

Quinsigamond Community College

MEMORANDUM

Office of the President

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To: The College Community

From: Sandra L. Kurtinitis, Ph.D.
President

Re: Adoption of Core Curriculum

I am pleased to distribute the college's new core curriculum policy, approved at the May meeting of the board of Trustees. Having evolved from the work begun by the Curriculum Task Force two years ago, the core is a solid reflection of the key instructional values articulated by the college community.

That Quinsigamond has achieved a core curriculum in nearly record time is an impressive achievement. Special thanks to the many who patiently worked to advance the proposal through its multi-layered process. Kathy Frederickson and Pat Toney, as Chairs of the original Curriculum Transformation Task Force and its General Education offspring, led this effort assisted by committee members Dan Daly, Nancy Donohue-Berthiaume, Elaine Dow, Vicki Kirsch, Linda LeFave, Marilyn Martin, Jane Pickett, Bob Prior, John Solaperto, Maura Tighe Stickles, and Steve Zona. Special acknowledgement is due to Cathy Livingston for bringing the proposal to successful end.

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Attachment

Core Curriculum

Quinsigamond Community College has selected a primarily integrative approach to a Core Curriculum designed to develop and strengthen students' general education skills. General Education skills are complex skills that are integral to lifelong learning and contribute to the mastery of tasks and challenges faced in daily living and career pursuits. They serve as the basis for the continuous learning and development that enhances the quality and richness of life.

The College offers three types of associate degrees, and the type of degree determines the minimum number of credits required in general education. The Associate in Applied Science degree requires a minimum of sixteen credits in general education; the Associate in Science degree requires a minimum of twenty credits in general education; and, the Associate in Arts degree requires a minimum of thirty-three credits in general education. These requirements are distributed across the disciplines of Humanities, Mathematics, Science, and the Social Sciences. Actual distribution requirements will vary according to the demands of each program.

Individual programs address the following general education competencies within the curriculum frameworks of program courses. While many of the general education competencies are addressed in multiple courses within a program, the College has identified specific courses within each program that emphasize specific Core Competencies. These courses are so noted on the catalog pages that describe each program of study.

Written Communication

Students will build on the foundations established through the first year course work in English by applying their writing skills to more advanced demands of their specific course work of study. Course(s) within each program have been identified as meeting the advanced Written Communication requirements.

Oral Communication/Teamwork

SPH 101 – Speech Communication Skills – is currently required in many of QCC's programs. In addition, students are presented with opportunities within their program coursework to develop their oral communication skills, both individually and as members of teams. Workforce trends indicated that one of the most essential skills needed within the workplace is the ability to work in teams. Essential to good teamwork is the ability to communicate effectively. At least one course (other than SPH 101) within each of the College's associate degree programs has been designated to include course objectives that concentrate on the development of oral communication skills and teamwork.

Quantitative Skills

Students are required to complete a college-level course in mathematics or science. Individual program goals provide opportunities for students to apply these skills in context.

Technology: Applications and Resources

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the College's credit and non-credit offerings in these areas. College graduates should demonstrate competency in basic computer applications and in electronic retrieval and utilization of information. Basic computer applications include proficiency in applying word processing skills and in utilizing the Internet. Each program of study has designated a course(s) that requires students to apply the technical skills embedded in technology.

Critical Thinking Skills

Since critical thinking skills cannot be taught in isolation, students are challenged with the application of critical thinking skills throughout their programs. Each program has identified a course that requires the successful application of critical thinking skills and the synthesis of many of the key concepts learned within the program.

Multiple Perspectives

The College offers a variety of courses emphasizing diverse perspectives. In addition, faculty have and will continue to make a concerted effort to include a balance of perspectives within their required readings and supporting course materials. Students are encouraged to elect from courses that will enhance their

understanding of the world citizenry. QCC has embraced a bold vision of molding a technologically literate, yet humane citizenry able to thrive, not just survive, in a global setting.

Experiential Education/Service Learning

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in coursework that allows them opportunities for learning outside the classroom. Believing that “experience is one of the best teachers”, the College is committed to providing students with guided learning opportunities that will promote inquiry and reflection.

Personal Development

Recognizing that one of the goals of higher education is the cultivation of a desire for lifelong learning, the College strives to reserve at least one open elective slot in each program. The elective option provides students with an opportunity to explore areas of knowledge of interest or importance to them. Exceptions to this effort include programs in which course requirements exceed seventy credits.

Summary

Quinsigamond Community College recognizes the historical emphases of higher education: preparation for lifelong learning and for career development. In support of these two important, interrelated goals, the College has structured each program to foster career preparation in combination with the development of general education skills. Courses within each program of study have been identified as emphasizing the integration of the following general education skills:

- ¹Written Communication Skills
- ²Oral Communication/Teamwork Skills
- ³Quantitative Skills
- ⁴Technology (Application and Resource) Skills
- ⁵Critical Thinking Skills
- ⁶Multiple Perspectives.