



The OCC Advantage program, launched in 2016, is a college and career-readiness program offered to freshmen entering high school at participating area schools. The program supports the development of skills, behaviors, and habits that prepare a student for success in high school, college, and ultimately for their career. Students who successfully complete the OCC Advantage program while in high school will be eligible to complete their associate's degree tuition-free at Onondaga Community College within one year of high school graduation (students must enroll in either the fall or spring semester of the academic year immediately following their graduation).

The OCC Advantage Program funding is considered last dollar. This funding is applied after any state or federal grants, public and private scholarships, or other non-loan financial aid is applied to their account. OCC Advantage program funding covers Fall and Spring full time tuition only. Students will be responsible for all fees, room and board, Box of Books fees, supplies, transportation, Summer or Winter session tuition, and all other college or program fees.

Students may receive bills during the processing period and should contact the financial aid office at OCC with any questions or to confirm the status of their account. By signing this statement of understanding, the student and their parent or guardian indicate understanding of the following criteria which are required of each participant to remain in the program **while in high school**:

1. Attend and complete required programming at OCC. OCC Advantage students in each grade level participate in a full day of college readiness programming that includes topics such as career exploration, and strategies for success in college and career. This programming typically takes place at OCC but will be virtual via Google Classroom for the 2020-21 academic year

2. Grade Point Average – maintain the following end of year high school GPA (on 100-point scale):

- Freshman year – 70 average (based on 2nd semester average)
- Sophomore year – 73 average
- Junior year – 75 average
- Senior year – 77 average

3. Meet the following attendance requirements during high school (number of unexcused absences):

- Freshman year – 5 days (based on 2nd semester)
- Sophomore year – 9 days
- Junior year – 8 days
- Senior year – 7 days

*One restorative workshop will be offered at the high school in September, to students who do not meet the above criteria, #1-3. Students will be eligible to attend the restorative workshop one time during their high school enrollment. Subsequent failure to maintain program requirements will result in removal from the program.

4. Complete community service as required by their high school.

5. Apply to Onondaga Community College by March 1st of their senior year at high school. Students are not required to attend Onondaga Community College to participate in the OCC Advantage program while in high school. However, only high school graduates who meet the requirements and who enroll within one year of high school graduation (Students must enroll in the fall or spring semester immediately following their high school graduation) as a full-time student at Onondaga Community College will be eligible to earn a tuition-free associate degree from OCC.

6. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), apply for the New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and New York State Excelsior Scholarship (if available) by May 15th of senior year. OCC's FAFSA College Code is 002875.



By signing this statement of understanding, the student and their parent or guardian indicate understanding of the following criteria, which are required of each participant to remain eligible to receive a tuition-free associate degree, **while enrolled at Onondaga Community College:**

1. Participate in the Onondaga Community College welcome activities and orientation program prior to beginning freshman year.
2. Full-time enrollment every semester – minimum of 15 credits per semester for four semesters (fall/spring), with completion of 30 credits per academic year. Summer or winter courses may be applied to the completion requirement at the expense of the student. Students who enter OCC with prior college credit in a degree pathway can apply these credits to the 15-credit minimum.
3. Consecutive enrollment – fall/spring until certificate/degree is completed (up to four semesters)
4. GPA requirements (on a 4.0 scale):
 - 1st semester – 2.2
 - 2nd semester – 2.3
 - 3rd semester – 2.5
 - 4th semester – 2.5
5. Complete the FAFSA and applications to the New York State TAP Program and New York State Excelsior Scholarship (if available) – each year by May 15th. OCC’s FAFSA College Code is 002875.
6. The OCC Advantage program funding will be awarded only after all other financial aid awards (excluding loans) are applied. Students who receive bills during the processing period should contact OCC to confirm the status of their account.
7. Community service – participation in at least one college-sanctioned service activity, enrollment in one service-learning course, or one internship per academic year.

Participating high schools/school districts will maintain and share records with Onondaga Community College for participating students’ records in accordance with the requirements of the college readiness program for school attendance, high school GPA and participation in college preparatory programs and activities.

The high school/school district will notify students and parents/guardians regarding student eligibility or ineligibility for the program while enrolled in high school. In the event a student requires restoration and/or remediation or is ineligible for any reason (attendance, GPA, etc.), these reasons will be communicated to the student and parents/family by the high school. Students will be notified each semester following the reporting of grades by the OCC Advantage Program Coordinator at their high school of the student’s eligibility for the program based upon the above criteria.

By signing this Statement of Understanding, we indicate that we have reviewed and understand the criteria for participation in the OCC Advantage college and career-readiness program.

Print name of student

Print name of parent/legal guardian

Signature of student

Date

Signature of parent/legal guardian

Date