 

**The Achievement Center at Raritan Valley Community College**

**Academic Classes 2024-2025**

1. **PAGE ONE: THINKING ABOUT READING**
* The purpose of PAGE ONE: Thinking About Reading is for students to explain and recognize the impact of words in the written form. Students will develop their reading skills to understand the basis of a narrative; recognize and report about connected events in a written story; identify difference between plot and meaning; and recognize the different roles of characters in the written text. Students will actively participate in weekly discussions; in small groups and apply critical thinking skills to communicate ideas both verbally and in writing from a variety of reading material (Poetry, Short Stories, Online articles, Music Lyrics).
1. **WRITING OUT LOUD: INTRODUCTION TO FICTION AND WRITING**
* Writing Out Loud is designed to have the student learn to dissect the theme, character development, conflict, and structure of a narrative in reading short stories, plays, and a novel. Students will learn how to create different characters and learn the importance of imagination, lead paragraphs, plot structure, foreshadowing and themes. The students will work in small groups and apply critical thinking skills as they communicate their ideas in written form (Essay). The students will learn how to create an Elements of Fiction outline and turn the skills they have learned into a Short Story.
	+ **Page One: Thinking About Reading is a recommended prerequisite**
1. **COLLEGE SKILLS AND STRATEGIES I**
* College Skills and Strategies is a Two-Part Series designed to assist students in identifying their reliable student skills and differentiates those that may be different from successful skills used in secondary educational settings. Students will also work to use their learned skills to further practice for increased college and vocational success. Study skills, note-taking, note-using, time management, adult self advocacy communication, as well others are highlighted. Students will use the class to work and develop planning skills to advance their practice in areas of need.
1. **COLLEGE SKILLS AND STRATEGIES II: STUDENT PLANNING**
* Student Planning is Part Two of the College Skills and Strategies series. This class allows students to put their strategies into practice, whether it is helping them navigate the rigors on an extended post-secondary coursework; expanding their personal campus interests (Clubs and Organizations); Person-Centered planning; or increasing their social/interpersonal relationships on campus. Students will learn how to manage expectations and increased educational challenges throughout the semester.
1. **INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION IN SCHOOL, WORK, AND LIFE**
* The purpose of Individual Communication is to expose students to various components of adult social interactions as typical in collegiate and vocational settings. Students will work on specific skills, such as Total Voice Control; working in groups; consensus building; Active Listening and clarification strategies among others. This class forms the basis for hopeful further engagement in the campus and civic community through future classes.
1. **EXPANDING COMMUNICATION**
* Expanding Communication is designed for students to learn the importance of interpersonal communication and its impact on everyday life. Students will develop self awareness (through journaling, writing); expand their speech communication skills; learn to identify their strengths and areas of improvement; and learn how to listen effectively in all different environments. The class will participate in small and large groups and learn how to identify non-verbal communication skills, as well as empathy and equality in communication.
1. **STAGE FRIGHT: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC SPEAKING**
* Stage Fright: Intro to Public Speaking emphasizes to students the techniques to lessen public speaker anxiety; prepare students to organize their thoughts and ideas; learn teamwork on projects, and to achieve success in everyday public speaking situations. Students will learn to plan and prepare speeches that informs, persuades the needs of an audience; develop outlines to their speech and the importance of research. The class will work on their listening and non-verbal skills (body language, facial expressions); tone/volume, and importance of visual and presentation aids.
	+ **Expanding Communication and/or Individual Communication is a pre-requisite**
1. **SOCIAL SKILLS FOR GROUPS**
* Students in this Group Presentation class will be able to identify the purposes and characteristics of a small group (Formal, Advisory, Creative, Supportive, and Networking). Students will learn the importance of cohesiveness, interdependence, commitment, roles, and norms. The class will discuss the stages of group development; decision-making; leadership styles; and demonstrate ways in which collaboration and cooperation is successful and hindered.
1. **CAREER DEVELOPMENT I**
* Career Development I is the first of a two-part series, which involves more than helping students choose or enter an occupation. It helps the students makes a self-assessment of interests, values, and skills, and understanding all the steps in choosing an occupation or possible career path. The students will work in group exercises to help them recognize the importance of social skills, customer service, and teamwork in a competitive employment environment. Students will practice filling out employment applications; discuss flexibility in workplace; and their roles and responsibilities in completing job tasks.
1. **CAREER DEVELOPMENT II**
* Career Development II is the second in a two-part series. The purpose of Career Development II is to assist students in communication through the job interview scenarios with an emphasis on speaking to a developed resume. Students will practice through a series of interview related questions and develop strategies for communication, memory, and tactical job seeking among others. Students will also work with current examples of job descriptions and posting to align their skills and interests as well as prepare specific communication and interview strategies. Lastly, students will prepare for a Mock Interview process that will allow them to use their learned skills as well as manage the normal anxiety and stressors that come with seeking employment.
	+ **Prerequisite TAC class is CAREER DEVELOPMENT I**
1. **RESEARCH and the WRITING PROCESS**
* The purpose of Research and the Writing Process is to introduce students to basic research concepts and techniques in the written form. Students will learn how to use research as a tool that can make their writing more powerful and convincing to the reader. Students will learn how to access research in many different forms (library, journals, Case Studies, magazines) and researching the Internet in a productive and informative way. Students will learn how to appropriately and accurately document their research in a bibliography and in the body of your research paper, and examine the issue of plagiarism.
	+ **Pre-requisite TAC classes are WRITING OUT LOUD and ESSAYS**
1. **MATHEMATICS and EVERYDAY LIFE**
* The purpose of Mathematics and Everyday Life is to improve students understanding of Basic Mathematics (addition, subtraction, multiplication) and the use that Mathematics (exchange of money, bill payments, budgets, measuring) plays in our daily life skills. Students will learn the importance of how to read and write with numbers; percentages; differences between list, sale, and discount price; budgeting money, and the language of Algebra (positive/negative integers; use of exponents).

**13. CREATIVE WRITER IN YOU I: Introduction to Fiction and Prose Writing**

* Students will learn the elements of effective prose – from plot and setting to characters and imagery – to create vivid and engaging short stories or essays. Students will sharpen their writing skills and strengthen their understanding of craft. Students will engage in good writing practices that will enable them to produce, edit, and polish works of fiction.
	+ **Page One: Thinking About Reading is a pre-requisite**
	+ **Writing Out Loud is a pre-requisite**

**14. CREATIVE WRITER IN YOU II: Short Fiction and Play Writing**

* Students will take the elements they learned in Creative Writer in You and explore the world of Theatre writing from vivid characters, to stage directions to the world of Fictional Novel writing. Students will examine different works of the theatre, and literature. Students will work in workshops to learn the elements of effective prose – from plot and setting to characters and imagery – to create vivid and engaging short stories or essays. Students will sharpen their writing skills and strengthen their understanding of craft. Students will engage in good writing practices that will enable them to produce, edit, and polish works of fiction.
	+ **TAC classes Creative Writer in You I is a pre-requisite and/or Writing Out Loud**

**15. COMPUTER ESSENTIALS I**

* The purpose of Computer Essentials is to develop or improved student’s computer literacy, keyboard skills, and to meet the needs and expectations of students in post secondary education and typical college degree programs. The student will learn hands-on experiences in basic computer skills; standard and operative parts of the keyboard; Microsoft word; file management, and other computer applications (copy, paste, proof documents).

**16. INDEPENDENCE LIFE: Academic, Community, Household, and Work Skills**

* This course is designed to guide students through all aspects of living independently. During this semester, the course works with students to build their confidence, competence, and communication skills (Self Advocacy). Students will learn to identify different strategies, organization skills, and supports to daily life inside the home (finances) and also outside of the home, such as academic/career goals, community resources, medical needs, transportation, and emergency skills.
	+ **TAC class Mathematics and Everyday Life is a pre-requisite**

**17. THE BIG PICTURE: My Career**

* This Third Part of our Career Class Series is designed to guide students through all aspects of their career choice. During this semester, the course works with students to build their confidence, competence, and understanding of requirements both educationally and professional in their related field. Students will learn to identify different strategies, organization skills, and supports necessary to work in their career choice, as well as talk to Trained Professionals and Leaders in the employment world to give a real life workforce perspective.
	+ **TAC classes Career Development I and/or II is a pre-requisite**

**18. NON-FICTION: Understanding Communication, Directions, and Writing**

* This entry level Non Fiction class is designed to develop and enhance students understanding and importance of Non-Fiction comprehension, communication, as well as learn the impact of following directions. Students will learn all the different types of Non-Fiction writing – Essays, Research Papers, Business, and the influence of Social Media in our everyday and work lives. How communication through emails, memorandums, texts can disseminate, inform, as well as create conflict if not executed properly.

**19. COMPUTER ESSENTIALS II: Computer Concepts and Applications**

* The second part of our Computer Essentials series, focuses on how productivity software (word processing, spreadsheet, and Power Point presentation) can be used efficiently and effectively to gather, analyze, organize, and present information. The social, ethical, and privacy related aspects of computing are also deliberated. Students will learn how to develop effective online research techniques, social network platform usage, and develop the skills. Other items, such as memory management, process management, device management, the user interface, security and administration will be explored.
	+ **Computer Essentials I is recommended**

**20. ESSAYS: Organization, Revision, and Writing Strategies**

* This Essay based writing course works on strategies for reading different kinds of texts and the stages of the writing process with special attention given to essay organization (Thesis Statement) and sentence structure. We will examine all different types of Essay forms (Compare and Contrast, Descriptive, Narrative, and Persuasive). This class is also designed to help students prepare for English Accuplacer testing and develop skills necessary for comprehension of reading material and provides guidance during revision process.
	+ **Pre-requisite TAC classes are PAGE ONE and WRITING OUT LOUD**

**21. TIME MANAGEMENT: Importance of Managing Your Time in Life and School**

* This course entry is designed to help understand the important of planning and scheduling their personal activities or recreation, but also their commitments and deadlines surrounding school and work. With the use of planners and applications, we discuss the W’S – What’s Due, When is it Due, When are you going to Complete It, Where You Are Going to Complete It, and H – How you are going to do it. We will emphasize the importance of organization skills and follow through.

**22 BASIC MATHEMATICS: What Makes Math Different**

* This entry level Mathematics class is a transition class for students who are considering the next steps in their college education. Mathematics is an important component in all career fields, and is essential in college courses and requirements for two-year and four-year certifications and degrees. Students will study and test mathematic questions which are common on Accuplacer Examinations. The class will reinforce math study skills, preparation on exams, and on what skills are needed to succeed in math.

**23 SELF-ADVOCACY One: Identifying Support Systems Within Your Life**

* This course will help students learn the importance of self advocacy and basic human rights as it pertains to educational, professional, and personal environments. Students will obtain tools and resources they can use to foster a better understanding of what self advocacy means to them. Topics will include: speaking up for one’s self in different environments that supports their interests; learning and understanding one’s right and responsibilities; and problem solving and listening.
	+ **Pre-requisite TAC classes are INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION, SOCIAL SKILLS for GROUPS, EXPANDING COMMUNICATION/SOCIAL SKILLS AWARENESS**

**24. SELF-ADVOCACY TWO: My Choices, My Responsibility, and My LIfe**

* This class enhances those skills learned in SELF-ADVOCACY ONE and putting it in practice in real world settings. Students will examine advocacy in community, health, professional, and work settings. Students will discuss Self-Control, Self-Management, Personal Responsibility, and Achievement Drive around Advocacy. This class will provide select Guest Lecturers that will provide further support and topics based on real life experiences (College, Community, Personal, and Professional) for Advocating for Yourself and Others.
	+ **Pre-requisite TAC class is SELF-ADVOCACY ONE**

**25. TEAMWORK ONE: Unleashing Collaboration, Creativity, Diversity, and Leadership**

* This course is designed to help students recognize the importance of teamwork in all facets of their personal, professional, and community life. Students will identify their skill strengths, roles in a teamwork setting; identify leadership skills, and the importance of advocacy. Students will recognize the importance of team culture, and diversity. Topics will include recognizing personality types, team decision-making, developing problem solving and organization skills, and understanding/improving communication.
	+ **Pre-requisite TAC class is SOCIAL SKILLS for GROUPS**
	+ **Career Development I is recommended**

**26. TEAMWORK TWO: Project Management and Success**

* This course is designed to help students take their teamwork experience and apply into raise the performance of their team. Those looking to improve how they interact and work on all different project management platforms. Students will be more productive in the academic/workplace by building their problem-solving capabilities, and communication skills.
	+ **Pre-requisite TEAMWORK: Unleashing Collaboration, Creativity, Diversity and Leadership**

**27. WORDS: Note-Taking for Success**

* This course is designed for students to learn the importance of note-taking not only during and outside of college class time, but also in work and community environments. an essential learning skill for college students to implement during and outside of class time. The notes recorded should be compiled of the important facts or ideas presented by a speaker, and helps you make a connection to prior knowledge or introduction to new material and skills. Good note taking is an important study strategy. Actively listening and taking notes during class increases the retention of the material. Reviewing the notes immediately after class to add additional points or to generate questions for clarification creates opportunity for additional retention and understanding. Effective note taking skills will assist in preparing for exams and future knowledge base of material.
	+ **Pre-requisite TAC classes are:**
		- **Non-Fiction, Individual Communication**
		- **Page One or Writing Out Loud**
			* **Career Development One is recommended**

**28. GOALS: Projecting Our Life Now and in the Future**

* This entry level course is designed to get students to start considering their long-term and short-term goals in college and beyond. Students will learn the importance of goals providing focus and organization in your life. Students will examine the roles and responsibilities to reaching them, motivation, and research around those goals. Students will examine the starting point of goals and learn planning strategies around them for their personal, college, community, and work life.
	+ **Recommended Pre-requisite TAC class**
		- **Time Management**

**29. INTRODUCTION TO ART: Foundations of Artistic Expression**

* This entry level Art course will provide students with the foundations of artistic expression. Students will learn to manipulate the design elements and principles of art, as well as a variety of media to communicate ideas creatively. Students will learn differential learning strategies in its approach to art making, art history, criticism, and aesthetics. An Art Show Exhibit will be held at the end of the semester showcasing students’ art work accomplishments.
	+ **Students must be in their second year or beyond in TAC to take this course**

**30. LOVE OF MOVIES: Film Appreciation**

* This course is an examination of the history, forms, and functions of American cinema. The course will introduce students to important films and filmmakers instrumental in the different genres. Students will learn about screenwriting, creating scenes, importance of camera and production and technology. Students will be required to watch series of films and give written/verbal viewpoints, and research filmmakers.
	+ **Pre-requisites are Writing Out Loud or Page One or Creative Writing I/II**
	+ **Only Available to students in second year or beyond in TAC**

**31. COLLEGE SUCCESS: Academics, Advocacy, Canvas, and Student Life**

* This course entry is will explore what it means to be a college student from different points of view – academically, emotionally, student community, independence, self-advocacy, and self-determination. Students will learn the importance of planning/scheduling; academic readiness, social life component; independence in all facets of your college life; living on your own; and taking ownership of your education future and career choices.
	+ This course is only available to Year Three or Beyond students

**32. DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

* This course explores multiple psychological theories about development from conception to death. Attention will be focused on aspects of the individual’s physical, cognitive, personality, and social development. Students will explore prenatal development and birth; physical growth, motor development, and perception; cognitive development and information processing; intelligence; emotional development; attachment; identity; temperament and personality; family and peer relationships; culture; death and dying
	+ This course is only available to Second Year Students and Beyond

**33. INTERMEDIATE ART: A Look at All Mediums**

* This upper level art course covers an examination of all of the mediums in the art world, such as oil painting, watercolor, acrylic, pastel, and mixed media. This class will have students expand their creative abilities within these mediums with weekly and long-term art projects. Students will also be required to research art work and artists, as well as review art show or museum pieces and present to the class.
	+ **Pre-requisites is Introduction to Art and Creative Writing I/II**
		- **This course has limited enrollment and Instructor approval of enrollment**

**34. INDIE FILMS REFRAMED: Filmmaking in 1990s and 2000s**

* This film entry explores the 1990s and 2000s of filmmaking and takes a deep dive in the Independent Film scene, the Rise of Documentary films, and low budget films. Students will learn the importance of all of facets of filmmaking (camera styles, acting, screenwriting, location shooting, independent marketing). Students will also film a three-minute original or class 1990/2000 scene as their final project, followed by a Film Festival Presentation.
	+ **Pre-requisite courses are Writing Out Loud or Page One; Creative Writing I/II or Film Appreciation**

**35. ACTING is an AUDITION: Starting a Conversation with Imagination and Real Life**

* This entry level Acting class will explore the importance of acting not only through the world of imagination (theatre, film, television), but the practical uses of these skills in everyday life, such as job interviews, relationship conversations, and self-advocacy. Students will participate in role play exercises, on-camera performance, as well as learning the history of acting, research, and observation.
	+ **Pre-requisite courses are Individual Communication or Social Skills for Groups; Writing Out Loud or Page One**

**SUMMER SEMESTER CLASSES**

**1. SOCIAL SKILLS AWARENESS (available to students 16 years old and up) – 8 Classes**

* This Social Skills Awareness class is concentrated to develop and enhance social skills; discuss better ways to communicate our ideas and thoughts; learn safe practices with others; recognize the importance of verbal/non-verbal communication in our interpersonal relationships; identify social strengths, and learn how to maintain and grow friendships.

**2. READING and WRITING for COLLEGE (available for students 16 years old and up) – 8 Classes**

* This entry level Reading and Writing class is designed to develop and enhance students reading comprehension, learn the impact of literature, as well as the importance of writing when communicating our ideas and thoughts. Students will learn all the important tools of reading, such as identifying the Protagonist/Antagonist; Exposition of a story; First and Third Person; and examine different types of literature (short story, poetry).

**3.**  **WHAT IS COLLEGE LIFE? (available for students 16 years old and up) – 8 classes**

* This entry level College Life course is designed for students to learn and understand what are the emotional, physical, and education components of being a college student. This course includes a campus tour; structured assignments surrounding both academics and communication skills, such as self advocacy. The importance of independence, organization, and note-taking skills. The class also addressed the social components of being on campus and reflects on those skills that would put a student in the best position to succeed.

**4. HARDWARE: Introduction to Computer Basics (available for students 16 years old and up) – 8 Classes**

* This entry level Computer Basics course is designed for students to learn and understand the importance of computers in their daily and everyday college life. It will address different comfort and experience level while using a computer. Students will have hands-on experience using common hardware and software, as well as different applications.

**ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS and SERVICES:**

**CLUB FRIDAY NIGHT HANGOUT (Fall/Spring) and CLUB WEDNESDAY NIGHT HANGOUT (Summer only)**

* This CLUB FRIDAY NIGHT HANGOUT offers Social Skills Awareness program on the campus of Raritan Valley Community College is designed through recreational activities the importance of peer support and interpersonal skills. Through interactive topic themes, such as Art as Therapy, Games Night, Team Based Challenges, Social Skills Olympics, Murder Mystery Night, and other social bonding related activities on campus, students can develop lifelong skills.
	+ **Now available in FALL, SPRING, and SUMMER semesters**

**COLLEGE MANAGEMENT: Office Support**

College Management offers support to the student on weekly basis or bi-weekly basis with the Director of Post Secondary Programming to help them navigate a number of classes simultaneously. Students each session with identify specific barriers in their courses that range from process learning material; time management of assignments/tests; navigate relationships; study and learning habits; and communication tools to interact with faculty. Students will receive weekly reflective notes from the Director which outlay the goals discussed and regarding their choices for the upcoming academic week.

**PEER MENTORING SUPPORT**

Peer Mentoring is a well-established tool that enables students to work with undergraduate students who serve to help students navigate the daily challenge of college life. Our Peer Mentors work with the students on a weekly or bi-weekly basis and help facilitate their needs that range from academic support; learning the college support system (library, campus environment, special interest groups, Academic Support Center), and the Lion’s Den website for academic information. Peer Mentors will help the student prioritize their academic and personal interest needs and help facilitate person-centered planning and self-determination.

**VOCATIONAL – SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**

Supported Employment offers an opportunity for students to take their employment and social skills learned (Career Development I and II) to competitive employment opportunities in the community. Each student is assigned Job Coach who helps prepare them for the connections through work; role play with students the interview process; navigate skill training related to the job; and allow person-centered job development that focuses on career or first time employment goals. Supported Employment offers career counseling, evaluation, and assessment; possible internships on and off campus, and assistance with any job accommodations that may arise.

**Updated OCTOBER 2023**