Welcome to the EMS Programs information session. This presentation session will cover basic information about the advanced level Emergency Medical Professional and the role of the Paramedic and Advanced EMT in the health care team. Program application and admissions processes and resources for applicants will also be discussed. We thank you for seeking information about the EMS Professions and our EMS Professions program here at Austin Community College. ACC offers an Associate of Applied Science Degree and a level II Certificates for Paramedic. In addition, we offer a level one certificate for AEMT. You can obtain the EMSP certificate and degree plans from the ACC catalog, in print and online, from the Health Sciences information office, and from the EMSP website. We recommend that you have a copy of the certificate or degree plan you are pursuing while viewing this presentation. Significant information will be provided on the slides and in the audio narrative. You may want to view this presentation several times to ensure that you have all the information you need to apply for admission to an EMSP program.
At the end of this information session, you will complete an assessment to assure that you have achieved the objectives of this presentation. Please note that the application process is the same for the AAS degree program and the Level I and Level II certificate program for Paramedic and Advanced EMT.
Detailed information on topics covered in this presentation can be obtained by clicking on the links to the left of these slides. If you have questions during the presentation, click on the pause button at the bottom of the slide, write down your question, and then check the frequently asked questions section on the EMSP website or speak to the health sciences information specialist for answers. Contact information for health sciences and the EMSP program is found at the end of this presentation.

We will review the information listed here in detail in the upcoming slides.
The Paramedic is an integral part of the health care team and is responsible for the health and safety of the patients in their care during an emergency situation. The paramedic works typically in the out-of-hospital environment on an ambulance, fire apparatus, or aircraft. The profession carries an extremely high level of responsibility as the paramedic makes critical assessment, diagnostic and treatment decisions as the lead member of a team of emergency responders. Thanks to television and extensive media coverage during disasters, most people think of paramedics and EMTs as people who simply pick up the sick and injured at the scene of an accident or disaster and drive them to the hospital. The actual profession of EMS is far more complicated and gratifying than the one aspect of patient transport. The Paramedic is often the first medical professional in contact with the patient and starts the process of assessment, diagnosis and treatment of the patient. This is all done under the license and oversight of a physician, usually specially trained to oversee an EMS system. This oversight is accomplished primarily in an “offline” fashion in the ACC service area, so the ACC paramedic is highly trained in the art and science of assessment, working diagnosis development, and treatment of the urgent, emergent and minor care patient. In addition, the paramedic can be found working in the clinical settings of interventional radiology and imaging involving cardiology and gastroenterology. Many paramedics work in the area of clinical research using their skills in drug research and as emergency responders for these projects.
Paramedics are the highest level of licensure or certification for this area of study. They are called paramedics and not EMTs or techs. The Advanced EMT is an interim level between the basic EMT and the paramedic. This individual is considered a technician and specializes in trauma care. Under current state rules, this level of certification allows for limited advanced skills beyond the basic skills of the EMT. The paramedic works independently, usually in a team of responders without a physician on the responding team. Although direct contact with a base physician is available, most patient care is provided using standing orders or clinical operating guidelines provided by the physician and used once the patient has been assessed and a working diagnosis is established. Although every effort is made to preserve the safety of the paramedic and their patients, the environment in which the paramedic works can be inherently dangerous and this danger must not be minimized when contemplating the decision to enter into this profession. Dangers include those seen by any healthcare professional working with patients suffering from disease, but also include the hazards created by working in traffic, rescue operations, and violent scenes. Every effort is made by the ACC EMS professions program to prepare the entering paramedic for these hazards through education, training and awareness. The paramedic must be able to deal with patients in all types of settings from busy streets to private homes. He or she must also be able to advocate for their patient within the health care system and communicate well with family members and other health care professionals to whom they are transferring care. In addition, the paramedic must be able to work with other public safety agencies involved in the safety and rescue of patients and be able to serve as team leaders in the coordination and execution of the medical aspect of patient rescue.
The ACC EMS Professions offers an Associate of Applied Science in EMS Professions. This 68 credit hour program qualifies the graduate to take the National Registry Exam for the Paramedic and qualifies for licensure as a Paramedic in the state of Texas upon successful completion of National Registry. The EMS Professions also offers a Paramedic Certificate for those who already hold a degree in another area or prefer not to pursue an associate degree at this time. This 45 credit hour program qualifies the graduate to take the National Registry Exam for Paramedic and qualifies for certification as a Paramedic in the state of Texas upon successful completion of National Registry. The 21 credit hour AEMT Level I Certificate allows the student to exit the Paramedic program after the second semester if they do not wish to complete the program. It also qualifies the student to take the National Registry Exam for AEMT curriculum and for certification as an AEMT in the state of Texas upon successful completion of National Registry. This interim certificate is optional for Paramedic students.
All EMSP advanced courses are taught at the ACC Eastview Campus where the dedicated EMS labs are housed. All courses are supplemented, some heavily, with online content, using Blackboard, ACC’s online platform. All EMSP students are required to have and maintain an email account while in the program. In the dedicated EMS labs, students have access to the latest in medical simulation technology as well as manikins used to practice specific patient care skills such as Intravenous access, medication administration and advanced airway management. Open lab practice times are available through the lab manager by appointment 5 days per week with some evening hours available. EMSP students are required to have a variety of clinical experiences throughout their education. All clinical opportunities are provided by local area services and hospitals and are managed and arranged by the EMSP clinical coordinator. Clinical rotations are a challenging and critical learning experience for the new EMS professional. Students provide patient assessments and care under the supervision of EMS faculty and/or site preceptors. Clinical rotation assignments vary in availability during the week and may occur on any weekday or time depending on the site. The student should be prepared to experience their learning during non-traditional hours. The clinical experience culminates with a practicum in the final semester. During this practicum, the student is assigned to one Field Training Officer who will help the student to reach their outcome goals and objectives. This practicum consists of 240 hours as a full member of an EMS crew at the one or our area EMS providers.
When choosing a program for your Paramedic Education, it is helpful to know how students fare once graduating from the program. Austin Community College EMS Professions has a pass rate of 99% pass on the first attempt over the past 5 years. The second attempt pass rate is 100%. ACC EMS Professions accomplishes this success rate by providing excellent instruction by seasoned EMS professionals and educators. Class sizes are limited to 25 for the lecture sections and the instructor to student ratio in lab is 1:5. Clinical experiences are personalized with individualized instruction during the practicum and the ER rotations. In addition, all aspects of the EMS Professions program meet or exceed the requirements of our accrediting agencies.
Accreditation is important when considering any health sciences program. ACC holds institutional accreditation which allows students to transfer courses to other regionally accredited institutions. For example, should an ACC EMSP graduate seek a higher EMS degree at a university, the applicant would have coursework that could be evaluated for transfer. Many courses such as core requirements transfer directly and others can be evaluated individually for credit. Extremely important to the applicant and student is accreditation specific to the Paramedic program also known as programmatic accreditation. CAAHEP accreditation is a peer review, voluntary process that assures the applicant and student that our EMS Program has met a national standard comparable to all other CAAHEP accredited Paramedic programs in the United States.
CAAHEP accreditation also assures that students will be able to sit for the National Registry of EMT’s National Certification Exam. This exam is the current process by which the State of Texas licenses and certifies all EMS providers, meaning that anyone wishing to be licensed or certified as a Paramedic in Texas MUST sit for and pass this exam. The National Registry of EMTs has announced that they will only make the exam available to graduates of Accredited Paramedic programs starting in January 2012. Those seeking certification as an AEMT or EMT will still be allowed to take the National Registry exam regardless of accreditation. The EMS Program currently hosts at least 2 National Registry Skills Exams per year. The written exam is taken at a private testing site. You can read more about the National Registry of EMTs by accessing their website at www.nremt.org
The next few slides discuss requirements and specifications for EMS Paramedics. The Paramedic must be able to assess, provide a working diagnosis and initial stabilization and treatment plan for every patient they encounter as well as provide safe and efficient transport and transfer of care for these patients. This requires a fast thinking, rapidly responding, flexible individual with many talents beyond their driving and rescue skills. The paramedic must be able to gather information quickly and efficiently from a variety of sources including the patient, technology, and other responders. This information must be rapidly interpreted and used to develop a working diagnosis and treatment plan. Essential characteristics of the paramedic include an ability to think critically and have excellent judgment and decision making skills. In addition, the paramedic must be a confident leader who willingly accepts high degrees of responsibility. Paramedics must be independent thinkers with high levels of curiosity in order to maintain currency in knowledge in a rapidly changing field. Communications skills are the cornerstone of the successful paramedic. The paramedic must be extremely ethical, compassionate, and empathetic. In order to be a safe and successful paramedic, the candidate must possess strong math and science skills. These are essential to the safe administration to medication and competence in assessment, diagnosis and treatment of a patient. Street navigation, map reading and a good memory are necessary as well. The physical requirements for the job of paramedic require good physical stamina, endurance, and body condition that would not be adversely affected by frequent walking, standing, lifting, carrying, and balancing, at times, in excess of 125 lbs. Visual acuity must be adequate to read small print and interpret patient information in written format as well as interpret wave forms and information from assessment technology devices. Auditory acuity must be adequate to interpret assessment findings using a stethoscope or Doppler devices.
Technical Standards

- Technical Standards and Essential Functions include:
  - Observation
  - Communication
  - Motor skills
  - Intellectual Abilities
  - Behavioral and Social Attributes

Please note that every health science program here at ACC has technical standards and essential functions. The general categories and definitions apply to all programs. Each program then lists a few specific examples of the technical standards for that program and profession. For more information on the technical standards and essential functions for the EMS Professions student and EMS Provider, please click on the student resources link on the left and see the complete list in the student handbook starting on page 65.
Some personal factors that applicants must consider include the demands on the student's time and the level of intensity of the paramedic program. Regardless of previous educational level or background, students within the paramedic program are faced with learning experiences and materials that are vastly different from any they may have previously experienced. The amount of time spent in study, practice, attending classes, labs and clinicals will impact every student's personal relationships, ability to work during the program, and recreational activities. Even students who have had high grades in previous courses find themselves challenged by this material. In addition, the skills necessary to become a practicing paramedic are many and complicated and require additional practice time outside of regularly scheduled labs. Should a student fail to meet the minimum requirements of any course, they may repeat that course one time. Failure to pass the course on the second attempt will result in removal from the program. A specific process for re-entry is required for a third attempt.

**Personal Factors**

- The EMS Professions Program is time consuming
  - Full time program of study that will impact your personal life including relationships, work, and recreational activities
- The EMS Professions Program is academically challenging
  - There are minimum passing grades on each exam as well as minimum passing grades for each course
Working while attending the EMS Professions program is extremely challenging and requires immense organizational skills and the ability to avoid procrastination at all times. Not only is it difficult to find time to study, but trying to balance work schedules and program attendance requirements may be impossible depending on the job you are trying to do. This chart provides a guideline for the amount of time the average student should expect to spend in class and in preparation each week from the first day of the program through graduation if following the standard 5 semester format. Note that all times are increased for semesters occurring during summer due to the shorter semester. You may need more study or practice time each week to be successful. You may also need to seek assistance with study or test taking skills. Please note that the only place that the student may practice advanced EMS skills is in the EMSP labs or at the clinical site.
As you can see from the chart above, the hours needed to prepare for class, do homework, and study for exams exceeds the full time work schedule that most people are accustomed to. Applicants may want to consider taking as many of their non EMS courses as possible prior to admission to the program. This is especially important if you are considering working while attending school. There is a misconception that clinical hours do not generate any preparatory or study time beyond actual attendance. Clinical experiences all require documentation and homework assignments that can take significant time to complete.
Attendance is critical for didactic, lab and clinical courses. Anything in the student’s life that will negatively impact attendance and or the ability to focus during the program must be addressed prior to attempting the coursework. It is the responsibility of the EMS Professions program to secure clinical placements. All current clinical affiliates for the EMS Program are within the greater Austin area. Students may be assigned to any clinical affiliate used by the program. Requests for specific clinical sites and locations will not be accepted. EMS Professions students are required to demonstrate a variety of computer skills throughout the length of the program. This includes web research, online submission of papers, and using the college online teaching platform, Blackboard. Children are not allowed in any EMSP classroom, lab or clinical site. In addition, unattended children are never allowed on campus. Please make sure that you have safe and proper child care arrangements during your tenure as a student.
Another important consideration when selecting a Paramedic program is cost. ACC tuition and fees that are charged to all students are found in the ACC course schedule and the ACC annual catalog either in print or online from the current students link on the ACC home page. Health science students will have additional fees for labs and liability insurance as well as clinical site fees. The applicant should also plan for costs associated with books, uniforms and travel to clinical sites and campus. Once admitted to the program, the student will need funds for housing, food, clothing, car upkeep and family expenses. ACC does not provide student housing but there are a variety of student friendly housing options with a few miles of the Eastview campus. All of the above should be taken into consideration during financial planning.
To begin the process of applying for admission to the EMS Professions Program, you should follow these steps which may be done concurrently. It is critical that you begin your immunizations as soon as possible, as some immunization dosage sequences may take several months to complete. Many people already have these immunizations and only need to compile the documentation for submission. Do not forget to print out a copy of the verification you will complete at the end of this presentation. You must submit a copy of the verification with your application materials.
To provide documentation of your program preparedness, you will need to submit the following:
Applications to the EMSP program are taken on a first come first served basis. All applicants that meet the minimum application requirements will be admitted to the 25 available spaces for each starting class. The deadlines listed to the left of this presentation are designed to give the applicant the best date by which to maximize their chance at admission for the following term. Applications will be accepted until all seats are filled or the last date that applications can be processed for criminal background checks has been reached. This date is usually 4 weeks prior to the start of classes.
Prior to submitting the application to the Health Sciences Office, room 8356 please make sure that the application contains the following: A record of ALL required immunizations, unofficial copies of transcripts from other colleges or universities. These will be separate from the official transcripts sent to ACC upon your application to the college. A copy of your Texas Success Initiative status which you can obtain from your advisor during the admissions process, from the admissions and records office, or online under your student online account; a copy of your EMT certification from either national registry or the State of Texas OR proof of enrollment in an EMT class with a letter of good standing from your instructor. And finally, submit a copy of your verification of successful completion of this online information session. The Health Data form and criminal background check require a fee from the student and are therefore only submitted when the applicant is conditionally accepted into the program. If you completed the criminal background check for your ACC EMT class and will not be skipping a semester prior to starting EMS advanced classes, you may not have to repeat this requirement. You will be notified in your letter of conditional acceptance what steps you should take. Criminal background checks for other schools or agencies cannot be accepted by ACC. Please read through the information provided on the Health Sciences website about criminal background checks and if you have any questions regarding the criteria or the process, please contact the Health Sciences Compliance Coordinator at www.co@austincc.edu

**Application Documents**

- All applicants, regardless of prior background or level of education, must meet all application requirements
- Take the completed application to the Health Sciences office in room 8356 at the Eastview Campus
- **DO NOT** submit the Health Data form
- **DO NOT** do the Criminal Background Check
There are several sequences of courses required for successful completion of all the EMSP certificates or degrees. We will start by reviewing some of early prerequisites common to both certificates and the degree plan. All students must have their EMT basic certification prior to registration for the second semester. This means that those applicants accepted based on their current enrollment in an EMT program during the previous semester, must take and pass their national registry exam prior to the start of the following semester’s registration. All students must complete Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology prior to being able to take the traditional second semester classes of EMSP 1355 and EMSP 1261. In order to sit for the National Registry AEMT exam and earn the level one certificate, the student must have completed Medical Terminology. Finally, all students taking cardiology, must have completed or be currently enrolled in Pharmacology for Healthcare professionals. In addition to these highlighted courses, many EMSP courses are prerequisite to other, higher level EMSP courses, but not all of them. A complete list of courses and their prerequisites is available on line or in print in the Annual Catalog of courses on the main ACC website. All Core requirement courses and other non-EMSP courses listed in the degree plan are considered co-requisite and must be completed prior to the conferring of the degree.
Questions?

Contact the Health Sciences Information and Admissions Office
Eastview Campus, Building 8000, Room 8356
3401 Webberville Road
Austin, TX 78702
Phone: 512.223.5700 or
Toll Free: 888.686.1697
Email: healthsciences@austincc.edu
Hours: 8am-5pm Monday - Friday

If you have questions that were not answered in this presentation or in the frequently asked questions, contact the health sciences information office. If they are not able to answer your question about EMS Professions, you will be referred to the appropriate person within the EMS Professions program for assistance. This completes your EMS Professions information session. Please click on the verification tab at the top of your screen to begin the post-test. Thank you for your interest in our program. We look forward to seeing you in the classroom.