

English Transcript for *Montgomery County Community College*

We're back with Dennis Barrera, assistant director of admissions for Montgomery County Community College. And now that we know a little bit more about the College, Dennis is going to take some time to speak with us about the application and evaluation processes. >> I'm happy to do so. >> So, to begin with let's just discuss the, the process of applying to Montgomery County Community College, beginning with the basics. So what are the requirements to apply to the college? >> The requirements are, to complete the application it's downloadable through our website mc3.edu. Once you do that, we do need verification of that equivalent of a U.S. high school diploma. This can take the form of transcripts, certified copies of the diploma itself, as well as a statement of marks, things of that nature. The second, or the third element, actually, is the financial statement. Students do have to show a financial statement balance of about \$22,000 in a savings account. It doesn't necessarily have to be in the student's name, but if it isn't, that person must also complete a notarized affidavit of support. Only if the students are applying from outside the United States, do they have to submit a TOEFL or IELTS score. Many of our students are actually transferring from other institutions inside the United States, and they can simply come on campus and take our ESL placement test to determine ESL placement. With that, those are the major requirements of the application. Some students we do ask them when they enroll to also submit their immunization records. But those are the full requirements to enter the college. >> And next, can you outline your application deadlines and the, the basic process that the students would go through to apply? >> For students that are transferring from another institution, the United States, we ask them we ask them to send us an email at admissions@MC3.edu. Because we practice something called enrolling admission, rolling admissions, meaning there's not a hard deadline to submit your application. But as the semesters draw near, we do advise, we'd like to work with every student to make sure that they're properly enrolled by the start of the classes. Classes for the Fall semester usually start in late August. And then classes for the Spring semester usually start in mid January. If you're applying from outside the United States, then the application, there is an application deadline. And that's July first for the fall semester, and November first for the spring semester. And that this is so we can process the I-20 paperwork. And have it to the student in a timely manner for the, for the interview. >> Now, Dennis, do you find that there are certain pieces or parts of the application process that tend to confuse international students, and, and if so, what are they? >> I think there is one important piece, and that is the TOEFL and the IELTS requirement. Many students, and this is common place with a lot of other institutions, feel that they need to score a certain minimum in order to be admitted to the college, and that's not the case. The reason we ask for the TOEFL and the IELTS, is so that we can assess how much IELTS is required prior to taking those college level courses. It helps us hold the spot for the student. As they're entering the school itself rather than us assessing ESL a few days before the semester begins. So, students must take these tests, but there is no minimum to gain admission to the college. If students want to be waived of the, any ESL, then they have to score above a certain, a certain mark, or they have to earn a TOEFL score of 79 or higher on the IBT. Or 6.5 or higher on the IELTS. >> Dennis, you explained to us the idea of open admission, and how community colleges work on open admission. But can you walk us through the process from the time that an international application is complete and submitted to you, until a student receives their decision? >> Sure. It happens at a much more rapid rate than, say a four year institution. what, when the application comes into the office, one of the things that we do is to

make sure that we either have the original documents or that we have certified copies of everything that we need. One of the, the documents that we closely inspect will be the financial statement, affidavit of support, as well as the transcript or diploma. This is so that we verify that the student definitely has the highest, the US equivalent of a high school diploma or completion of secondary school. Or if they have a university credits. Some students will want to transfer those credits in. The possibility does exist, but we do ask for a course by course evaluation, from a provider like world education services, or educational credential evaluators. Any evaluator that's approved by NACI can be used when students are applying to us. Once we go through all these documents and they're they meet the minimal requirement, we immediately send the admissions letter along with the I20. >> And then the students get to celebrate. >> And the students get to celebrate, yes. Well they, the celebrations continue once they come on campus as well. So there's a big celebration orientation. >> As an open admissions college, what is it that you look for to accept a student? >> It really is it's really just a bare bones diploma. The minimum diploma required, and then any student who is just proactive in getting their admissions criteria, the various few admissions criteria in. It's a different from a four year college. I mean, there's no committee that you know, dissects different elements of an application that, you know, the traditional recommendations, the essays, did they do extracurricular activities, did they take any biology courses. What is it that's so special about this student they should be honored to come to our institution? The mission of community college is to be very inclusive, and to be accessible to those that are interested in getting a quality education. So the dynamic is very different in that, we don't do any of those things. We don't get together in committee meetings and read over applications. It's really a matter of processing and working with the student to make sure, make sure they're reaching their educational goals. >> So Dennis are there any situations in, in which an international applicant to Montgomery County community college, would be denied admission to the college? >> The only scenarios I can think of are one is the student doesn't have the equivalent of the high school diploma. They still need to graduate high school or show the documentation necessary to enroll in our college. That's the one, one minimum requirement we have and we need to keep that so that we can stay regionally accredited. And the only, and it's, maybe happened once in the six years that I have been with the college. But if on an off year that the student needs a certain level of ESL and that particular course isn't running that semester, then the student, we're just not providing the classroom for the student. With the students now submitting, standardized test scores for English, we're able to create cohorts at a much earlier time and that eliminates that problem, we haven't seen that problem in about four years. >> So how if, if at all, does the application process to Montgomery County Community College differ for international students than it would for say, a student from Pennsylvania? >> The international students must provide that statement of support. And this goes along the lines with, what's handed down to us from the state department and the SEVP, the student exchange visitors program. And it's the stipulations of the F1 visa. The students are there to study and they need to be self-funded. So, that's the only true additional requirement and also the, the immunization at the time of enrollment. Just provide documentation for that. Those are the only true I would say, unique qualifiers for admissions to the college. >> I was hoping that you can address a popular myth that I hear a lot. students, international students will often believe that a college has a quota or a limit on how many international students they can accept maybe overall or how many students from a single country. Do any such quotas or limits exist at Montgomery County Community College? >> They do not. We accept all students from all different kinds of backgrounds. And

we've got students from pretty much all over the world. Even then one of the unique characteristics about our community of Montgomery County, is that we have a rather large South Korean immigrant community. With that, about 50% of our international students are from South Korea. So, they have the connections to the community there, while they're getting their quality college education about five miles away from where that community is based. So there's no, we've never done a quota and said oh, we've got too many Korean students, we have too many students from Saudi Arabia. We just accept them as they come in. >> We'll take another quick break, and we'll come back to speak with Dennis about the pieces of the application. [BLANK_AUDIO]