Greenfield Community College  
Principles of Education  

“We are all about learning.”—Bob Pura, President GCC

These principles articulate the implicit assumptions regarding teaching and learning held dear by members of Greenfield Community College and represent the ideals to which the GCC community aspires. They apply to all members of the GCC community—students, employees and trustees.

These principles intend to provide a foundation on which members of the community develop and teach courses, engage students, hire faculty and staff, design professional development activities and structure budgets. These principles should inform the daily, habitual life of all members of the college, having both immediate and lasting impact. As teaching and learning are at the heart of the college, these principles appropriately shall guide the college into the future.

The college maintains a learning environment that values the process of learning as much as the knowledge taught; an environment that encourages independent thinking and divergent activities; and an environment that elevates members of the community and inspires them to:

- Develop independent and interdependent, lifelong learning strategies
- Nurture their aspirations, confidence, curiosity, imagination, self-respect and responsibility to others
- Explore and adapt to new ideas in both work and leisure
- Understand social change and individual development and take responsibility for sustaining both
- Accept the constancy of change and cope with, adapt to and manage change effectively in all areas of one’s life
- Possess self-determination with a realistic assessment of one’s aptitudes and inclinations

Members of the GCC community have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes that empower them to clarify values, express ideas, solve problems, and embrace learning as a life-long process.

Diversity and Community

The college creates and fosters an environment for work and learning in which one may achieve a level of comfort with one’s individuality and culture, while accepting and respecting the individuality and cultures of others. The college encourages each member of its community to:

- Recognize how the foundation of one’s ideals and values emanate from one’s particular background and experience
- Participate in communities as both teacher and learner, connecting with others, sharing thoughts and creating knowledge while taking advantage of an open environment that values critical thinking and civil discourse
• Enhance one’s understanding of various forms of discrimination and oppression while embracing the principles of access to promote equitable opportunity for all in the teaching and learning experience
• Explore, understand, and respect the tenacity and validity of diverse values and heritage
• Appreciate the interconnectedness of global events and issues and one’s place in the web of life
• Develop an environment that encourages active learning and values the differing approaches of all community members

**Literacy and Communication**

The college promotes effective expression in many forms for making public meaning and personal significance. Symbolic interpretation and representation of ideas and emotions, using logical and aesthetic systems that cultivate various modes of self-expression, contribute to successful interpersonal and intrapersonal communication. The college policies and practices ensure that all its members continue to develop their capacities to:

- Enhance literacy in all areas—reading, listening, viewing, writing, speaking, creating, and movement
- Reason quantitatively, using numerical data to meet personal and vocational needs and to respond to a world increasingly dependent on the understanding of a broad range of quantitative concepts and processes
- Identify a need for information and know how and where to find it
- Use language to communicate effectively with other individuals and groups, including basic functional ability in a language other than one’s own
- Function constructively in both a leadership and participatory role within groups

**Knowledge and Thinking**

The college expects members of the community to think critically and to conduct disciplined inquiry, using both their minds and hearts in order to understand the complexity and simplicity of ideas and actions; to prioritize and make decisions; to identify and solve problems; to evaluate and judge; in short, to think independently. The college encourages each member to:

- Access, organize, interpret, evaluate, synthesize and apply information
- Reflect on and assess information and knowledge from differing perspectives
- Develop knowledge of one’s feelings, values and biases and how they relate to one’s thinking and behavior
- Integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines to make thoughtful and informed decisions
- Base decisions on factual and affective evidence rather than on unexamined opinions
- Determine the nature of a problem, analyze the problem and implement an appropriate solution, applying scholarly theories and methods where appropriate
- Evaluate, integrate and adapt to technological change

Endorsed by GCC Assembly on May 17, 2004