



## **“Your ONE-STOP-SHOP for support”**

The Cougar Support Center is here to support students in need of additional assistance as they venture through their educational path at Taft College. The mission of the CSC is to collaborate with on-campus programs and community resources to create a student-centered ecosystem that cultivates a sense of belonging for all, creates an equitable environment, closes the gap amongst a diverse population, and removes the barriers associated with basic needs. The Cougar Support Center team is committed to offering a holistic environment within a one-stop shop to serve the students’ basic needs which includes but are not limited to the following: financial assistance, a nutritious and sufficient food pantry, clothing pantry, housing assistance/support, technology, and transportation. The Cougar Support Center team is here to provide information and resources to combat everyday hardships which adversely affect the ability of TC students to complete their academic, professional, and personal development objectives.

Currently the Cougar Support Center (CSC) is located in the old IT building just west of the Administration Building.

### **Cougar Support Center Hours**

#### **Fall and Spring**

Monday – Thursday

8 am - 5 pm

Fridays

8 am – 2pm

Closed on Holidays

#### **Winter and Summer**

Monday through Thursday

10 am – 2 pm

Check the webpage for updates on evening hours and weekends

**Call the CSC front desk to schedule an appointment with the CSC Coordinator or Supervisor**

[basic.needs@taftcollege.edu](mailto:basic.needs@taftcollege.edu)



**TAFTCOLLEGE**

**COUGAR  
SUPPORT CENTER**

661-763-7812

**Cougar Support Center Coordinator**

661-763-7814

**Student Life and Basic Needs Coordinator**

Myisha Cutrona

[mcutrona@taftcollege.edu](mailto:mcutrona@taftcollege.edu)

[661-763-7887](tel:661-763-7887)

Submit a [CSC Request form](#) online to request hygiene products, items from the food pantry, clothing, and more. You can also request more information about other on-campus and community resources.

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## **Cougar Support Center Direct Services**

### **TC Pantry**

#### **What's in the TC pantry?**

The TC Pantry is located inside the Cougar Support Center. In the pantry there will be non-perishables, toiletries, hygiene products and even a clothes closet. Students can also request a grocery gift card, gas card, and/or a meal voucher for the Taft College Cougar Café. (eligibility for grocery/gas cards and meal vouchers are dependent on each student's financial aid). Perishable items are available periodically. Check the Cougar Support Center webpage for details.

#### **Pantry guidelines:**

Number of Visits Per Week: 3 visits

Maximum number of items per visit:

- Food Items: 15 total, no more than 3 of one item
- Hygiene products: 8 total, no more than 2 of one item
- Water: no more than 3
- Perishable food items: choose 3 items from the available list (no more than 1 of each)
- Towels, face clothes, blankets: one of each per semester.
- Clothing (students can choose during a visit to the center)



CSC Front Desk: 661-763-7812

### **Cougar Support Program (Financial Assistance)**

Taft College students can work with the CSC coordinator or designee to become a part of the CSC program to receive financial assistance. Once a case file is created for the student, the student will receive guidance on how to leverage community and campus resources to offset their bills and financial needs. Students in the program will need to sign the CSC agreement prior to receiving any financial assistance. Financial assistance for the CSC program can include bill pay, rental/housing assistance, and emergency housing.

CSC Coordinator: 661-763-7814

Student Life and Basic Needs: 661-763-7887

### **Cougar Support Program (Vouchers & Grocery/Gas Cards)**

The Cougar Support Center offers meal vouchers, grocery & gas gift cards upon request. Students can submit an interest form or an online request for a voucher or card. Once submitted, the CSC staff will check with financial aid to determine the requestors eligibility. An email will go to the students confirming a pickup day and time if the student is eligible for this type of aid.

- One gas and/or grocery card per month
- Three meal vouchers per week

*(limit is subject to change based depending on the budget)*

CSC Front Desk: 661-763-7812

CSC Coordinator: 661-763-7814

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## **On-Campus Resources**

### **CalFresh Outreach of Taft College**

Taft College participates in a state-wide outreach program to encourage and aid eligible students with the application and verification process. Taft College CalFresh Outreach (TCCFO) will then follow-up and assist students with the semi-annual and annual reporting to continue eligibility for CalFresh benefits. **The Taft College CalFresh Outreach pre-screens students for eligibility criteria only and does not determine eligibility or award EBT benefits.**



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Students may be eligible for CalFresh if your household income is lower than the maximum limit for the household size. A household is defined as a person living alone or group of people living together, related or not, who buy food and make meals together. A student 22 years or older and living with his/her parent(s) can apply as an individual household. Students who live on-campus and have a meal plan are not eligible. CARE meals are not considered a meal plan.

Call: 661-763-7782

Text: 661-745-8067

E-mail: [calfreshoutreach@taftcollege.edu](mailto:calfreshoutreach@taftcollege.edu)

### **California Dream Act (Eligible Non-Citizens & U.S. Citizens)**

Assembly Bills 130 & 131, known as the California Dream Act of 2011, are laws increasing access to financial aid for undocumented students who attend a public university, community college or private college in California. In order to qualify, students must meet the requirements of AB 540 and NOT be eligible to apply for the FAFSA. Students who meet these requirements must complete the [California Dream Act Application](#).

### **How do I apply?**

Fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Once the application is complete, it will take approximately 5-10 business days for your FAFSA application to be processed into the system.

### **AB540**

Fill out the California Dream Act online at <https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>. Once the application is complete, it will take approximately 2 weeks for the Dream Act Application to be processed into the system.

### **Chafee Grant**

Taft College students who are or were in foster care for at least one day, between the ages of 16 and 18 as a dependent or ward of the court and have financial need, may qualify for up to \$5,000 a year for college. Students don't have to pay this money back and may also be able to use their grant to help pay for childcare, transportation and rent while in school.

The Chafee Grant can be used at any eligible California college, university, or career/technical school, as well as schools in other states.

### **Dental Hygiene**



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The Taft College Dental Hygiene program is a teaching and learning clinic. Students perform all dental hygiene services and are overseen by licensed dental hygienists and dentists. This service is available to TC students and the community at a low cost. As a teaching clinic, appointments are longer, and students appreciate the commitment of all patients.

Call: 661-763-7706

Email: [aomega@taftcollege.edu](mailto:aomega@taftcollege.edu)

### EOPS (Extended Opportunity Programs and Services)

EOPS (Extended Opportunity Programs and Services) offers “over and above” support services to students with social, economic, and educational challenges with the goal of increasing access, retention, and transfer.

A state-funded program at Taft College that provides educational support services to eligible students who have historically experienced economic and educational disadvantages.

EOPS assists eligible students in obtaining their educational goals by providing additional support through counseling, book service, assistance in transferring to a four-year university, and other services.

## ACADEMIC SERVICES PROVIDED

- Academic, Career, Personal and Transfer Counseling
- ASO, NSLS & PTK membership fees
- Book Service Each Semester
- Cal State and UC Application Waivers
- Graduation Regalia
- Long Term Educational Planning
- Peer Advisor Support
- Lending Library
- Priority Registration
- Scholarship and Grant Opportunities
- EOPS Region 6 Summer Institute/field trips

Call: Phone: (661) 763-7723

Fax: (661) 763-7758

Email: [eops@taftcollege.edu](mailto:eops@taftcollege.edu)



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## COUGAR SUPPORT CENTER

### Financial Aid

It is the goal of the Taft College Financial Aid Office to ensure no student be denied access to our quality educational programs because of a lack of funds. Help is available to students with financial need from a number of sources including federal, state and institutional to help pay expenses related to the achievement of an educational goal. Assistance may be available to students in the form of grants, work study, and enrollment fee waivers.

Students must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for federal aid:

- Have a high school diploma, GED or CHSPE
  - [GED Support](#)
- Be a U.S. Citizen or an eligible non-citizen
- Enroll in a program leading to a degree, certificate or transfer
- Not be in default on any student loan nor owe a repayment on any Title IV aid at any institution
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).

- Paperless [Financial Aid Verification System](#)

The FSA ID – a username and password – has replaced the Federal Student Aid PIN and must be used to log in to certain U.S. Department of Education websites. Your FSA ID confirms your identity when you access your financial aid information and electronically sign Federal Student Aid documents. If you do not already have an FSA ID, you may create one when logging in to [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov). You can use your FSA ID to sign a FAFSA right away. Once the Social Security Administration verifies your information in 1-3 days, or if you have linked your PIN to your FSA ID, you will be able to use your FSA ID to access U.S. Department of Education websites. For help, visit [StudentAid.gov/fsaid](http://StudentAid.gov/fsaid) or call 1-800-433-3243.

Call: 661-763-7762

Email: [bamerio@taftcollege.edu](mailto:bamerio@taftcollege.edu)

### **Health and Wellness Counselor**

Students seeking help or wanting to help a friend/student in need can send a referral to the Taft College Health and Wellness Counselor. Student can also receive additional help resources, including free and confidential personal counseling, mental health, wellness, and crisis resources.

Call: 661-763-7748



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- Counselor, Isaias Hernandez
- [Self Referral Form](#) – Fill out this form if you wish to speak with our on-campus wellness counselor.
- [Referral Form](#) – Fill out this form if you wish to refer someone to our on-campus wellness counselor.

### **Promise Program**

Taft College is making an investment in our local students. All Taft College Promise students are required to maintain full-time status, which is a minimum of 12 units and are strongly encouraged to take classes during the summer session to accelerate movement towards graduation. Promise students work with an experienced academic counselor who meets with the students regularly and provides comprehensive academic, social, and personal support. We are therefore providing a Taft College Promise to local high school graduates in our service area to help remove financial barriers to students who attend Taft College full-time. For students who have applied and completed their financial aid file, and there is a gap between the student's financial aid award and the tuition and fees, Taft College Promise will cover the difference, so these students have no cost to attend college. In addition, the Taft College Promise Program will help to reduce the cost of textbooks and supplies up to \$250 per semester for those students not receiving financial aid to cover the cost. Taft College Promise Students or also are eligible to have their enrollment fees waived for up to **two** years starting their freshman year.

To be eligible, students must have recently graduated from a local high school. Eligible high schools include Taft Union High School, Maricopa High School, and Buena Vista Continuation High School.

**Call: Counselor, Promise Program, Vicki Jacobi**

**(661) 763-7719**

[vjacobi@taftcollege.edu](mailto:vjacobi@taftcollege.edu)

**Call: Special Programs Coordinator, Baghdad Alkorin**

**(661) 763-7782**

[balkorin@taftcollege.edu](mailto:balkorin@taftcollege.edu)



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## COUGAR SUPPORT CENTER

### Technology Support

You can request items online from the Taft College Library.

Students can log into their [Library Accounts](#) to make requests online for Laptops, Hotspots, Calculators, and Print/Physical books only.

### Instructions for Requesting Items Online

- **Online Requests** are available for pick up **Monday through Wednesday from 8AM-5:00PM.**
- Requests made before **12PM** will be available for same day pick-up after **1PM.**
- If a request is made after 12PM the item will be available for pick-up the following business day.
- Items will be held for **2 business days**, after which items that have not been claimed will be returned to the shelf.
- You may check out only **1 Hotspot** for the whole of the semester.
- You may check out only **1 Calculator** for the whole of the semester.
- Only **3 requests** can be made for Print/Physical books at a time.
- You may check out only **1 Laptop** for the whole of the semester.
- Once your request has been fulfilled you will receive a **confirmation email** (Please check your Junk Mail/Spam Folder).
- When picking up your items:
  - Have your Student ID
  - Come to the **Circulation Desk**
- When picking up any technology, you will be required to sign an Equipment Loan Agreement.

Call: 661) 763-7707

Email: [Ask the Library](#)

### Work Study

Work Study provides on campus jobs for eligible students. Work Study offers students the opportunity to earn money to help pay educational expenses, enhance employment skills and gain valuable experience. Eligibility is based on financial aid standing and enrollment status. All students are considered for employment. The hourly rate is at least the current minimum wage. The total work study award depends on the student's financial need and the amount of money the school has available for the program. Taft College students currently enrolled may work up to a maximum of 20 hours per week. The college primarily utilizes the College Central Network website which links employers with prospective job candidates.





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- Click here to get details for the [Work Study Process](#)

Call: 661-763-7914

Email: [lmurphy@taftcollege.edu](mailto:lmurphy@taftcollege.edu)

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## Community Resources

- [Kern County Department of Human Services:](#)
  - 119 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Taft C A93268
- [Laborers of Harvest](#)
  - 201 ½ Harrison Street, Taft CA 93268
  - 661-745-4536
- [Community College Services](#)
  - 1021 4<sup>th</sup> Street Ste. B, Taft, CA 93268
  - 661-765-7025
- [Community Action Partnership of Kern: 211](#)
  - 300 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301
  - 661-336-5236
- [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#)

The mission of SNAP is to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a way that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

- [Transportation Support](#)

Kern Transit provides passenger bus service between and in the rural communities of Kern County. There are 16 fixed transit routes, and Dial-A-Ride (DAR) service is available in most communities. The transit system offers intercity service between Arvin, Bakersfield, Bodfish, Boron, Buttonwillow, California City, Delano, Edwards, Frazier Park, Inyokern, Keene, Kernville, Lake Isabella, Lamont, Lebec, Lost Hills, McFarland, Mojave, Onyx, Ridgecrest, Rosamond, Shafter, Taft, Tehachapi, Wasco, Weldon, and Wofford Heights, along with local transit service. Connections to Metrolink in Lancaster are also available. Kern Transit is a division of the Kern County Public Works Department. [More About Kern Transit](#)



If you are experiencing basic needs insecurity, or other hardships, stop by the Cougar Support Center, relax, and visit with our helpful staff. If you know someone who needs a helping hand, tell them about our services or come with them for support.