

Core Program Handbook
Center for Continuing Education and Distance Learning
Elizabethtown College
(August 2008)

Mission of Elizabethtown College

Molded by a commitment to “Educate for Service,” Elizabethtown College is a community of learners dedicated to educating students intellectually, socially, aesthetically and ethically for lives of service and leadership as citizens of the world. As a comprehensive institution, the College offers academic programs in the liberal arts, sciences and professional studies. Combining classroom instruction with experiential learning, these programs advance independent thought, personal integrity and social responsibility as the foundations for a life of learning. Founded by members of the Church of the Brethren, the College believes that learning is most noble when used to benefit others and affirms the values of peace, non-violence, human dignity and social justice.

Mission of the Center for Continuing Education and Distance Learning

The Center for Continuing Education and Distance Learning at Elizabethtown College seeks to extend the boundaries of the College’s learning community to include a wider and more diverse population. The Center expresses the values of the College’s mission through a commitment to and advocacy of degree and non-degree academic programs for adult learners. In particular, the Center embraces the values of human dignity and social justice by widening access to quality higher education for adults. In its programs and outreach, the Center fosters a learner-centered academic culture that expresses the College’s belief that learning is life-long and most noble when used to benefit others.

1. Introduction

The Core Program supports the goals expressed in the Mission Statement of Elizabethtown College and the Mission Statement of the Center for Continuing Education and Distance Learning. Through the Center’s Core Program, Elizabethtown College offers each undergraduate adult learner a broad exposure to the liberal arts and sciences in a manner respectful of adult learning needs and styles. Adult learners experience a core curriculum that complements and enriches major and elective courses.

2. Structure

The Core Program is divided into two basic categories – common learning experiences (Foundations for Accelerated Learning and the Senior Research Project), which total six credits; and learning experiences in eight Areas of Understanding, which total twenty-four to twenty-five credits. These thirty to thirty-one credits, based on broad learning themes, form a cohesive and useful liberal arts foundation for more intensive learning in the major.

3. Core Program Objectives

Courses, either taken at Elizabethtown College or accepted by the CCEDL in transfer, that fulfill Core Program requirements, have learning outcomes that support the following Core Program objectives:

- To unite the program of general education into a cohesive and useful whole.
- To develop the learner's intellect by helping her/him master the skills and competencies associated with the liberal arts, such as:
 - Writing
 - Speaking
 - Researching
 - Creating
 - Imagining
 - Critically analyzing
 - Problem solving
 - Synthesizing
 - Integrating
 - Valuing
 - Contextualizing
 - Appreciating
- To offer the learner fundamental knowledge as the basis for future learning.
- To help the learner be aware of and to master various methods of knowledge acquisition as the basis for a lifetime of learning.
- To integrate knowledge across disciplines in a way most effective for adult learners.
- To facilitate the adult learner's entry or re-entry into college-level learning.
- To encourage the adult learner to develop and maintain the skills and competencies associated with lifelong, independent, self-directed learning.
- To broaden adult learner perspectives and awareness through valuable learning experiences which enhance and complement the professional and/or academic disciplines.

4. Learning Outcomes of the Core Program

Adult learners completing the Core Program offered by Elizabethtown College through the Center for Continuing Education and Distance Learning will be able to:

- Write clearly and persuasively.
- Speak clearly and persuasively.
- Analyze, critically, arguments, positions, and hypotheses.
- Solve problems imaginatively and creatively.
- Recall and apply fundamental knowledge from a number of different disciplines.
- Find and apply more specific knowledge in a number of different disciplines.
- Synthesize and integrate knowledge from many different disciplines.
- Choose and apply values from many possible choices.
- Direct her/his own independent learning.
- Complete a college-level learning program.
- Apply a broad, human perspective and awareness to professional studies.

5. The Common Core

All adult learners matriculated in degree programs offered by the Center for Continuing Education and Distance Learning share in the Common Core by successfully completing the following two courses:

- **Foundations for Accelerated Learning (FS 150) 3 credits (1 course)**

Foundations for Accelerated Learning blends professional studies with the liberal arts by presenting fiction, non-fiction, and educational selections as springboards for discussion and evaluation of learners' educational development. The decision to continue education is often a turning point in an adult's life and self-examination can be beneficial to learner success.

This course is designed to introduce adult learners to the scholarly demands of Elizabethtown College and the accelerated format of the adult degree program. Through the course research requirement, learners access critical campus resources, evaluate their learning strengths, and discover keys to participating effectively as a member of an academic seminar.

Adult learners successfully completing this course will be able to:

- Implement college-level writing research and communication skills.
- Synthesize information from a variety of sources and apply it to various personal, educational, and professional situations.
- Understand and demonstrate concepts of paraphrasing appropriately, citing works properly and avoiding plagiarism.
- Identify personal strengths and areas for improvement related to effective learning in an accelerated learning environment.
- Describe and analyze his or her own educational development/history and cultural competence.

Foundations for Accelerated Learning should be taken in the first three sessions of an adult learner's entry or re-entry into college.

- **Senior Research Project (IDC 490) 3 credits (1 course)**

As the Core Program's capstone, this course is designed to assess the learner's mastery of the core learning outcomes. The course provides the learning environment and structure within which the learner will self-direct an independent, integrative, problem-solving research project for written and oral presentation. This research project must be linked to the liberal arts and will be carried out within a problem-solving framework. The facilitator will guide the learner's selection and framing of a contemporary problem, research into the problem, research into its solution, framing a preferred solution, and arguing for that solution. The facilitator will also serve as a resource for the learner's preparation, presentation, and defense of the research project, both in writing and orally. Peers, faculty, administrators, staff, and community leaders may be invited to student presentations.

Adult learners successfully completing this course will be able to:

- Write clearly and persuasively incorporating MLA guidelines.
- Speak clearly and persuasively.
- Analyze arguments and positions that support the thesis.
- Solve problems imaginatively and creatively.
- Recall and apply fundamental knowledge from a number of courses within the liberal arts core.
- Research, apply, and integrate more specific knowledge from a number of different disciplines.
- Choose and apply values from many possible sources and/or references.
- Self-direct her/his own learning.

Normally, the Senior Research Project should be taken only after adult learners have satisfied Power of Language, Foundations for Accelerated Learning, and Math Analysis requirements; those taking Senior Research Project should also have junior or senior status at the College.

6. Areas of Understanding

Areas of Understanding represent broad, thematic approaches to college-level learning and appear in the Core Program because of their importance in building a useful and valuable liberal arts learning experience for adult learners at Elizabethtown College. Areas of Understanding are described below and each area's learning outcomes are listed. Courses, taken at Elizabethtown or accepted in transfer, that fulfill these Area of Understanding requirements, should meet a majority of the listed learning outcomes.

• Power of Language 3 credits (1 course)

The hallmark of a liberally educated person is the ability to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively in any number of settings and contexts, ranging from the academic world to the business world.

After successfully fulfilling this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:

- Use language clearly and persuasively to articulate ideas.
- Read and listen carefully and critically.
- Assess the quality of other people's use of language.
- Analyze and synthesize ideas.
- Speak and write clearly and persuasively.

Some English, communications, and philosophy courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

- **Mathematical Analysis** **3 credits (1course)**

Mathematical Analysis fosters competency in quantitative reasoning and the mastery of problem solving skills.

After successfully fulfilling this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:

- Argue and present using numbers and statistics.
- Respond, critically, to arguments and positions that use numbers and statistics.
- Model real world phenomena, using numbers and statistics.
- Problem-solve.

Some mathematics and computer science courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

- **Creative Expression** **3 credits (1 course)**

This Area of Understanding fosters the learner's appreciation of the diversity of human perception and its expression. This includes the history, theory, creation, performance, and/or criticism of art forms from music, painting, drama, cinema, architecture, sculpture, and the graphic arts.

After successfully fulfilling this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:

- Identify the basic concepts and the vocabulary employed in the creation and analysis of works of art.
- Make informed aesthetic judgments.
- Discuss the value that an artistic medium has, beyond simple utility.
- Appreciate that creative art forms affirm humanity and express innermost, human feelings.

Some art, English, music, and theatre courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

- **Cultural Heritage** **3 credits (1 course)**

While the United States today reflects the blending of many different cultures, Western European cultural traditions form the underlying context within which this blending has occurred. Critical analysis of significant human endeavors from those traditions forms the foundation of this Area of Understanding. This analysis will help adult learners to understand themselves and their society better. Subject areas discussed in the course of this analysis may include art, government, history, literature, music, philosophy, religion, science, and social institutions.

After successfully completing this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:
Discuss important aspects of the cultural heritage of the United States.

- Analyze the relationship of the cultural past to the contemporary world.
- Interpret knowledge in a variety of different ways.
- Contextualize culture, historically.
- Analyze critically and use, effectively, primary texts, secondary sources, and other forms of evidence.

Some art, English, history, music, philosophy, religion, and theatre courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

- **Foreign Cultures and International Studies 3 credits (1 course)**

The Foreign Cultures and International Studies Area of Understanding promotes analysis of the human experience from a current international or non-US cultural perspective.

After successfully completing this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:

- Discuss the interdependence of the world's peoples and countries.
- Demonstrate intercultural awareness.
- Discuss the experience of peoples in cultures different from the prevailing US culture.

Some anthropology, foreign language, history, political science, and religion courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

- **Natural World 3-4 credits (1 course – must include lab)**

This Area of Understanding promotes the systematic study of the natural world through content and methodology.

After successfully completing this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:

- Collect, analyze, and interpret data.
- Apply the scientific method of inquiry.
- Discuss major concepts associated with the scientific disciplines.
- Demonstrate the criticism, challenge, and revision of scientific theories.

Some biology, chemistry, earth science, physics, and psychology courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

- **Social World** **3 credits (1 course)**

The Social World Area of Understanding investigates the ways in which human behavior is shaped, ranging from self-formation to international relations.

After successfully completing this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:

- Explore, analyze, and interpret the influences on human thought, feelings, and behavior.
- Apply the methods and procedures of social research.
- Discuss major concepts, theories, and texts that interpret and explain human behavior and interaction.
- Discuss the diversity and/or integration of social worlds.
- Analyze the organization and functions of one or more social worlds.

Some communications, economics, history, psychology, religion, sociology, and social work courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

- **Values, Choice and Justice** **3 credits (1 course)**

The Values, Choice and Justice Area of Understanding reflects the values of the College's Brethren heritage and tradition; it affirms human dignity, social justice, peace, and non-violence. Through this Area of Understanding adult learners engage value-based decision-making and are encouraged to consider the personal and social aspects of their choices.

After successfully completing this requirement, the adult learner will be able to:

- Define self-values.
- Make thoughtful decisions based on self-values.
- Think independently and critically.
- Evaluate options and outcomes.
- Apply all of these skills to the exercise of responsible citizenship and other kinds of service.
- Discuss works that represent aesthetic, cultural, historical, religious, or philosophical approaches to values.

Some English, history, philosophy, political science, and religion courses can usually fulfill this requirement.

7. Other Requirements to Complete the Core Program

- Completion of the Core Program requires three 200-level Core courses. 200-level Core courses are more advanced and more writing-intensive than 100-level Core courses.
- Normally, the adult learner should have completed the Foundations for Accelerated Learning, Power of Language, and Mathematical Analysis Core requirements before taking any 200-level Core courses.
- The Senior Research Project must be taken at Elizabethtown College.

- Normally, adult learners take the Foundations for Accelerated Learning within the first three sessions of their academic program.
- Normally, adult learners may use only one course in their major area of study to fulfill a Core Program requirement; this course should be an elective and should not fulfill a major requirement.
- The Center may require specific Core Program courses for the different majors it offers; these required Core Program courses should not be courses in the major area of study.

8. Special Circumstances

Adult learners may petition the Associate Dean of Continuing Education and Distance Learning to waive a particular Core Program requirement or to provide a substitute for an existing Core Program requirement. Such petitions should be in writing and should present the special circumstances supporting the waiver request.