3.4 Overview of Curriculum, Instructional Activities and Student Support Services

Effective Date: July 1, 2007; titles updated July 1, 2008; GED® trademarks compliance July 1, 2009; July 1, 2011 Copyright Law compliance; Accessibility and accommodations, Individualized student learning plan; January 1, 2016.

Revises Previous Effective Date: N/A

I. Policy:
The curriculum, instructional activities and support services will assist adult learners to achieve academically, obtain an adult high school credential or GED® credential, obtain and retain employment, and/or qualify for post-secondary education and training. The selected activities will focus on outcome-based results and demonstration of learning gains.

II. Applicability:
This applies to all Adult Education offices and employees associated with the Technical College System of Georgia.

III. Related Authority:
P.L. 105-220 Section 231

IV. Definitions:
Contextual Learning: learning that occurs only when adult learners process new information or knowledge in such a way that it makes sense to them in their frame of reference (their own inner world of memory, experience, and response). This approach to learning and teaching assumes that the mind naturally seeks meaning in context – this is, in the environment where the person is located – and that it does go through searching for relationships that make sense and appear useful.

Content Standards: what the learner should know and be able to do within each content area is specified. It defines and organizes the critical skills and content knowledge of each educational level. Content Standards are the foundation for building a sustainable curriculum framework to ensure high levels of achievement for all adult learners and to provide critical accountability for reporting outcomes.
Copyright: is a property right attached to an original work of art or literature. It grants the author exclusive rights and right of control over all forms of reproduction, including photocopies, slides, recordings on cassettes and videotapes, compact disks, and other digital formats.

Curriculum: what should take place in the classroom, delineating in greater detail the topics, themes, units, and questions contained in the content standards. Curriculum serves as a guide for instruction. Unlike content standards, curricula can vary somewhat from program to program, provided the focus is on delivering the concepts that the standards require learners to understand and apply.

Curriculum Framework for Adult Education: a guide of what to teach in adult education programs and not how to teach. It identifies the competencies and minimal skills required to demonstrate educational gains. It describes the components that can be used to design the curriculum. The framework allows curriculum flexibility based upon local needs, adult learner achievement levels and individual learning difference. It also serves to ensure statewide uniformity of program offerings.

Disabled Adults: persons who are sixteen years of age and older with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits or restricts one or more major life activities, including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, and working. This definition may include adults who are alcohol and drug abusers, hearing-impaired, deaf, speech-impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other health impairment, and adults with specific learning disabilities.

Documentation of Disabilities: a written or printed paper that determines a specific diagnoses and recommendation of appropriate accommodations, and must be made by a qualified professional diagnostician whose credentials are appropriate to the disability. Documentation is maintained locally.

Evidence-Based Practice: the integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence from scientifically based research in making decisions about how to deliver instruction.

Functional Context: refers to a curriculum that utilizes job related materials or work manuals to teach basic skills to improve employees overall job performance.

Instructional Methodologies: methods employed in the classroom such as individual instruction, peer tutoring, whole group instruction, role playing, lecturing, tutoring, small group instruction, and computer assisted instruction.

Learning Disabled Adults: are adult learners with IQs in the low-average and above (70+ to any level) who have deficits (related to neurological impairments) in capacity in defined limited areas related to learning, including dyslexia (reading
disability), dysgraphia (writing disability), dyscalculia (math disability), and who have a history of previous educational efforts. (NRS)

**Learning Disability:** a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life span. Problems in self-regulatory behaviors, social perception, and social interaction may exist with learning disabilities but do not by themselves constitute a learning disability. Although learning disabilities may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (for example, sensory impairment, mental retardation, serious emotional disturbance) or with extrinsic influences (such as cultural differences, insufficient or inappropriate instruction), they are not the result of those conditions or influences. (National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 1994, p. 16).

**Performance Standard:** a performance standard indicates the level of competences or adeptness learner must demonstrate to show attainment of the content standard.

**Real Life Curriculum “life-skills”:** building the adult education program upon everyday life skills. The classroom work is grounded in the life of the adult learner outside of the classroom. Classroom activities center on a real life theme that facilitates the acquisition of adult education for day-to-day experience within the context of life. For example, a thematic unit may center on the use of a checkbook if the adult learner has a checking account in real life.

**Scientifically Based Research:** research that meets particular criteria such as experimental design, published in peer-referred journals, meets thresholds for sample size and selection, etc. and is rigorous, systematic, objective, empirical, and peer-reviewed. It relies on multiple measurements and observations, and is preferably conducted through experimental or quasi-experimental methods. (U.S. Department of Education)

**Transition to Postsecondary/Occupational Services:** see 4.1 of Georgia’s Adult Education and Family Literacy Policy and Procedure Administrative Manual.

V. **Attachments:** (Use the back button on your browser to return to this section after viewing an attachment).

Curriculum Framework
VI. Procedure:

Accessibility of the Facilities

The adult basic and literacy education activities must be offered in facilities that are easily accessible to all eligible adult learners who wish to enroll in the program.

Accommodations in Academic Program

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42, U.S.C. 12201, adult education programs must make reasonable accommodations for individuals with mental or physical disabilities.

- Arranging and paying for accommodations provided to students is the responsibility of the local eligible program providing the activity.
- Accommodations should be reasonable and not damage the integrity of the program.

Class Schedules

Local eligible programs are to offer flexible schedules to meet the needs of adult learners. This includes offering classes in the day, evening, and on weekends. Students must be scheduled for at least six hours per week of instruction and for a length of duration that will allow students to be post-tested and to demonstrate achievement of substantial learning gains.

Curriculum, Activities and Instructional Methodologies

The Office of Adult Education provides a curriculum framework for adult education courses to the local eligible programs. The framework will align curriculum in reading, writing, mathematics, English Literacy Program, and citizenship test preparation to content and performance standards. The framework also allows the integration of Health, Financial, Workplace and Career Awareness literacy. Using the framework, local eligible programs may choose curriculum materials that best fit the needs of their students.

- Teachers must implement the assessment policy as outlined in the Adult Learner Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual.
- A variety of instructional approaches, e.g. technology applications, group activities, videos, peer tutors, and activities that allow for teacher interaction with students to enhance learning opportunities.
- The accommodation of learning styles must be provided through instructional practices, technologies, materials, and software.
- The instructional activities must reflect the program goals and meet student needs.
- Phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading
comprehension that research has proven to be effective in teaching individuals to read must be available.

- Activities should provide learning in real life “life-skills” contexts to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

- Activities initiated should be built on a strong foundation of scientifically based research and effective educational practice.

- Books and printed materials should be appropriate, up to date, in fair condition, are/level/content appropriate, etc.

- Advances in technology including the use of computers should be effectively employed to enhance the curriculum.

- Technologies and equipment such as computers, internet, video, audio, etc. should be available to all students including all educational functioning levels, type of class and programs.

- Procedures should be available for teachers and other staff to obtain maintenance of equipment, supplies, and materials.

- Technology and connectivity should be provided to offer curriculum and related learning products available electronically.

- Instructional staff should participate in trainings designed to foster a variety of instructional approaches.

**Copyright Law of the United States**

The copyright law has been modified many times since the U.S. Congress first exercised its power to enact copyright legislation with the Copyright Act of 1790. Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 is known as the Copyright Clause. In the modern era, copyright, intellectual property and other related rights regarding ideas or other intangibles are known as intellectual property rights. The State Board of Technical College System of Georgia’s policy on Intellectual Property is at [https://tcsg.edu/tcsgpolicy/docs/II.E.Intellectual_Property_Policy.html](https://tcsg.edu/tcsgpolicy/docs/II.E.Intellectual_Property_Policy.html).

The current Federal Copyright Law, Title 17, updates the law to include modern technology such as DVDs and videocassettes. A violation of any of the exclusive rights of the copyright holder is known as a copyright infringement.

Many resources are available through the internet search to learn more about copyright law. Many large universities and libraries have a section on their webpage with resources regarding copyrighted materials which often include tutorials and checklists for fair use: ex. the University System of Georgia [http://www.usg.edu/copyright/copyright_generally](http://www.usg.edu/copyright/copyright_generally).

Educators may use some copyrighted work in their classes without compensation to the creator in certain circumstances under the doctrine of “fair use” (17 United
“Fair Use” permits certain limited copying of copyrighted works for education or research purposes without the permission of the owner. While fair use cannot be defined by number of pages copied or the number of copies distributed, it is important to remember that extensive use of copyrighted work without the permission of the creator violates the spirit of the fair use doctrine. For example, multiple copies

- cannot exceed more than one copy per adult learner in a class
- each copy includes a notice of copyright
- are not copied from works intended to be “consumable” in the course of study such as workbooks, exercises, standardized tests and test booklets, answer sheets, and like consumable materials
- shall not substitute for the purchase of books, publisher’s reprints, or periodicals

Circular 21, Reproduction of copyrighted Works by Educators and Librarians is available at [http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ21.pdf](http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ21.pdf) and outlines the four factors used to help determine fair use:

1. the purpose and character of your use;
2. the nature of the copyrighted work;
3. the amount and substantiality of the portion taken;
4. the effect of the use upon the potential market.

If you are not certain if your materials meet the fair use guidelines, review website resources and consult with a Librarian or Learning Resource Specialist.

**Disabilities (Learning or Physical)**

Documentation of diagnosed learning disabilities or physical disabilities should be maintained, and an individualized student learning plan developed to meet the academic needs of the student.

**Confidentiality**

It is a goal of all adult education service providers to provide services in a confidential, trusting atmosphere. Each local eligible program has a responsibility to protect confidential information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). An authorization will be provided which allows records and information to be disclosed, but also provisions will be available for a student to withdraw the authorization in writing.

In addition to the Confidentiality Notice on the Intake Assessment Form, students registering to take the GED® Test will be provided an additional opportunity to authorize the release of student GED® testing information or to deny the release of student GED® testing information.
Student Support Services

The local eligible program should develop written policies and procedures for serving students with needs for support services that are necessary to enable adult learners, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.

- Utilize the interviews during the intake process and the quarter/semester student-teacher conference, to identify students who require services and/or assistance in order to successfully complete an adult education program.
- All categories of special populations are to be treated equally.
- Project activities can be directed toward students from special populations who have special instructional needs – such as low-income.
- Identify community resources that will assist the student.
- As possible through cooperative agreements, support services such as child care and transportation should be offered to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.

VII. Records Retention:

Local eligible programs will adhere to the Record Retention Chart which is located in the attachment section of Policy 2.3

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