

The College of New Jersey

CAREER & COMMUNITY STUDIES CCS



LESSONS WE LEARNED

THE CONTEXT



- ❑ Liberal Learning
- ❑ Career Development
- ❑ Social / Emotional Development

Career &Community Studies CCS



- **Career & Community Studies** is a college-based, liberal studies program designed to prepare students (ages 18-25) for adult life through academic rigor, career discovery and preparation and peer socialization as part of a diverse community of learners.

We Believe



- All young adults go through a similar developmental process that requires certain activities, experiences & supports
- All young adults must develop skills & understandings about themselves & the world around them, in order to fully participate in society & to become successful interdependent adults

We Believe



- In the value of higher education as a vehicle for power & access, to social networks, cultural & social capital
- Access to liberal learning promotes the development of critical thinking, self reflection, and an understanding of the inter-relatedness required for civic responsibility
- Group membership provides essential motivation and support for learning & participation in community life

Our Mission Statement



- Therefore, the mission of Career and Community Studies at the College of New Jersey is to provide a coordinated and comprehensive course of study that includes career exploration and preparation; self awareness, discovery and personal improvement, through a framework of liberal learning and community participation.

CCS Goals



- To provide an inclusive post secondary education based in liberal learning
- To provide transition services and study skills to transitioning high school students
- To use principles of universal design to make typical coursework accessible
- To provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations

Program Attributes



- Full-time four year Certificate Program
- Peer mentor support
- Portfolio development
- CCS core curriculum includes specifically designed coursework and field experiences
- Campus clubs & organizations
- Provides both inclusive and individual coursework



Eligibility/Admission Criteria



- Students must be 18-25 years old
- Student must present a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills
- Students must present a means of communication including basic skills in functional literacy and numeracy.
- Students must demonstrate appropriate student conduct
- Students must demonstrate a desire and motivation to continue their education
- Students are encouraged to apply with DDD and/or DVR support

Program Components



- **Academic**

- Core coursework
- Independent study
- TCNJ course audit

- **Career**

- On-campus and off campus employment experiences

- **Socialization/Leisure**

- On campus recreation/ leisure experiences with peer mentorship support

- **Independent Life Skills**

- On campus/near campus community based instruction



Academic Coursework

- Freshman Seminar
 - Career Exploration I
 - Personal Exploration
 - Planning Forum I
 - Internship I & II
- Assistive Technology
 - Writing Strategies
 - Great Conversations
 - Child & Adolescent Development



Career Training



- Career Exploration
- Interview Skills
- Job Shadow
- Resume development
- Work Experience on campus
- Work Experience off campus

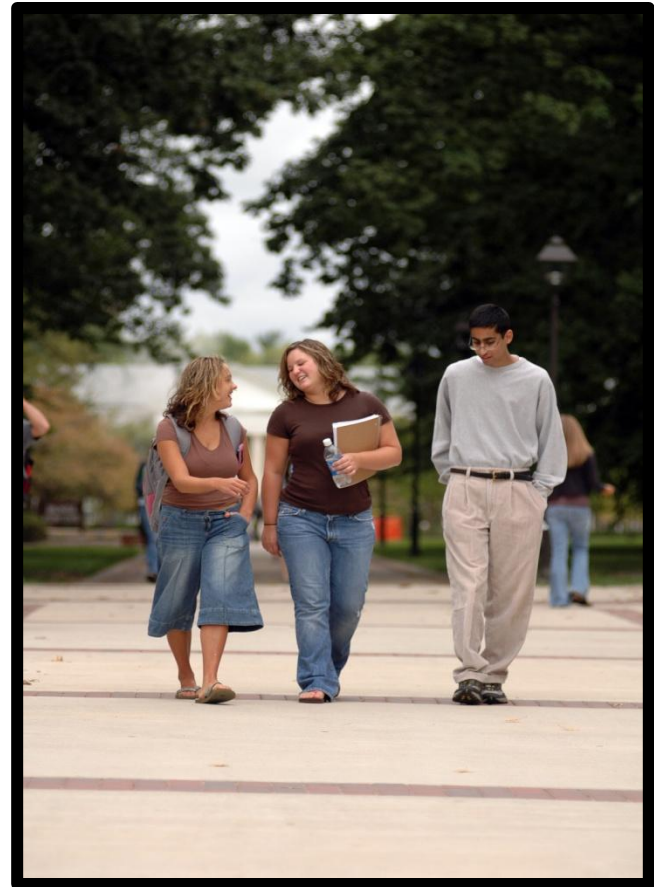


Social/Leisure

Campus Organizations & Events



- Bowling club
- Anime club
- Intramural Tennis
- Volleyball
- Convocation
- CEC
- Best Buddies
- Swimming
- Phi Sigma Sigma
- Habitat for Humanity
- Campus Speakers



Independent Life



- Life Styles 101
- Personal & Social Relationships
- Health & Wellness 101& 102
- Personal Finance 101& 102

Student Outcomes



- Student Portfolio (product & electronic)
- Certificate in Career & Community Studies from TCNJ
- Student transcript of coursework
- Career/ employment development
- On-going TCNJ Alumni Activities



Outcomes



- Increased self-confidence
- Improved social skills
- Increased technology skills
- Increased literacy skills
- Increased independence
- Improved self-image



CCS Faculty & Staff



- Co-Program Directors
- Project Coordinator
- 3 Full-Time Teachers
 - Teacher of CCS Courses and Outreach to TCNJ Course
 - Teacher of Technology and Assistive Technology
 - Teacher of On-Campus Job Sampling and Off-Campus Internships
 - Part-Time Technology Specialist
- Faculty Staff (Great Conversations / Finer Things)
- TCNJ Faculty/Adjunct faculty
- TCNJ Graduate Students

Student Mentors



Currently 32 mentors are providing between 1-8 hours weekly

- Mentors provide support with:
 - campus orientation
 - in class support/instruction
 - individual assignment support
 - social and recreational activities
 - club & organization involvement

more >
than mentors



Admissions Criteria



- **Applicants must 18-25 years old**
- **Applicants must express a desire and motivation to continue their education and have the ability to benefit from a college based program**
- **Applicants must have a “cognitive/intellectual disability” characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills.”** (AAMR, 2005)**
- **Upon entering, it will be expected that applicants be able to demonstrate basic literacy skills in reading and writing.**
- **Applicants must have a strong desire to become an independent adult, possess sufficient emotional stability and maturity to participate successfully in the program.**
- **The applicant must have the potential to successfully achieve his/her goals within the context of the CCS programs content and setting**

Admission process



STEP 1

- **Prior to the admissions process, students must schedule and attend a pre-application tour.**

STEP 2

- **Complete a Student Application Packet** You may access a student application on our web page [**www.tcnj.edu/~ccs/**](http://www.tcnj.edu/~ccs/)

STEP 3

- **Complete and submit the Student Application Packet, including a non-refundable application fee of \$25.00**
 - **Submit High School Transcripts**
 - **Submit Educational Evaluations**
 - **Submit 4 Letters of Recommendations**

Admission/Student Selection



STEP 4

- **Upon receipt and review of the completed application packet, the applicant will be contacted to schedule a personal interview .**

STEP 5

- **Following the personal interview, the screening committee comprised of the CCS coordinator , an advisory board member and the project directors, review the student application checklist and the student interview checklist to make student selection for CCS**

Orientation Process



- **Student/Family Orientation occurs in June**

- Welcome from the Dean of School of Education
- Students and families meet each other
- Fall Term Courses are presented
- Summer Reading is distributed to students
- Students meet with mentors
- Parents have a Q& A session with faculty

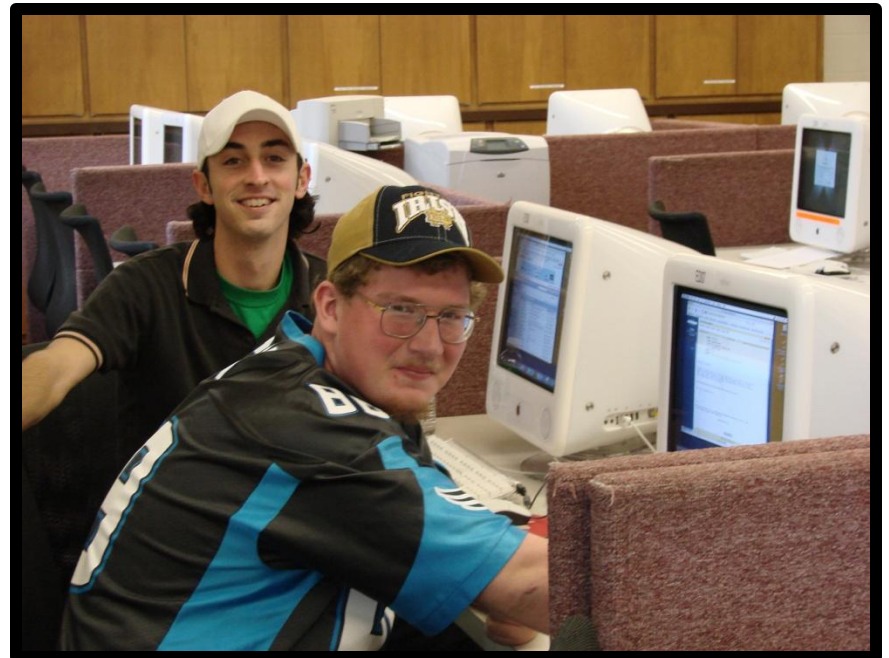
- **Student Orientation occurs in August**

- Mentor/student get together
- CCS Student handbooks
- Summer Reading discussion
- Dinner/ Convocation
- Class schedule orientation
- Meeting faculty
- Internship I class with Dr. Carroll
- Student ID cards

Peer Mentors



- **Recruitment:** Peer mentors are recruited through campus postings, handouts, and meeting with a variety of student campus groups;
 - Student senate
 - Best Buddies
 - Campus Sororities / Fraternities
 - Special Education Majors
- Additional mentors are acquired through internships, independent study and related course projects





Peer Mentors



Function

A peer mentor is a similar-age companion that assists and guides a CCS Student for the purposes of unlocking and achieving his or her potential.

Mentors will also provide support for the successful inclusion in traditional college classes and activities.

The “More than Mentor” relationship is beyond assistance and should reflect shared experiences that results in mutual benefit.

In other words, “More than Mentors” is intended to expand the typical role of mentor and will create the opportunities to develop respectful, meaningful and reciprocal relationships.

Peer Mentor Training



Peer Mentors attend three training sessions:

- **Session 1: Orientation to CCS program, Mentor roles and responsibilities, developing a mentor schedule**
- **Session 2: Mentors and students meet and share a common experience/activity. Mentors and students establish “ground rules” (i.e. phone, emails) Mentors and students plan next meeting**
- **Session 3: CCS Coordinator meets with mentors to provide on – going support, group discussion, and any problem solving strategies.**

NEW!!! Mentors and Class Peers can attend one of three lectures on Disability Studies that are presented by Faculty with CCS Students

CCS Coursework



- **Fall Term**

- Planning Forum 101
- Career Exploration 101
- Personal Exploration 101
- Freshman Seminar
FSP 121
- EDUC 694
Internship I

- **Spring Term**

- Planning Forum 102
- Writing Techniques & Strategies
- Great Conversations
- Assistive Technology 101
- Child & Adolescent Development SPE 203
- Career Exploration 102

Additional CCS Coursework



- Community Leisure 101
- Personal Finance 201
- Building Relationships 101
- Career Internship 1
- Community Resources 101 & 102
- Lifestyles
- Career Internship 2

Getting the Campus Involved



- Great Conversations and The Finer Things: an interdisciplinary seminar taught by faculty from various departments and schools.
- Presentations at Department meetings, faculty and student senate.
- Individual outreach to faculty
- Campus newspaper
- Bonner Scholar Program

Great Conversations



- Topics Included: TCNJ's favorite poetry, Probability, the Psychology of Sensation, New Jersey Water Quality, Citizenship and Voting, The History of Rock and Roll
- Utilized UDL principles and activity based learning experiences
- Associated activities: TCNJ Poetry Slam, Doug Forrester visits. Inclusive experience

The Finer Things



- Topics Included: Appreciating the Masters; Film Study; One-Act Plays; Readers Theatre; The Wonders of the World
- Utilized UDL principles and activity based learning experiences
- Associated activities: Field trips to local museums; campus events in the School of Arts and Culture

Inclusive Courses



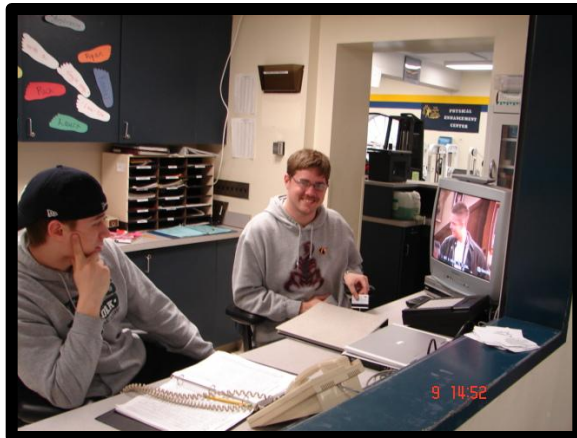
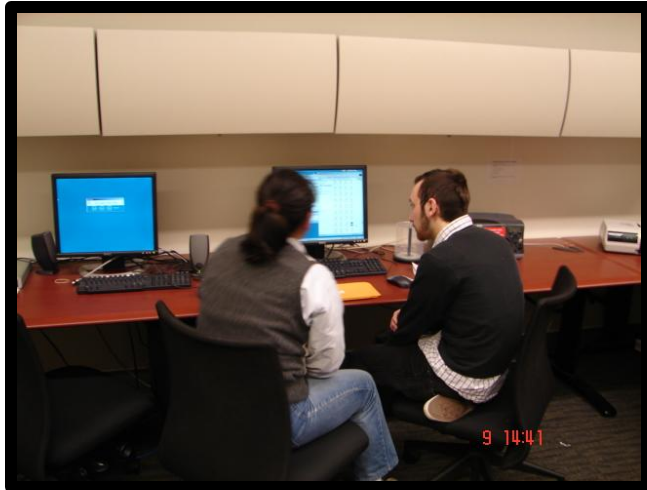
- Freshman Seminar FSP 123
- EDUC 694 Internship I
- SPE 203 Child & Adolescent Development
- EDUC 513 Collaboration, Consultation & Partnerships
- FSP 12118 Life Choices, Community & Wellness
- AFA 101 Art/Sculpture

Inclusive Supports



- **Adaptations** Course syllabi are reviewed by CCS faculty. Adaptations may include: Syllabi language clarification, breaking assignments into smaller steps, books on tape, film,
- **Universal Design** SOCS, Power point in advance. Assistive technology such as WordQ 2, Auto summary Microsoft word, Inspiration, WYNN (book scan) Bookshare.org, Portable Notetakers Dana /Neo
- **Professor supports** Pre-teaching sessions, in-class mentor support

Jobs on Campus



Campus Activities



- Students attend a “Campus Activities Fair” on campus to select clubs they may wish to join

- CEC
- Best Buddies
- Habitat for Humanity
- Bowling club
- Anime
- Phi Sigma Sigma
- Choir

- Students also choose to attend events such as theater, music and sporting events in the evenings

- Poetry Slam
- Campus Lecturer *Ethan Cain
- Dance Dance Revolution
- Swim meet

Person Centered Planning



- Each student is guided through a person centered plan process as part of Personal Exploration 101
- Each student completes their own Person Centered Plan as their course final project
- Each student presents their plan using a power point format to the class i.e. mentors and faculty

Student Outcomes



- Student Portfolio *webpage
- Certificate in Career & Community Studies from TCNJ *completion of 128 CCS credits*
- Career/Employment Development
- On-going TCNJ Alumni Activities
- Community Integration

Program funding



- CCS Student fees
- TCNJ in kind support
- School Districts
- Division of Developmental Disabilities (Real Life Choices)

Student Voices



- “This experience has taught me how easy it is to include a person with a disability in a group discussion or collaborative effort”
- “I have gained new insight into the experience of my own students with disabilities”

Student Voices



- “After being in a group with her over the last few weeks, I realize the rest of the group gained most from the experience”
- “This experience has opened my eyes to the contributions that people with disabilities can bring to any given situation”

Student Voices



- “At first I was unsure of how to act toward her. As time went on, I realized I didn’t need to act any differently than I normally would”
- “He was able to understand and fit into then group process without any difficulty”

Evaluation



- Student assessment and satisfaction data collected for all coursework CCS students attend
- Interview data collected for Great Conversations (faculty and students)
- Parent focus groups (2007-2008)
- Assessment of student products (portfolio development)

LESSONS LEARNED



- Admissions
- Faculty
- Typically Enrolled Students
- Campus Community
- College Systems

Lessons Learned about Admissions



- It is critical to make sure that there is an appropriate fit for each student and their family (parents). If expectations are not clearly delineated and repeated, a student could experience failure.
- Students and their parents need to be encouraged to be forthright in presenting skills and support needs. Therefore, the interviewing process needs to be in-depth and additional admission processes may need to be implemented.
- It is critical for the potential student to observe and participate within a class or more.

Lessons Learned about Faculty



- College faculty are for the most part willing to do nearly anything you want as long as it doesn't effect their class; doesn't give them more work; and they understand and feel good about what is occurring
- It is beneficial to promote the scholarship that is associated with the program as an interdisciplinary opportunity
- Assure that faculty understand clearly what is expected and provide alternatives to grading and assignments for them

Lessons Learned about Typically Enrolled Students



- Make sure there is opportunity for typical classmates to have an opportunity to understand the foundations of including students with DD / ID
- Don't under-estimate the generosity of college students
- Create as many natural supports as possible, it helps everyone
- Mentors are Mentors NOT Professionals

Lessons Learned about our Students



- They need less support than we think, but when they need support, it must be there
- We must allow our students to face controversy
- Our students need strong and clear boundaries set for them (e.g. cell phone numbers, emails, etc.)
- May need coaching for relationships as young adults

Lessons Learned about Campus Community



- Create opportunities for discussion with college community which includes all members, not merely, professional staff, faculty and students
- Be careful to be aware of “overly helpful” community members
- The campus is much safer if the our students are known by the community
- Let the Campus Police know about your students; ask if disability awareness training is needed

Lessons Learned about College Systems



Pinocchio Syndrome

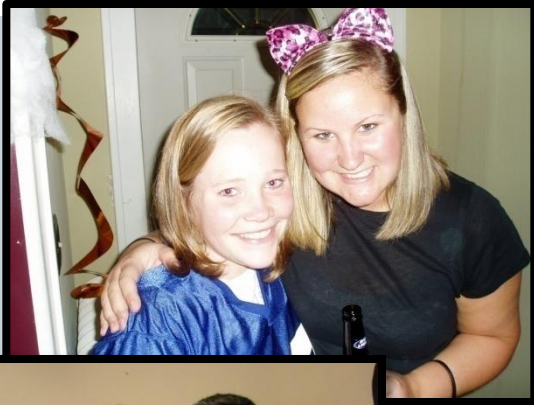
- It is critical to negotiate from the very beginning, the status of students at the college. College have a hard time figuring out who are our students and what are doing with them.
- College systems are often rigid, bound by policies and traditions that are often difficult to change
- Don't get caught in the second-class citizen status by not being matriculated

Things we are still figuring out . . .



- Students become comfortable in the TCNJ Community, how and to what extent can we provide support to our alumni
- CCS students make friends (and even more) with each other, how can we prevent them from being in large groups on campus or segregated
- Transportation, Transportation, Transportation
- Legal boundaries and reasonable accommodations or allowances to participate in campus activities (dignity of risk)
- Case Management – you have to do it.
- College Supported - Residential Options

CCS students



CCS Information



- For more information please contact our webpage

www.tcnj.edu/~ccs/

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