



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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February 22, 2008

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: New Initiative – Cambridge College Courses: Human Services and Bridge to Community College

Overview

Cambridge College is offering three courses for the Spring 2008 semester for Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) clients who are currently residing in shelters in the Boston area. Cambridge College will offer courses in Human Services: *Self Care for Helping Professionals*, *College Writing I* and *Principles and Process of Adult Learning*.

Cambridge College is also offering a program (*Bridge to Community College*) for those teen parents enrolled in the Young Parents Program (YPP) who are currently earning their General Educational Development (GED)/high school diploma. This course will serve as a bridge for these teen parents to move on to community college. While teen parents are attending this program, they meet the education requirement.

These courses are scheduled to begin March 3, 2008.

Purpose of Memo

The purpose of this memo is to inform TAO Staff about:

- the courses offered at Cambridge College;
- marketing the courses to our clients; and
- enrolling clients in these programs.

**Cambridge
College Courses:
Human Services**

The Human Services program at Cambridge College consists of three areas of study: *Self Care for Helping Professionals*, *College Writing I* and *Principles and Process of Adult Learning*. These are being offered to clients, both exempt and nonexempt, who have a GED or high school diploma, are homeless and are currently residing in shelters in the Boston area. Our clients will have the opportunity to receive three college credits for each of these courses which may be used towards further education.

The *Self Care for Helping Professionals* course focuses on the impact that stress can have on clients' physical and mental health, job functioning, learning, and on their relationships with family and others. Clients will learn ways to deal with the stress that is often part of everyday life, will learn concrete skills to take better care of themselves and will be able to pass these skills on to those with whom they live or work. Topics that will be addressed are stress management, relaxation techniques, physical activity, nutrition, time management, cognitive restructuring, and attitude.

The *College Writing I* course focuses on readings, class discussions, small group collaborations, and different forms of writing, to help clients learn the skills and process of "thinking on paper." Clients learn to construct an argument or discussion that supports a clear thesis and to present it effectively in a well-organized essay. Clients will write academic papers that analyze the issues suggested in two or more readings. Critical reading, critical thinking, research skills, and forms of documentation are also introduced.

The *Principles and Process of Adult Learning* course focuses on helping clients clarify their career goals as well as the steps needed to achieve those goals by exploring theories of adult learning. Clients will focus on past learning experiences in an effort to identify strengths and transferable skills to today's job market. Clients will clarify the connection between their current academic program and their own learning styles and career needs to see how their prior learning fits with their overall academic and career goals. Within the class, they will assess their thinking skills, mathematics, writing and computer literacy skills as they relate to their employment goals.

In addition to these areas of study, clients will also be required to perform computer lab work, participate in writing workshops and one-on-one staff tutorials totaling 30 hours per week.

**Cambridge
College Courses:**
Bridge to
Community
College

The *Bridge to Community College* program will offer teens enrolled in YPP a bridge from GED testing to community college. The intention of this program is to improve the success rate at the college level. Since this program is part of YPP, it meets the teen parent's education requirement and will not count towards the 12-month education and training counter.

The program takes place for a minimum of twenty hours per week for one semester and will target students who will soon have a GED, but have weak basic skills. In addition to developmental classes in pre-college reading, study skills, writing, and math, teen parents will participate in seminars to support academic and social success at college. These classes will be held at Cambridge College and the YPP sites.

YPP providers in conjunction with this program will start a community college support group for teen parents to promote social connections and peer support for academic achievement at college. YPP staff will meet weekly with these teen parents to provide continued case management and family support services.

**Marketing
Cambridge
College Courses**

To ensure that all TAFDC clients are aware of the courses in Human Services at Cambridge College, staff from DTA and Cambridge College held learning sessions at Boston area shelters in February.

To ensure that our teen parents are aware of the YPP course at Cambridge College, staff from DTA and Cambridge College held learning sessions at Boston area YPPs in early February.

At each of these sessions, clients were able to learn about the courses offered, ask questions about the courses and find out how to enroll in these programs.

**Enrolling Clients
in Cambridge
College Courses**

AU Managers must refer clients interested in the Human Services courses at Cambridge College by doing the following:

- on the ESP Referral Disposition window select the activity Skills Training;
- select Cambridge College from the Resource field; and
- refer the client to Cambridge College following established procedures.

Referrals to YPP should be made following established procedures. Teen parents should not be removed from the YPP activity until they have completed the YPP activity, successfully completed the *Bridge to Community College* program or have decided not to complete the program.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.
