

Members of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society chapter at the Quad-Cities Campus are writing PTK Posts for their 2021 College Project. College Projects are a way for PTK chapters to engage and give back to their colleges.



The goal of PTK Posts is for Quad-Cities Campus PTK members to share student stories and information to help current and prospective BHC students be successful and happy with their college experience.

In this post, Leah Mueller, PTK vice president of service, shares her advice on selecting your transfer school and preparing to transfer from Black Hawk College!

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**BHC activities:** Phi Theta Kappa

Transferring schools after completing time at a community college such as Black Hawk

College can be a scary idea, but for me, the idea of picking which school I wanted to transfer to was even more daunting. There are so many difficult questions that need to be answered, and it can be hard to make a decision that will seemingly impact such a major part of your life.



My name is Leah, and I'm a soon-to-be transfer student and an officer for Phi Theta Kappa at Black Hawk. This is my personal advice for transfer students and what I wish I would have known during this process. When approached by a fellow PTK member with some questions on the transfer process, it made me wonder if I was even qualified to give advice on how to transfer. While I don't know all of the ins and outs of how to transfer, and how to make the best decision, I think what I have learned along the way might be helpful for other students.

## How do I decide where to transfer?

Many students wonder how to narrow down their transfer school options. This is definitely one of the most overwhelming questions and it honestly comes down to many different factors. I would start by asking yourself what you want in terms of size, and thinking about what you can afford. This will help narrow down what is available to you and you can choose from there.

It can be hard to get a feel for the colleges you're interested in just by the website, so

something I found helpful was to follow the colleges you're interested in on platforms such as Instagram. This is a great way to get a feeling for the college, their events, organizations, and the student involvement on campus, especially if you aren't able to take a tour.

Although not all schools are offering campus tours, many have created the option for a virtual campus tour to allow prospective students to get acquainted with the campus before making a decision. While this might not be the most preferred option, this is still a helpful tool in making your decision.

## How do I make sure my credits will transfer?

Another question that I was asked had to do with what students should be asking their [advisors](#) before transferring, and how can a student make sure that they're coming in with the right credits. My biggest piece of advice on this would be to make sure you're communicating with your BHC advisor.

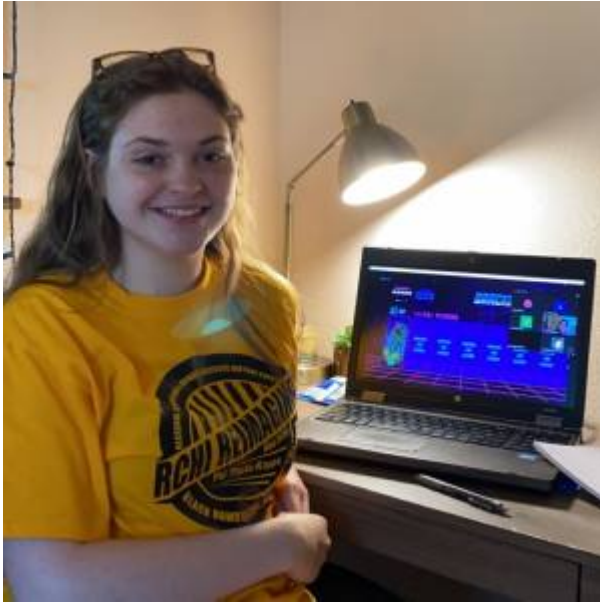
Black Hawk is known for being a school that transfers credits really well, so by keeping in contact with your advisor when it comes to the classes you're taking and fulfilling the right amount of credit hours for the university you plan to transfer to, you should have no problem meeting all of the qualifications.

In addition to this, you will also want to make sure that you're keeping in contact with the advisors from the school that you plan to transfer to. This will just make sure that there are no gaps, and that you are on track for a seamless transfer. By talking with both sets of advisors you will also be able to know which classes you can knock out at Black Hawk so that you aren't making up any credits at your transfer school. If you do this, you'll save money and time.

## What else should I be doing?

Lastly, you're probably wondering a couple of things like, when do I need to be doing this, or what are the main things I need to focus on? The two main points that I think most students should be focused on are finding a school and scholarships.

Finding a school can depend on the scholarships available, but programs offered, organizations or extracurricular activities offered, and overall feel of the school should all definitely be taken into consideration. Scholarships are helpful to so many people and there are a ton of scholarships out there to take advantage of.



You can apply for scholarships through the Black Hawk College Foundation to help you during your time at Black Hawk, as well as applying for scholarships at the school you are transferring to. One perk of being in Phi Theta Kappa is scholarship opportunities. PTK administers scholarships and there are also hundreds of four-year colleges and universities that offer transfer scholarships designated for members of PTK.

Something that I learned when going through the transfer process is to not judge a university by the sticker price, especially private ones. I didn't think that a private university was going to be an option for me until I really began to look at the different scholarships that I could earn. Now I am transferring to Augustana College!

As for when a person should begin searching, deciding, and applying, I would say that there's no time like the present. The earlier you can get some of this done, the lighter your stress load will be. But coming from a procrastinator, I think a realistic goal would be to be making your decision between the summer after your first year of community college and the middle of the fall semester of your second year. This way, you will have the rest of the spring semester and next summer to apply for scholarships and get everything set up to be ready to transfer. It might seem like you don't have much time, but thinking about this over the summer gives for a lot of free time to look around and explore your options.

## Setting yourself up for success

In all, choosing a university that you want to transfer to and getting prepared to do so can be quite intimidating, but you have to keep in mind that in the grand scheme of things you won't be there forever, and no matter where you go, it is what you make it. You will make friends and learn new things, just like you did at Black Hawk.

Getting started now, taking the time to do some digging, and using the resources that Black

Hawk has to offer are just good ways to take the pressure off of yourself and help make the decision and transfer process easier. This way, you can be set up for success at your next school. Also, do not forget if it takes some time to make that decision, that's perfectly okay, too.

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*Phi Theta Kappa is the largest honor society for two-year college students. Black Hawk College has a PTK chapter at each campus. The honor society focuses on leadership, fellowship, service and scholarship. Our members lead the chapter each year, hold meetings and activities to help students build a network with other students, participate together in service opportunities on campus and in the community, and are recognized for their high academic success. PTK has many scholarship opportunities for members, whether they are transferring to another college or joining the workforce after BHC. For more information about PTK, visit [www.ptk.org](http://www.ptk.org) or email our Quad-Cities Campus Chapter Advisor [Nicole Banks](#).*

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