

GENERAL EDUCATION

GENERAL EDUCATION CORE COMPETENCIES AND GOALS

As part of Essex County College mission, the College seeks to transform lives so that students can achieve a better future through education. Essex students are thus empowered to become agents of change in their own lives, in their communities and in the world. Mastery of the general education courses prepares students with critical thinking, writing, problem solving, research and analytical skills that lay the foundation for academic excellence. Essex's comprehensive core of general education courses is affirmed by the State of New Jersey. These courses ensure that no matter the degree chosen, all Essex students will graduate with a comprehensive academic perspective, as well as the more specialized knowledge of the major course requirements.

Essex County College firmly believes that broad-based knowledge best prepares students for further education at four-year institutions, as well as for the demands of a competitive marketplace and the global economy. Therefore, depending on the degree and major chosen, students may take a number of courses in the following categories:

General Education Core Competencies

The following core competencies should, to the greatest extent possible, be embedded in all general education courses:

A. Written and Oral Communication in English:

Students will communicate effectively in oral, written, nonverbal, and visual media.

1. Students will read, write, illustrate, and listen actively, critically, and reflectively and respond logically, informatively, persuasively, and creatively.
2. Students will evaluate and revise their communication, writing and speaking clearly and effectively in standard formal American English with use of inclusive language.
3. Students will understand, analyze, and assess nonverbal, cultural, and gender communication in small group and public communication settings.

B. Critical and Ethical Thinking and Problem Solving:

Students will use critical thinking and problem-solving skills in analyzing information in an ethical manner.

1. Students will distinguish among opinions, facts, and inferences identifying and critiquing underlying and implicit assumptions.
2. Students will thoughtfully evaluate diverse perspectives and alternate points of view by asking informed questions and making informed judgments.
3. Students will solve problems by applying discipline-appropriate methods and standards.
4. Students will integrate their knowledge, take an ethical position on issues or situations, and defend their stance with logical arguments.

C. Information and Computer Literacy:

Students will recognize when data and information is needed and have the skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college-level work.

1. Students will recognize the value of using the information to strengthen arguments and articulate research project questions.
2. Students will identify resources and construct strategies for locating information and data to answer research project questions in their particular study fields, possibly using web search engines and data analysis tools.
3. Students will understand factors that affect the quality of data and information and extract pertinent information needed for specific research questions and integrate it cohesively.
4. Students will respect the privacy, security, and ownership of data and information they use, including ethical considerations focusing on avoiding plagiarism.
5. Students will demonstrate media literacy by accessing, analyzing, and evaluating messages in various media modes, genres, and forms with an appreciation of the impacts of technologies on societies.

D. Collaboration, Cooperation, Intra-Cultural, and Inter-Cultural Responsibility:

Students will demonstrate interpersonal skills required for effective performance and understand the privileges and responsibilities of being a citizen in diverse and pluralistic societies, both locally and globally.

1. Students will demonstrate communication skills that promote effective functioning and interpersonal relations with individuals and groups, including effective cross-cultural communication.
2. Students will employ strategies, like brainstorming, role playing and consensus building, which promote productive and supportive interpersonal interaction in individual and group settings.
3. Students will demonstrate understanding of the behaviors and beliefs of different social groups with pluralistic societies, including those based on culture, ethnicity, race, religion, creed, disability, marital status, national origin or ancestry, age, gender, socio-economic status, and sexual orientations.

General Education Goals

Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English:

Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

- 1.1 Students will read, write, and listen actively, critically, and reflectively.
- 1.2 Students will logically, informatively, persuasively, and creatively respond orally and/or in writing to what they read, hear, and see.
- 1.3 Students will evaluate and revise their written and/or oral communication.
- 1.4 Students will write and speak clearly and effectively in formal standard English.
- 1.5 Students will understand, analyze, and assess nonverbal, cultural, and gender communication in both small group and public communication settings.

Goal 2. Mathematics:

Students will use appropriate mathematical and statistical concepts and operations to interpret data and to solve problems.

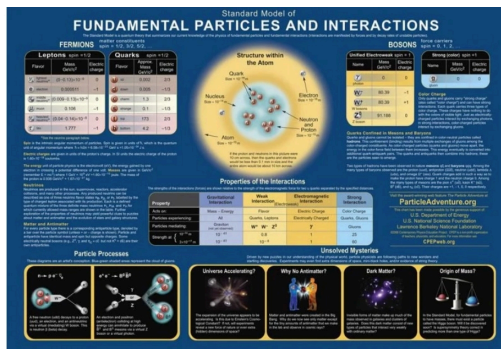
2.1 Students will develop graphical, numerical, analytical and verbal models to describe quantitative relationships that exist in the world and communicate these concepts effectively.

2.2 Students will investigate and interpret these models using the mathematical skills, tools and reasoning appropriate to each type of model.

2.3 Students will draw logical conclusions by applying a variety of mathematical problem-solving strategies.

2.4 Students will demonstrate an understanding that mathematics is a precise language that is used to solve complex problems in many disciplines.

This chart of the particles and interactions details how the particles of the Standard Model interact according to the three fundamental forces that Quantum Field Theory describes. When gravity is added into the mix, we obtain the observable Universe that we see, with the laws, parameters, and constants that we know of governing it. Mysteries, such as dark matter and dark energy, still remain.



(Credit: Contemporary Physics Education Project/DOE/SNF/LBNL)

Goal 3. Science:

Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.

3.1 Students will apply the scientific method of inquiry to solve problems utilizing critical thinking techniques to reason, listen, follow directions, make observation, and draw conclusions based on verifiable evidence by converting word problems to the appropriate mathematical language.

3.2 Students will use scientific theories and knowledge to understand the Natural Sciences and assess the impact of scientific theories, discoveries, and technological changes on society.

3.3 Students will integrate scientific principles and scientific discovery, and will critically investigate the impact of science and scientific discovery on our understanding of the natural universe.

Goal 4. Technology or Information Literacy:

Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

4.1 Students will demonstrate proficiency with electronic communications as appropriate to academic and professional use.

4.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to use a particular technology or group of technologies to analyze or solve problems.

4.3 Students will demonstrate proficiency in the proper use of interfaces, files, essential productivity software, web browsers and search engines.

4.4 Students will describe accurately and analyze the impact computer technology has on modern society.

4.5 Students will explain the social and ethical issues surrounding a particular technology or group of technologies and articulate their opinions about such issues using written and oral communication.

4.6 Students will gather information various resources, search tools, and strategies, evaluate and analyze that information, and then select information and use it correctly to answer a research question.

4.7 Students will respect the privacy, security and ownership of the information they locate and use, recognizing and honoring the ethical considerations relevant to data and information use with a particular focus on eliminating plagiarism.

4.8 Students will demonstrate competencies in utilizing computing devices and software skills to command programming languages to take advantage of education, information, and cultural opportunities in digital societies.

Goal 5. Social Science:

Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

5.1 Students will critically evaluate behavioral or societal issues using theories and concepts from a social science perspective.

5.2 Students will analyze and appreciate how social and political institutions and organizations influence individual development and behavior.

5.3 Students will demonstrate an understanding of the ways social scientists gather, analyze data, integrate knowledge, and draw conclusions.

Goal 6. Humanities

Students will analyze scholarly works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

6.1 Students will interact with texts, performance and visual media, demonstrating an awareness of significant themes and their contexts. They will analyze themes and contexts, while articulating their connections, meanings and values to self, society, and others.

6.2 Students will draw upon the visual, literary and performing arts and/or the study of philosophical and religious systems of thought and practice in order to expand their understanding of cultural, historical, and intellectual imagination.

6.3 Students will critically engage and use project-based learning to demonstrate an awareness of and critically engage with a range of historical and contemporary performances and visual and literary works and the approaches commonly used to analyze them.

6.4 Students will demonstrate communicative competence in a language other English and their own, and show appreciation of that added language's cultural and historical context.



- 8.3 Students will identify and evaluate the consequences of prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory actions.
- 8.4 Students will analyze the impact of globalization on the economic and political structures of various nations and cultures.
- 8.5 Students will demonstrate an understanding of the behaviors and beliefs of different social groups within a pluralistic society.

Goal 7. History:

Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

- 7.1 Students will demonstrate an understanding of the causes of major historical events and analyze the impact of those events on a nation or civilization.
- 7.2 Students will critically interpret primary and secondary historical documents and critically evaluate the influence of perspective, time, and culture on the writers' point of view.
- 7.3 Students will explain major ideas, movements, and technological discoveries, and their impact on western, world, and American society.

Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective:

Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.

- 8.1 Students will link culture, its practices and perspectives, with its geographical and/or historical conditions.
- 8.2 Students will analyze how the differences in people's backgrounds are important to U.S. society and the global community.