

College of Continuing and Professional Studies

Mission Statement

Consistent with the mission of Mercer University, the College of Continuing and Professional Studies offers undergraduate and graduate academic programs and lifelong learning opportunities for adult learners who seek leadership roles in their communities and beyond, professional transition and achievement, and lives that have meaning and purpose.

Strategic Goals

– Offer qualified adult learners at Mercer’s community-based centers the highest quality learning experiences and education

Objectives:

- 1) develop and implement an adult learner orientation program and course
- 2) implement appropriate competency testing in reading, writing, and mathematics
- 3) improve academic support services including library, technology, academic advising, and writing and mathematics skill development (QEP)
- 4) implement continuous assessment as part of the College’s culture
- 5) promote, evaluate, and reward effective and innovative teaching and learning experiences for working adults
- 6) establish an overall minimum of 60% full-time coverage of all courses offered in the College and a minimum of 50% in each major as internal benchmarks
- 7) give high priority in the College and department planning process to the achievement of professional accreditation in Liberal Studies, INSY, CJP, and Human Services within six years

- 8) broaden the disciplinary expertise represented in the College so that adult learners are given opportunities with which to view themselves, their life's work, and the diverse world in which they live from a variety of perspectives
- 9) maintain an undergraduate student retention rate of 60% over a six year period
- 10) recruit and hire faculty who have a commitment to and understanding of adult learners

– Integrate in distinctive ways liberal learning and professional education, theory and practice, and knowledge and experience

Objectives:

- 1) encourage through assessment and evaluation writing and speaking across the curriculum as an integral outcome of each program in the College
- 2) encourage through assessment and evaluation critical thinking and problem solving skills
- 3) identify the “big questions” each program raises to assist adult learners in finding meaning and purpose in their vocation and their lives
- 4) require students to reflect on work and personal experiences as they develop new perspectives and meanings
- 5) encourage faculty and student involvement in community activities
- 6) develop the ability of students and faculty to see problems, issues, and events in global and multi-cultural settings

– Cultivate a teaching, learning, and knowing community characterized by values rooted in respect for others, caring, passion, service, spirituality, and integrity

Objectives:

- 1) promote, reward, and evaluate service in the College and beyond

- 2) develop a community of partnership between faculty (including adjunct faculty) and students that professes a commitment to the nurturing of the knowledge, understanding, and development of others through formal and informal learning experiences
- 3) challenge students to reflect deeply on issues, policies, and actions (and the ideas and values that under gird them) that promote justice, love of humanity, and peace and harmony within organizations, communities, nation states, and beyond

– Cultivate a community in which learning and discourse thrive

Objectives:

- 1) use of on-line technology to promote learning and discourse
- 2) promote innovative pedagogy that encourages collaboration, cooperation, learning through peer teaching, group presentations, etc.
- 3) linked courses, cohorts, etc.
- 4) provide opportunities for center students to make formal presentations of their research to faculty and other students in the College
- 5) find opportunities for center students to present their research at professional conferences and meetings
- 6) promote inter cultural learning experiences by encouraging formal and informal dialog with Mercer’s international students and the international community that resides in metro Atlanta and beyond
- 7) develop with the University a speaker series for centers that focuses on contemporary issues from a variety of perspectives

– Develop adult learners who possess the skills to become self-directed lifelong learners

Objectives:

- 1) promote problem and inquiry based learning
- 2) require experiential learning

- 3) teach for mastery of content within the context of developing “learning to learn skills”
- 4) involve graduates of CCPS programs in the nurturing of the knowledge, understanding, and development of currently enrolled students
- 5) work with Mercer’s alumni affairs to develop a survey instrument that measures the involvement of CCPS graduates in lifelong learning activities

Vision Statement

In the postmodern world, continuous learning will be a way of life regardless of a person’s age or occupation. Ultimately, the spiritual and material welfare of communities, states, and nations will rest on the ability of its citizens to learn continuously.

Learning will cut across disciplines and institutional and geographical boundaries. Distinctions between liberal learning and professional and vocational education will become blurred as individuals seek to discover meaning and purpose in their lives beyond the acquisition and consumption of material goods. As a result, learning will be rooted in human experience, be self-directed, and focus on both personal and professional growth. It will occur in homes, offices, factory floors, churches, shopping malls, in electronic space, and on satellite campuses and academic centers that are community based rather than full service campuses. Assisting diverse people become continuous, self-directed learners is the goal of the College of Continuing and Professional Studies.