

To: All Advisors

From: David Gómez, Ed.D.   
President

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Subject: Policies for Student Success

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In recent weeks, we have spent considerable time discussing the Middle States process, the significance of evidence-based decision-making, and the need to support our students, many of whom face substantial financial and logistical challenges in meeting their academic goals. As we begin the period of academic advisement for the next semester, it is important that we keep in mind what our experience and the research have shown us.

We know, for example, that students who earn college credits in English and Math in their first year graduate at much higher rates than students who do not complete these courses in the first year. Our data further shows that the majority of students who do not take Math in their first semester never complete a Math class. We are fortunate to have Peer Leaders in all of our co-requisite Math and English classes and in the First-Year Seminar, and the peer leaders are a great support for our students' success. They are a tremendous help to students as they transition to college.

We know that many students are struggling financially. Fortunately, there are programs on campus that can provide the support they need. For those students who qualify, they should be referred to programs such as College Discovery, ASAP, and CUNYStart. These programs should always be a first referral for students.

Finally, students have expressed a desire for clear and consistent information on how to meet their academic requirements and accelerate their time to completion. Students should be provided information and guidance that allows them to make intentional decisions about their timeframe to graduate. Degree Maps provides the tools and options for completing 30 credits per year.

Based on our experience, data, and established College and University policy, I am reaffirming my expectations as we provide guidance to students. These are:

1. All incoming students must be advised to continually take Math and English until they complete the necessary sequences, starting in their first semester at Hostos. The goal is to have students earn college credits in both areas by the end of their first year.
2. All incoming Liberal Arts (AA) students must be advised to take the First-Year Seminar in their first year and ideally in their first semester.

3. The Degree Maps (<http://bit.ly/HostosDegreeMap>) shall be used by all members of the campus community when advising students.
4. Students shall be referred to the programs that offer them the best financial support based on their eligibility. College Discovery is the best financial package, followed by ASAP. CUNYStart saves financial aid for students who have significant developmental needs.
5. Students shall be provided the option, and explained the benefits, of taking 30 credits per year by either taking summer and winter classes or 15 credits each semester.

I appreciate your support in adhering to these policies as we begin our academic advisement period for the spring semester.