

# Pennsylvania Highlands Community College

## General Education Statement

General education at Pennsylvania Highlands Community College reflects our conviction that all associate degree graduates must demonstrate proficiency in the following foundational skills: critical thinking, scientific/quantitative reasoning, information literacy, effective communication, awareness of a diverse world, and technological expertise. These skills are essential for success in both college and career in an increasingly complex global economy, and they will ensure that students are equipped to develop as well-rounded and competent individuals through a lifetime of learning.

- *Critical Thinking*: Students must be able to read and think critically in order to synthesize knowledge gleaned from a wide range of sources. Students must demonstrate the ability to use higher-level thinking and analytical skills and to support their judgment, in their disciplines and in resolving ethical dilemmas.
- *Scientific/Quantitative Reasoning*: Students must be able to apply quantitative reasoning and methods, including the experimental method, mathematical formulae, and statistical analysis, to solving problems.
- *Information Literacy*: Students must be able to determine the extent of information needed, access the needed information effectively and efficiently, evaluate information and its sources critically, incorporate the information into their knowledge base, and understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use the information ethically and legally.
- *Effective Communication*: Students must demonstrate fluency in both written and oral communications. They must use information literacy, rhetorical training, and critical thinking to create clear written reports, speeches, and oral reports in Standard English. They must be able to comprehend written material.
- *Awareness of a Diverse World*: Students must develop an understanding and appreciation of various cultures in order to live in a diverse world and to compete in the global marketplace.
- *Technological Expertise*: Students must perform fundamental computer operations, use software applications, and demonstrate basic knowledge of computer theory. These are all essential skills in a technological society for problem-solving, communication, information access, and data analysis.
- *Values*: Students should be able to explain their own values and beliefs, as well as to understand the histories and cultures behind those values. Students will investigate and describe their values, and the value systems of other cultures, for both professional success and also for personal fulfillment.
- *Ethics*: Students must understand the complexities underlying moral and ethical questions and the consequences of choices we make as individuals and as members of communities.

*Summary Statement*: Students must present an associate degree level of academic and professional competence to the college and community. They must possess the skills necessary for lifelong learning.