The Five Cs of Success: Implementing a Required, Online Cornerstone Course for New Adult Learners
Excelsior College and Our Students

- Not-for-profit, degree completion college in Albany, NY
- Allow transfer of up to 113 credits
- Online, asynchronous coursework
- Average student age of 36
The Cornerstone

- Required first course for all incoming students
- IND101: Cornerstone A: Foundations (<60 credits)
- IND301: Cornerstone B: Pathways (>60 credits)
- Asynchronous, online, 3 credits
- Minimum C grade requirement
The Five Cs

Comfort  Confidence  Community  Courage  Curiosity
Your Thoughts on the 5 Cs

- Go to Pollev.com
- Enter MARYBERKERY254
- Rank the 5 Cs in order of importance for new students at your institution
Which of these 5 "Cs" do you think are the most important for new college students to cultivate? (rank 1-5, 1 is most important)

- Comfort
- Confidence
- Courage
- Curiosity
- Community
Which of these 5 "Cs" do you think are the most important for new college students to cultivate? (rank 1-5, 1 is most important)

- Confidence: 1st
- Courage: 2nd
- Comfort: 3rd
- Community: 4th
- Curiosity: 5th
1 Is There Anybody Out There?
2 Is Intelligence Predetermined?
3 What Is the Future of Human Thought?
4 Is This the Dawn of the Post-Truth Era?
5 Why Do I Need to Take That Class?
6 Will the Robots Replace Us?
8 Can We Create the Future?

William Daigneault

BEGIN
see will inevitably reflect confirmation bias. As a society, we'll need to adapt to this challenge. What does this mean for our collective future?

**Beware Online “Filter Bubbles” (Clip 3 of 3)**

In addition to potentially harmful filter bubbles and news feeds that play to your confirmation bias, you should also be aware of the financial motives behind sources. In an era of widespread corporate ownership, determining who is paying for the content is wise. Be skeptical of news sources and advertisements that...

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**Excelsior! Persistence**

You are in the final module of your Excelsior Cornerstone course. To get here, you've needed to plan your time, devote your energy, and keep an open and engaged mind. Enrolling in college can be daunting, but look where you are now! Remember when we explored growth mindset and grit back in Module 2? Be proud of your willingness to try new things and your tenacity through challenges. Keep moving forward and making any necessary adjustments to achieve your academic and professional goals.

You may have had a break from school before enrolling in this course. Maybe you were out of school for several years. Your life and work experiences have changed your processes and outlook. You are a different person now and your goals have evolved, so this is the perfect time to adjust your study habits. Don't stick to an ineffective process just because that's what you did in high school. Try something new to achieve new results.

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**Cornerstone Connections**

Describe a time in this course when you had to persevere through a challenge to meet your academic goals.
First-Time Course Taker Survey

• Cornerstone students feel:
  • More connected to faculty, other students, and the college community
  • More prepared for their next course
  • More prepared to write at the college level, to use strategies to maintain and improve learning, motivation and metacognition, to locate information sources, to critically assess the quality of arguments and information sources, and to cite information in APA format
  • More familiar with our resources (Online Writing Lab, Library, Career services, Advising)
Changes in the 5 Cs
How has your comfort changed during your Cornerstone experience?

- It has improved! I am much more familiar with my Excelsior environment and I have a better understanding of how to use the school’s resources.

- My comfort level is a little better. I am still getting acquainted with the types of resources I’ll use at Excelsior.

- It hasn’t changed at all. I am still struggling with the school environment and need additional support on which resources I should use.
How has your confidence grown during your Cornerstone experience?

- 54.37%: It has grown tremendously! I have a much stronger understanding of the questions I should ask and the resources I should use moving forward.
- 43.30%: It has grown some. I feel somewhat ready to incorporate elements from this class in my academic and professional goals.
- 2.33%: It hasn’t grown much. I don’t really understand how these skills can boost my confidence one way or the other.
How has your sense of community changed during your Cornerstone experience?

- 51.82%: I feel a sense of belonging with other students, my instructors, and the greater Excelsior community through my experience.
- 44.06%: I understand the types of connections I can make, but those interactions haven’t enhanced my experience much.
- 4.12%: I really haven’t connected with the Excelsior community at all and still feel like I’m fairly alone in this process.
How have you demonstrated **courage** in your Cornerstone experience?

- I can now demonstrate academic courage in a variety of ways. I know it’s about keeping an open mind, and I understand how to ask questions and apply critical thinking skills when confronted with new information.
- I’m still working on it. I see some benefits of using argumentative reasoning and inquiry, but do not understand how criticizing and critiquing new information or other people’s work creates academic courage.
- I am not ready to challenge the status quo. I am still in the process of developing academic courage and am more comfortable allowing others to speak for me in academic settings.
How has your sense of **curiosity** grown during your Cornerstone experience?

- **59.31%** It has grown remarkably! I am excited about and engaged with what I’m learning and I am looking forward to my next classes.
- **36.42%** It has grown a little. I am more self-aware of my commitment to school, but my engagement has not changed much.
- **4.28%** It hasn’t grown at all. I feel like I’m going through the motions just so I can complete each task.
Success Rates in First Courses

Success (A, B, C)
- First Course Not Cornerstone: 83.60%
- First Course Cornerstone: 89.40%
• Good evening, Professor, I am writing to you to express how grateful I am for all the answers you provided to me during this past eight weeks. My confidence in writing grew so much that I enrolled in ENG102A. When I opened ENG102A, I realized that, even if it is going to be difficult, I have all the necessary tools to succeed. You had a significant role in that. I will take on the offer you gave to the class and stay in touch with you.
What’s Next: Learning more about what happens to unsuccessful students