



Register today – hccs.edu/spring2024

Message from Trustee **Sean Cheben**

District V



Dear Neighbors,

It is my pleasure to communicate with you through my first newsletter. I welcome the honor of serving on the Board of Trustees, representing District V, and look forward to strengthening and expanding the relationship between Houston Community College and the community. Access is vital to our mission of student success. With 18 campuses throughout the Houston metro area and an Online College, there is a place for you at HCC. You can take classes online, on campus, or both for a safe, flexible, and affordable college experience.

HCC is beginning a new era, with new leadership and fresh ideas. We are prepared to embrace the rapidly changing landscape of higher education and will continue to provide the very best in education and workforce training. No matter where you are on your academic or professional journey HCC provides a great setting for you to enhance and complete your credentials.

New Chancellor

The Board of Trustees voted on January 24, 2024, to name Margaret Ford Fisher, Ed.D., the next chancellor of HCC. Dr. Ford Fisher has served as the interim chancellor since September 1, 2023. Her deep institutional knowledge, close to 40 years at HCC in various leadership roles, along with her forward-looking vision and nationally recognized leadership, makes her the ideal leader to navigate HCC towards a future rich in educational excellence and innovation.

New Bachelor Programs

Understanding the critical need for skilled workers in rapidly growing career paths within various sectors of STEM professions and the need for upskilling in healthcare managerial positions, Houston Community College now offers bachelor's degree programs in Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Robotics, and Healthcare Management. These programs launched in Fall 2023 giving students the ability to start and finish a four-year education at HCC. For more information, please visit hccs.edu/programs:

- Artificial Intelligence & Robotics: hccs.edu/ai-bat
- Healthcare Management: hccs.edu/healthcare-bat

In addition to these programs students can receive associate degrees and Level 1 & 2 Certificates in the following areas, please visit our website hccs.edu/programs/areas-of-study for a comprehensive list of program options:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Computer Programming
- Computer Systems Networking
- Cyber Security
- Electronics Engineering

Digital Access Centers

In the Fall of 2023, we took a major step towards increasing the digital footprint of HCC with the opening of nine Digital Access Centers. These centers are all-inclusive spaces for students in need of digital learning support and will provide tools for digital literacy and academic success. These centers are also open to the public, and we encourage you to take advantage of these spaces for your computer access needs. You can find a Digital Learning Center in your neighborhood at the campuses listed below:

- Alief Bissonnet: Room 161
- Alief Hayes: Room A200
- Coleman College: Health Science Tower, Room 210
- Eastside: Angela Morales Building, Room 210
- Felix Fraga: Main Room 306
- Missouri City: Main Room 214A/B
- North Forest: Building E, Room 215
- South: Room 122
- West Loop: Room 137

For more information please visit: hccs.edu/dac

Eagle Markets

HCC has established Eagle Markets, designed to support students and their families by decreasing the burden of food insecurities. The Markets have been made possible through a partnership with the Houston Food Bank Food for Change Program. For more information, please stop by one of the locations below and speak with Eagle Market Staff.

- Central: Monday, Tuesday, Friday: 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.; Wednesday & Thursday: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- Spring Branch: Monday-Friday: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- West Loop: Monday-Friday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Thursday: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

I, along with my colleagues on the Board of Trustees, hope that you will take the next steps to connect with Houston Community College and remember you can enroll at any time. Please visit our website at hccs.edu, if you ever need direct assistance contact me via email at sean.cheben@hccs.edu or leave a message at my direct number 713.718.7435. We are dedicated to the success of all students at HCC and our faculty and staff are here to help you along the way.

We look forward to seeing you on campus at HCC!

Respectfully,

Sean Cheben
HCC Board of Trustees
District V

Dr. Margaret Ford Fisher named chancellor

The HCC Board of Trustees voted unanimously to name Margaret Ford Fisher, Ed.D., as its new chancellor.

“Dr. Ford Fisher’s deep institutional knowledge, coupled with her forward-looking vision and nationally recognized leadership, makes her the ideal leader to navigate HCC towards a future rich in educational excellence and innovation,” said Dr. Cynthia Lenton-Gary, board chair.

Dr. Ford Fisher has dedicated four decades to serving HCC, most recently as interim chancellor from Sept. 2023-Jan. 2024. She was the founding president of HCC Online College and spent 20 years as president of HCC Northeast College.

“I am deeply honored for the opportunity to lead HCC and I thank the Board for the confidence it has placed in me,” Dr. Ford Fisher said. “I am committed to a vision of providing a Real World Education for a Talent Strong Future and look forward to fostering a talent-strong Houston, enriching the lives of all of our students, while elevating our community.”



Trustees acknowledge and honor two new members, one re-elected member

HCC Trustees recently acknowledged and honored two new members and one re-elected member.

New to the board are Laolu Davies-Yemitan, who will represent District IV, and Sean Cheben, who will represent District V.

Davies-Yemitan is a commercial real estate broker and developer who serves as principal at Five Woods Realty. He earned a bachelor’s degree in biotechnology with a minor in chemistry from the University of Houston-Downtown. He also earned an MBA in finance at UHD.

Cheben has held multiple roles in the energy business. He earned a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

He attended Clear Creek Independent School District schools through elementary, middle and high school.

In addition, Dr. Pretta VanDible Stallworth of District IX has been re-elected to serve a third term. She served as a board member from 1989-1993 and from 2017 until present.

She holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in chemical engineering from Rice University as well as a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Texas Southern University. She also holds an MBA and a doctorate in Christian education.

The trustees serve as the governing body of the college system. It has nine members who are elected from single-member districts. Board members hold staggered six-year terms and serve without remuneration.

HCC enrollment continues moving upward

Community colleges across Texas are seeing a post-pandemic recovery in enrollment.

The Texas Tribune reported that a total of 676,141 students were enrolled in community colleges this fall, a 4.25% increase in enrollment since 2021 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

HCC saw its own enrollment jump by 3% this past fall semester, while the spring semester saw an increase of 13%. Students are attracted by the high quality of the programs and

HCC’s affordability, where degrees can be earned for lower tuition costs than four-year colleges.

“Our programs are valued, and students are seeing that we are offering a path to real-world education that can lead to meaningful careers,” said Chancellor Dr. Ford Fisher. “The future looks bright for HCC, and our teams of counselors and financial aid specialists are ready to assist students get on board.”

HCC’s VAST Academy recognized with Star Award

HCC received a 2023 Star Award from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for its exceptional contributions of its Vocational Advancement and Skill Training (VAST) Academy.

The VAST Academy provides post-secondary transition programs and support services that lead to meaningful credentials, employment and independence for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

“The VAST Academy was a great experience for me,” said Patrick Hill, a recent student who earned an associate degree in culinary arts. “It gave me the confidence to excel in my field and to further my education.”

Learn more about VAST at hccs.edu/vast



HCC Online College is a convenient path to certificates, degrees

When HCC launched its online college, no one could have predicted its growth and success in providing pathways to students now thriving in careers.

Repeatedly named by Newsweek as one of the nation’s Top 150 online colleges, HCC provides options for students too busy to attend on-campus classes.

“Our outstanding online classes deliver the same high-quality instruction as HCC’s in-person classes,” said Jerome Drain, Ph.D., interim HCC Online College president.

HCC offers 60 online and 70 hybrid online programs, including thousands of courses in more than 80 academic and workforce disciplines.

HCC’s Office of Institutional Research indicates that students learn equally well in online classes when compared to students in traditional classes. Students can also apply for financial aid and receive counseling on which courses to take—conveniently all online.

What’s more, HCC recently opened Digital Access Centers (DAC) across the system. DACs are spaces with access to technology where students, including online students, will have internet access, noise canceling headphones, a quiet place to think, write, taken an exam, or study with other students or meet an HCC tutor.

This work and other efforts led to HCC recently being named a member of the American Association of Colleges and Universities Institute on Digital Equity as a national leader in online education.

“We’re helping people in the community have a place to learn the skills needed to become a part of the digital world—something many have been unable to attain,” Dr. Drain said.

Learn more at hccs.edu/online



DEGREE HIGHLIGHTS

NATIONALLY

#1

among 2-year institutions awarding associate degrees to international students

#2

among 2-year public institutions in awarding associate degrees to Black students

IN TEXAS

#1

in awarding associate degrees to Asian students

#2

in awarding associate degrees to total students

#3

in awarding associate degrees to Hispanic students

TOP 10 WORKFORCE DEGREE PROGRAMS BY ENROLLMENT DURING FALL 2023

- Business Management
- Accounting
- Computer Systems Networking
- Business Technology
- Digital Communication
- Real Estate
- Welding-Structural
- Automotive Technician
- Nursing
- Interior Design

STUDENT ENROLLMENT FOR 2022-2023

85,858

Hispanic / Latino	Black / African-American	White	Asian	Other
38.9%	26.2%	14.2%	12.4%	8.4%

DEGREES & AWARDS OFFERED

63 Associate of Applied Science	2 Bachelor of Arts	3 Enhanced Skills Certificates
12 Associate of Arts	73 Certificate Level 1	2 Advanced Technical Certificates
	35 Certificate Level 2	11 Occupational Skills Certificates