the appropriate accommodation(s), and provide a Faculty Notification Form to the student. Students receiving reasonable accommodations will submit a Faculty Notification Form to their instructor(s) each academic semester.

## **Financial Aid and Costs**

### **SC Lottery Tuition Assistance**

The SC Lottery Tuition Assistance (LTA) Program is funded by the State of South Carolina. Funding levels are contingent upon State approval for each semester as determined by the S.C. Commission on Higher Education. Funding levels for this program are subject to change on a semester-by-semester basis.

Early College students enrolling in at least six credit hours (two courses) will be eligible to receive LTA, provided they have completed a FAFSA waiver form (see Appendix C). The 2015-16 LTA funding amount for six credit hours was \$600. That amount will be applied to the student's tuition and fees balance, thus reducing costs.

### **Tuition and Fees**

The most up-to-date information about tuition and fees is available online via [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu). For the 2015-16 academic year, the tuition and fees for enrollment in six credit hours for an Aiken County resident is \$1147. Tuition and fees are subject to change.

### **Textbooks and Course Materials**

Students are responsible for purchasing textbooks and supplies (if specified). Information about the textbooks is available online through the ATC Bookstore website via [www.atc.edu](http://www.atc.edu).

Textbook prices vary considerably and are subject to change.

### **Payment Deadlines**

After registering for courses, Early College students will receive information about the payment deadlines for each academic semester. For more information regarding payment, contact the Cashier's Office at (803) 508-7503.

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## **Contact Information**

### **MVHS Contacts**

**Mr. Carl White**, MVHS Principal  
803.593.7100 (Phone)  
cwhite@acpsd.net

**Mr. Jason Schumpert**, Early College Administrator  
803.593.7100 (Phone)  
jschumpert@acpsd.net

**Ms. Elesha Ellison**, MVHS Early College Counselor  
803.593.7104 (Phone) / 803.593.7106 (Fax)  
ellison@acpsd.net

### **ATC Contacts**

**General Education Division**  
(803) 508-7271

**Ms. Jessica Moon**, Director of Enrollment Services  
(803) 508-7262  
moonj@atc.edu

**Ms. Erynn Black**, Enrollment Advisor  
(803) 508-7337  
blacke@atc.edu

### **ATC Resources**

**Academic Success Center**  
(803) 508-7482

**Cashier's Office** (for payment information)  
(803) 508-7503

**Enrollment Services Center**  
(803) 508-7263 (Phone) / (803) 593-6526 (Fax)

**Library**  
(803) 508-7430

## Appendix A

### MIDLAND VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

#### EARLY COLLEGE\*

(Proposed Course Schedule – Effective Summer 2016)

Semester and Course	Sophomore Year	Junior Year	Senior Year
Summer	General Psychology (PSY 201)  College Skills (COL 103)  *Rising Sophomores	Biological Science I (BIO 101)  Human Growth and Development (PSY 203)  *Rising Juniors	Biological Science II (BIO 102)  College Algebra (MAT 110)  Introduction to Theater (THE 101)  *Rising Seniors
Fall	Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101)  Art History and Appreciation (ART 101)	English Composition I (ENG 101)  Western Civilization to 1689 (HIS 101)	American Literature II (ENG 202)  Western Civilization: Post-1689 (HIS 102)  <b>Choose one:</b> Probability & Statistics (MAT 120) College Trigonometry (MAT 111) Finite College Mathematics (MAT 122)
Spring	American Government (PSC 201)  Music Appreciation (MUS 105)	English Composition II (ENG 102)  Macroeconomics (ECO 210)	Public Speaking (SPC 205)  English Literature I (ENG 205)  Ethics (PHI 110)

\* The above display meets the requirements of the Associate in Arts Degree. Adjustments will be needed in courses offered to satisfy the requirements of the Associate in Science Degree.



# Information Release Form

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) establish certain rights for students regarding the privacy of their educational records. While parents/guardians/spouses/and others may have an interest in the student’s records, access to or release of the educational records is only by written student consent. Students may choose to complete and submit this “Information Release Form” to the Enrollment Services Center to allow access or release of their educational records.

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

hereby request and authorize the Aiken Technical College Enrollment Services Office to release information to the following person (people) until I notify the office otherwise.

(P = Parent, G = Guardian, S = Spouse, O = Other)

- \_\_\_ Release to \_\_\_ Cancel Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: P G S O
- \_\_\_ Release to \_\_\_ Cancel Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: P G S O
- \_\_\_ Release to \_\_\_ Cancel Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: P G S O
- \_\_\_ Release to \_\_\_ Cancel Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: P G S O

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Signature Date

~~~~~  
**Office Use Only**

Enrollment Services: \_\_\_\_\_  
Initials/date



## Appendix C

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