

SIGNALS

T H O M A S E D I S O N S T A T E C O L L E G E

SUMMER 2009

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COURSE NEWS

Note: A complete listing of all undergraduate courses and their availability may be found on the College Web site. Go to www.tesc.edu/listall.php.

NEW ONLINE COURSE:

FDR-440 Fundraising for Nonprofits

NEW FLASHTRACK COURSES:

BIO-208 The Science of Nutrition

ECO-490 International Economics

FIN-301 Principles of Finance

HIS-301 African History and Culture

HIS-356 War and American Society

MAN-331 Human Resources Management

MAT-231 Calculus 1

MAT-232 Calculus 2

PHI-384 Ethics and the Business Professional

PSY-300 Thanatology: An Understanding of Death and Dying

PSY-322 Research in Experimental Psychology

PSY-350 Abnormal Psychology

PSY-352 Psychology of Personality

PSY-360 Organizational Theory

SOC-315 Social Gerontology

New Course Extension Policy Designed to Improve Course Completion

New Policy Begins July 1, 2009

Thomas Edison State College has developed a new policy on course extensions for all undergraduate and graduate online, Guided Study and Prior Learning Assessment courses that is designed to help students who request extensions to complete courses.

The new course extension policy will apply to courses that start on or after July 1, 2009.

With the new policy, students making satisfactory progress may apply for an eight-week extension, but their mentors must certify that 50 percent of the course work has been completed.

"Our goal with this new policy is to encourage students, who do request a course extension, to complete the course," said Dr. Ray Young, vice provost for Learner Services. "For example, with our online courses, many students who request an extension before they complete a sufficient amount of required course work are actually unable to successfully complete the course because the online discussion component of the course will have ended during the extension. We hope to prevent that type of situation with our new policy."

Once the mentor's certification is received

by the student, the student will submit the *Request for Course Extension* form to the Office of the Registrar with payment. The Office of the Registrar will process the request and notify the student of their new course ending date when the request has been approved.

With the exception of extensions related to military deployments, students will be responsible for the cost of the extension, including cases involving medical illness or financial hardship. For cases involving military deployments, students will be required to submit documentation showing their deployment dates relevant to the specific course.

For courses such as e-Pack® and FlashTrack, where no mentor certification is required, students will still be required to submit a course extension request with payment in accordance with the instructions on the form, omitting the

mentor certification part. The new *Request For Course Extension* form will be available on the Student Forms Web page on July 1.

For both first and second extensions, the eight weeks will be added to the current end date of the course in question. Students cannot have more than 16 additional weeks added to the original



Dr. Ray Young



Feeling the pinch of a tough economy? The New Jersey State Library is here to help.

The New Jersey State Library provides free resources for N.J. students and their families.

The recently launched New Jersey State Library (NJSL) portal: <http://gethelp.njlibraries.org> connects New Jersey residents to resources for job placement, financial management, healthcare management and mortgage assistance through a variety of state programs and agencies. The site also provides access to free recreational programs, books, movies, music and parenting tools for New Jersey families.

"Users of the online portal can find information on a host of items ranging from career development and financial counseling to free programs for seniors and obtaining reasonably priced healthcare for children – all with links to the entities offering assistance," said New Jersey State Librarian Norma Blake. "The site helps N.J. students and residents instantly connect to programs and agencies that can help them weather these tough economic times."

State library systems are reporting that residents are utilizing

library computers, checking out books, literature and DVDs, and attending computer, financial and job search classes more than ever. NJSL took these services one step further by providing one-stop shopping for state residents who need access to state services and agencies. "This new portal will link residents to a number of tools that will help save money and avoid frustration by taking them directly to the agencies that provide help," added Blake.

This resource augments the Library's full complement of services available to Thomas Edison State College students who hold a NJSL library card.

All Thomas Edison State College students, whether in- or out-of-state, are eligible for a NJSL card. Simply click on the library's 'Cyberdesk' online link: www.njstatelib.org and choose "Get a Library Card" from the resulting menu. With the array of full text journals and nearly 200 online databases, e-books and downloadable audio books at your disposal, you will discover the many ways that NJSL membership has its benefits. ■

Heavin School of Arts and Sciences Hosts TEAC Accreditation Site Visit

Thomas Edison State College's Heavin School of Arts and Sciences hosted a site visit for new program accreditation of its Master of Arts in Educational Leadership (MAEdL) degree program by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) on May 10-12. TEAC is dedicated to helping educator-preparation programs improve and be accountable for their quality. As part of the accreditation process, MAEdL students and mentors provided feedback to the team regarding their experiences with the program.

The Master of Arts in Educational Leadership program serves adults who wish to prepare for roles as school leaders. The program is offered completely online and aims to promote an understanding of

educational leadership and administration through a process which is based on the national Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards. To find

out more about TEAC's mission, visit: <http://www.teac.org/>. Details about the MAEdL program can be found by visiting: <http://www.tesc.edu/1844.php>. ■



TEAC accreditation team members considered the viewpoints of students currently enrolled in the MAEdL program during a conference call on May 11. From left to right: Dr. Mark LaCelle-Peterson, professor and chair of education at Houghton College, N.Y.; Dr. Allyson Taub, special assistant to the dean and professor of health education at New York University; Christopher Campisano, coordinator of higher education programs, New Jersey Department of Education, and Dr. Judith Gray, former superintendent for the Hunterdon Regional School District.

Take an e-Pack® on Your Path to a Degree!

PASSING A FINAL EXAM HAS NEVER BEEN AN EXACT SCIENCE. HOWEVER, THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE'S e-PACK® COURSES MAY OFFER THE BEST DIAGNOSTICS FOR PREDICTING YOUR RESULTS.

Delivered in a series of Web-based practice quizzes, e-Pack® courses prepare students for a comprehensive final exam. Similar to TECEP® exams in that they do not require online interaction with a mentor or other students and there are no written assignments, e-Pack® courses can be completed in a standard 12-week term (or sooner) and do not require a textbook.

"The e-Pack® course was one of the first course formats that I took at Thomas Edison State College," noted Dan Richards, a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration student majoring in accounting who works in financial operations for Lexmark International in Kentucky. "What I liked about the e-Pack® courses were the online quizzes that provided immediate feedback affirming my comprehension of the subject matter."

After studying sections of the textbook, students like Richards take a series of brief online quizzes, each of which provides an

immediate score and feedback to help identify areas that need further work.

"You're not given the correct answers for the ones you missed, so you have to research the correct answer in the text, added Richards. "It helped me strengthen areas of weakness and improved my grasp of the concepts which enabled me to pass the comprehensive final."

Quizzes taken during an e-Pack® course do not count toward a final grade but are a means to help students prepare for the final. Quizzes can be taken at a student's own pace, and each can be taken as many times as needed to sufficiently master the material. Ultimately, the student's grade – and credit for the course – will depend on the score received in a proctored, final exam.

"The journey to complete my degree started after being promoted to a supervisory position in 1995," recounted Richards. "Unfortunately, I possessed only an associ-



Student Dan Richards liked the immediate feedback that e-Pack® courses had to offer.

ate degree from a technical school with none of the credits transferring into a bachelor's degree program. Thirteen years, two brick-and-mortar schools, and one exclusively online school later - I'm enrolled at Thomas Edison State College. Through the burning desire to complete my degree, I targeted accelerated methods of earning college credit and ways to pack more into a year of college."

With more than 20 courses ranging from accounting to statistics, e-Pack® courses offer an efficient and accelerated method of adding credits to your transcript. ■

New Courses Extension Policy (continued from cover)

» end date of their term. Students may not request more than two extensions for a single course.

Students will not be granted an extension after the last day of the course. Students will be permitted to withdraw from a course after an official course extension has been processed as long as the extension has not ended.

Please note: a percentage of a final grade in an online course is based on a student's participation in online discussions and, depending on the course, in group activities involving other members of the class. These asynchronous "conversations" and collaborative assignments will not continue after the scheduled end of the original term and, as a consequence, can no longer positively affect the final grade.

Students on a course extension must call the Office of Test Administration at (609) 984-1181 two weeks prior to their

desired test date or at least two weeks prior to their extension end date to ensure that examinations are sent to their proctor when they are ready to take them. If a student is taking an examination or completing their assignments after the end of the term without having an approved extension, they will be billed for both the extension fee and the late fee.

Additional FAQs can be found in the knowledgebase on myEdison® under the "Help" tab. Students with questions regarding this policy may contact the Office of the Registrar by submitting a Help Desk case on myEdison®, or by writing to us at:

Thomas Edison State College
Office of the Registrar
Attention: Course Extension Policy
101 W. State St.
Trenton, NJ 08608-1176

Mentor Profile: Dr. Robert Price

Living the Dream

When it comes to teaching, Dr. Robert Price's experience runs the gamut. In addition to mentoring adult learners at Thomas Edison State College, his career includes teaching at traditional collegiate institutions as well as instructing children's music classes for Portland, Ore., public schools.

His philosophy, "Work becomes a labor of love when one follows ones dream."

Fulfilling the dream has included finding each new term with his students to be novel and invigorating.

"I love sharing my passion for the texts we study and the students' perspectives of the material keep it fresh for me. My experiences with the Thomas Edison State College students are among the most rewarding in my career," said Price. "Most of my students have been rigorous and passionate learners. Each has shown me that their work at this College is a 'labor of love' and they have taught me something new about the course material every term."

Price embarked on his teaching career as a teenager in the 1970s when he gave private clarinet lessons. His first higher-education position came in 1985 when he was an artist-in-residence at the University of Texas at Dallas. Price began mentoring for Thomas Edison State College in 1998 and was one of the designers of the College's second graduate program, which became the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS).

"I was surprised to find myself as part of a team that was developing a graduate program from the ground up and impressed by the excitement and idealism of the team that developed it," he recalled. "Every concern, value and idea that was most important to each faculty member was woven into the structure of the program."

Price mentors two core graduate courses in the MALS program that he helped design: Human Discourse and Sense of Community I: Art and Morality and Human Discourse and Sense of Community II: Faith and Reason. He also mentors three religion courses on the undergraduate level: Introduction to World Religions, Eastern Religions and Western Religions; various humanities courses, and is a Capstone advisor for several graduate students.



Dr. Robert Price

Having taught music ensembles, private clarinet, humanities, world music and public speaking face-to-face at other colleges, Price acknowledged that there are obvious differences between online-based courses and face-to-face instruction. He noted that the community is also quite different; that there are some challenges for developing a sense of community among online students and mentors.

But in Price's mind the advantages outweigh any downside.

"I think that online classes have many advantages that face-to-face classes do not," Price explained. "I studied liberal arts at St. John's College and noticed that some people had a difficult time speaking up in the seminars. An online discussion gives everyone time to think about their responses and everyone gets 'heard.' Of course, being able to participate at any time within a week at the convenience of the student has obvious advantages. Online education is often the only viable way that some professionals, single parents and soldiers can attend classes. Initially, online education was a challenge for courses requiring hands-on instruction and learning; however, new technologies are always becoming available that make most courses teachable online. I taught a music theory course for Marylhurst University online, for instance, that used cross-platform music software."

Price earned his MA degree in liberal arts from St. John's College in Santa Fe, N.M., and his doctorate in art and performance from The Union Institute & University in Cincinnati, Ohio. In addition to teaching, Price works professionally as a musician and performance artist. Currently, he is a clarinetist in a Balkan band. He is also an adjunct at Marylhurst University, where he is designing a course entitled Sacred Music that combines two of his interests – religion and music.

In addition, Price founded the nonprofit organization, the Present Time Dream Factory, to help fund art projects in his community. He lives in Portland, Ore., with his wife, Nancy Coscione, an artist who works in mixed media. They have three grown daughters and recently welcomed their first grandchild, who was born on Dec. 22, 2008. ■

“*I love sharing my passion for the texts we study and the students' perspectives of the material keep it fresh for me.*”

Advisement Made Easy

The Office of Learner Support has made it easier for students to schedule advisement appointments, obtain information about their programs or reach an advisor instantly by taking advantage of three new services.

AppointmentDesk

The recently implemented *AppointmentDesk* provides students with the capability to instantly make appointments with academic and nursing advisors. Students can access *AppointmentDesk*, via the College's online course space, myEdison® or by calling (888) 442-8372 to request an advising appointment - 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"Previously, advising appointments were primarily made on the phone and only during working hours," said Director of Advisement Dr. Garry Keel. "In addition to improving students' access to advising services, *AppointmentDesk* provides a more efficient method of managing appointments and scheduling. Learning how and when to use this and other advisement tools will help students get the answers they need quickly."

The most common reasons students utilize *AppointmentDesk*:

- ▶ planning multiple courses or an entire degree program
- ▶ reviewing course descriptions from outside institutions to ensure that they are appropriate for their academic program
- ▶ moving credits around within a degree program to ensure that previously earned credits are used in the most beneficial way
- ▶ reviewing the GPA policy and what can be done to improve academic standing

To access *AppointmentDesk*, log on to myEdison® and select "Make an Advising Appointment" under the Tools menu on the left side of the screen. Following the

prompts, enter your student ID and last name in the appointment area; select your degree program from the dropdown, an advisor and a counseling method. Students will receive a confirmation e-mail immediately and a reminder within 24 hours of the scheduled appointment.

myEdison® Help Desk

Keel also urges students to consider utilizing the myEdison® Help Desk feature to submit questions regarding:

- ▶ getting started
- ▶ obtaining course approvals
- ▶ understanding the differences in credit earning methods
- ▶ changing degree programs

To access the Help Desk feature, log on to myEdison® and click the "Help" tab and the "College Support Portal" link on the resulting page.



*Dr. Garry Keel,
director of
Advisement*

Advisement Expressline

Students that need answers immediately have the option of calling the College's *Advisement Expressline* at (888) 442-8372, (Monday - Thursday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Friday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. EST) to reach an academic advisor quickly without the need for a formal appointment. *Advisement Expressline* is best suited for questions that typically take less than 10 minutes for an advisor to answer, such as:

- ▶ determining how many credits a student needs to graduate
- ▶ learning the difference between credit earning options
- ▶ looking for suggestions on the first course(s) to take
- ▶ interpreting an Academic Evaluation



Academic Calendar

July 2009 Term

August 2009 Term

September 2009 Term

Registration Dates	May 16 - June 7, 2009	June 13 - July 12, 2009	July 18 - Aug. 9, 2009
Late Registration	June 8 - 12, 2009	July 13 - 17, 2009	Aug. 10 - 14, 2009
Course Transfer Period	May 16 - June 30, 2009	July 13 - 31, 2009	July 18 - Aug. 31, 2009
Term Start Date	July 1, 2009*	Aug. 1, 2009	Sept. 1, 2009
Midterm Exam Week**	Aug. 17 - 23, 2009	Sept. 14 - 20, 2009	Oct. 12 - 18, 2009
Final Exam Week	Sept. 21 - 26, 2009	Oct. 19 - 24, 2009	Nov. 16 - 21, 2009
Term Ends	Sept. 26, 2009*	Oct. 24, 2009	Nov. 21, 2009

* Dates apply to *both* graduate and undergraduate courses.

** Select courses have a midterm examination. Refer to your course materials for details.

New Grade Policy Announced

Thomas Edison State College has recently adopted a new policy on D Grades that will apply to all students who apply as undergraduate degree-seeking students on or after July 1, 2009.

The policy states that students may transfer in or apply Thomas Edison State College course grades of D to their non-area of study requirements as long as their overall grade point average is at least a 2.0. All area of study courses must be graded C or better in order to apply to area of study requirements. All required English composition courses must be graded C or better. Students must also meet any minimum required GPA standards established by their school to graduate from Thomas Edison State College.

For more information on this policy, contact the Office of the Registrar at registrar@tesc.edu.

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