

General Information

History

In 1999, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG), in collaboration with its institutions, began developing a fully online set of courses that would allow a student to complete core curriculum courses in Areas A-E for science and non-science majors. eCore became an award-winning, high quality, accessible set of interactive online courses that meet defined learning outcomes. eCore courses may be offered by any USG institution, taken by any USG student, and taught by any USG faculty member (*From 2000-2006 Factbook*).

Why Collaboration?

eCore serves as a successful example for collaboratively delivering education in the online environment. It has evolved from being a small, early start-up collaboration (the first in the USG), to a growing model studied carefully by other systems. In FY 2010, it became a fully scalable, self-sustaining program marked by high student retention and satisfaction, proven course quality and outcomes, and renewed interest. In FY 2012, eCore has continued on this trajectory.

The hallmarks of its present and future operation are:

Providing Increased Institutional Capacities for Fully Online Programs

While most USG institutions offer online courses, the vast majority of these are unable to offer all areas of the core courses online. Without the full core online, institutions cannot offer full undergraduate

degree programs online, and thus lose students to more expensive, proprietary institutions. Also, institutions that do offer online core courses often require at least one face-to-face meeting in these courses, whereas eCore courses do not.

Key Benefits

- Provides *full* online core curriculum, whereas most institutions are only able to provide some courses.
- eCore is completely self-sustaining, requiring no state appropriations.
- Efficient, scalable and consistent student services, course design and teaching.

Efficient Funding & Model Operations

- Among other (almost 90) collaborative programs across the United States, eCore is one of only a few that are completely self-sustaining, requiring no state appropriations.
- Institutions offering eCore courses receive 20-40 percent (varies based on withdrawals) of eCore tuition dollars, but have no faculty or course development costs; thus these collaborative enrollments are beneficial for affiliate institutions.
- eCore relies on centralized administrative services (unduplicated at institutions). These include course development and revisions, faculty development and support, identification and follow-up of at-risk students, student success initiatives, student orientations, non-technical call center services, tutoring services, data analysis, bookstore services, and marketing services.

Enrollment Management

- eCore course sections are analyzed on a daily basis during the registration periods to provide for an optimum number of course sections. Almost all sections of eCore are managed so that enrollments are sufficient to cover instructional costs.
- Institutions delivering courses via eCore are able to successfully utilize eCore for students who need core courses but have no courses available due to excess capacity.

Professional Faculty Development

- eCore Administrative Services provides eCore instructors with a certification course before they teach online. Certification includes participation in an online course as a student, as well as comprehensive learning experiences relating to technology, online teaching, faculty expectations, community building, and the role of the instructor in student support. Ongoing support includes mentoring programs, an online community, an annual meeting, and webinars.
- Many instructors who teach through eCore take their skills back to their institutions, where they develop and teach higher-level online courses and mentor other faculty.

Consistent Quality Courses

- All eCore courses meet or exceed the rigorous requirements for a 5-Star Online Course (developed by UWG and based on principles of good practice).
- All eCore courses are evaluated and substantially revised by teams of eCore faculty every three years. Smaller revisions take place on an ongoing basis.
- All eCore faculty agree to engage in specific practices that enhance student learning and success, including: high visibility in courses, quick responsiveness and grading, quality feedback, and identification of at-risk students.

High Student Retention

- eCore Administrative Services is staffed with individuals who are highly trained and have experience with the needs of online students, which can be markedly different than those of on-campus students.
- One of the major criticisms of eCore five years ago (poor retention) has all but disappeared with the formal system that has been put in place, first at the University of West Georgia (in

2007), and across eCore in 2010. eCore retention (course completion) has increased from 68 percent in 2005 to 82 percent in 2010, and continues to climb, with Summer 2010 having an 89 percent retention rate. For FY 2012, the average retention for the three semesters is 84.8 percent.

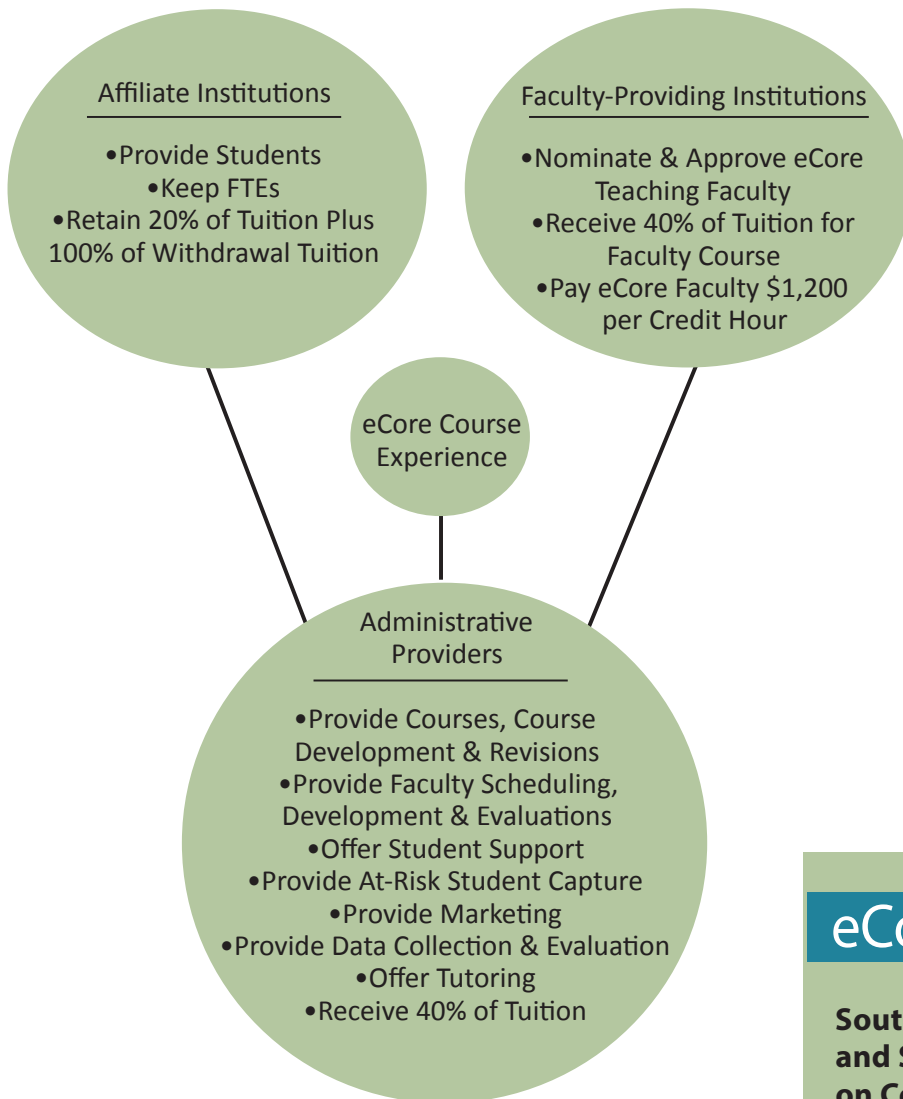
- The increases in retention are due to: a gated registration system for eCore students which requires demonstrated understanding of the nature of the courses; identification of at-risk students (by eCore faculty and administrators) and highly intensive follow-up of these students (by eCore advisors/administrators); faculty training as to the role of the instructor in student success; more student-friendly navigation within courses; and ongoing evaluation of student withdrawal surveys and other data.

Growth and Scalability

- Double-digit growth in students served and demand for services results in more quality choices for non-traditional students. A growing number of students taking eCore courses are transfers from proprietary institutions.
- The improved financial model provides incentives for institutions to become affiliates or to provide faculty.
- Through ongoing data collection and analysis, eCore administrative services aggressively identifies the changing needs of both member institutions and student populations, and evolves accordingly.

Administrative support for the program has been provided by the University of West Georgia since June 2009.

Collaborative Model



eCore Accreditation

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Commission on Colleges

In 2001, the initial five eCore Affiliate institutions (Georgia Highlands College, University of West Georgia, Valdosta State University, Columbus State University, Clayton State University) participated in a distance education substantive change visit by SACS. As a result of the visit, those institutions were considered compliant with SACS regulations for the delivery of online courses for the eCore program.

eCore Courses

The courses currently offered by eCore are shown in the following tables:

Current eCore Options for Non-Science Majors

Area A: Essential Skills Specific courses in English composition and mathematics	Must take: • ENGL 1101: English Composition I • ENGL 1102: English Composition II	One from: • MATH 1101: Introduction to Mathematical Modeling • MATH 1111: College Algebra • MATH 1113: Pre-calculus • MATH 1501: Calculus I
Area B: Institutional Options Courses that address institution-wide general education outcomes of the institution's choosing	Must take: • COMM 1100: Human Communication • ETEC 1101: Electronic Technology in the Educational Environment	
Area C: Humanities/Fine Arts Courses that address humanities/ fine arts learning outcomes	One from: • ENGL 2111: World Literature I • ENGL 2132: American Literature II	One from: • PHIL 1001/2010: Introduction to Philosophy • SPAN 2001: Intermediate • Spanish I • SPAN 2002: Intermediate • Spanish II
Area D: Science, Mathematics, and Technology Courses that address learning outcomes in the sciences, mathematics, and technology	Two from the following: • ISCI 1121/ENVS 2202: Environmental Science • Any science course listed for Math/Science Majors	• Additional math course from Area A, except that Mathematical Modeling and College Algebra cannot be used to meet Area A and D requirements • Either an additional science course from those listed for Math/Science Majors OR choose from one of the following: • CHEM 1211K: Principles of Chemistry I • CHEM 1212K: Principles of Chemistry II • GEOL 1011K: Introductory Geosciences I • PHYS 1211K: Principles of Physics I • MATH 1401: Introduction to Statistics (3semester-hours credit)
Area E: Social Sciences Courses that address learning outcomes in the social sciences	Must take: • POLS 1101: American Government • HIST 1111: World History I • HIST 2111: United States History I	One from: • PSYC 1101: Introduction to General Psychology • SOCI 1101: Introduction to Sociology

* PHIL 1001 Introduction to Philosophy has been upgraded to PHIL 2010, as of Fall 2011

* ISCI 1121 Integrated Science I has been upgraded to ENVS 2202 Environmental Science, as of Spring 2012

Current eCore Options for Science Majors

Area A: Essential Skills Specific courses in English composition and mathematics	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENGL 1101: English Composition I • ENGL 1102: English Composition II 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MATH 1101: Introduction to Mathematical Modeling • MATH 1111: College Algebra • MATH 1113: Pre-calculus • MATH 1501: Calculus I
Area B: Institutional Options Courses that address institution-wide general education outcomes of the institution's choosing	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMM 1100: Human Communication • ETEC 1101: Electronic Technology in the Educational Environment 	
Area C: Humanities/Fine Arts Courses that address humanities/fine arts learning outcomes	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENGL 2111: World Literature I • ENGL 2132: American Literature II 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHIL 1001/2010: Introduction to Philosophy • SPAN 2001: Intermediate • Spanish I • SPAN 2002: Intermediate • Spanish II
Area D: Science, Mathematics, and Technology Courses that address learning outcomes in the sciences, mathematics, and technology	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MATH 1501: Calculus I <p>If Calculus is used in Area A, choose one course from the list at right.</p>	One sequence from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHEM 1211K: Principles of Chemistry I • CHEM 1212K: Principles of Chemistry II • GEOL 1011K: Introductory Geosciences I • PHYS 1211K: Principles of Physics I
Area E: Social Sciences Courses that address learning outcomes in the social sciences	Must take: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POLS 1101: American Government • HIST 1111: World History I • HIST 2111: United States History I 	One from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSYC 1101: Introduction to General Psychology • SOCI 1101: Introduction to Sociology

* PHIL 1001 Introduction to Philosophy has been upgraded to PHIL 2010, as of Fall 2011

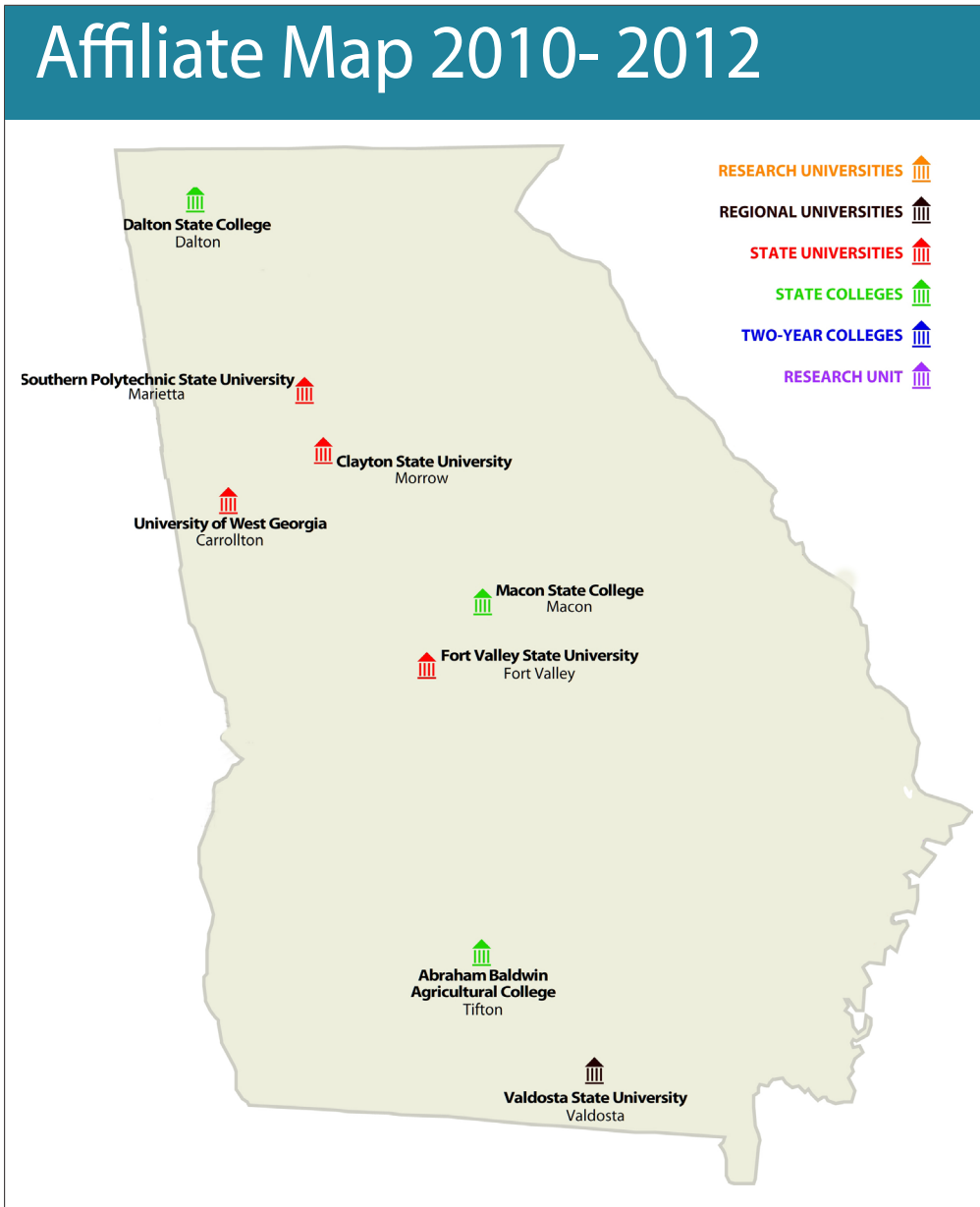
List of Courses Offered Through eCore

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Semester
CHEM	1211K	Principles of Chemistry I	4
CHEM	1212K	Principles of Chemistry II	4
COMM	1100	Human Communications	3
ENGL	1101	English Composition I	3
ENGL	1102	English Composition II	3
ENGL	2111	World Literature I	3
ENGL	2132	American Literature II	3
ENVS	2202	Environmental Science	3
ETEC	1101	Electronic Technology in the Educational Environment	2
GEOL	1011K	Introductory Geosciences I	4
HIST	1111	World History I	3
HIST	2111	U.S. History I	3
MATH	1101	Intro to Mathematical Modeling	3
MATH	1111	College Algebra	3
MATH	1113	Precalculus	3
MATH	1401	Intro to Statistics	3
MATH	1501	Calculus I	4
PHIL	2010	Intro to Philosophy	3
PHYS	1211K	Principles of Physics I	4
POLS	1101	American Government	3
PSYC	1101	Introduction to General Psychology	3
SOCI	1101	Introduction to Sociology	3
SPAN	2001	Intermediate Spanish I	3
SPAN	2002	Intermediate Spanish II	3

List of Assessments and Data Collected for eCore

As part of eCore’s internal evaluation, several assessments have been initiated to allow a clear and thorough analysis of the process, procedures, and outcomes of eCore operations and curriculum. The following chart lists eCore assessments conducted annually each term.

Assessment	Description	Responsibility
Demographics		
Student Demographics	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Student Profile	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Services Survey	Annually (Fall Term)	eCore Administrative Office
Course Management System Usage	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Academic		
Enrollment – Duplicated and Unduplicated	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Semester Credit Hours Generated	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Student Course Completion	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Grade Comparisons to F2F	End of each term	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Utilization of Tutoring	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Student Withdrawal Survey	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Saving our Students/At-Risk Findings	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Testing		
Testing Metrics	Within each term	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Faculty		
Faculty Training & Mentoring	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Support Survey	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Student Course Evaluations	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Review of Evaluations	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Faculty Chart	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
Course Revisions	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Financial		
Tuition Dollars Generated	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Course Development Costs	Within each term	eCore Administrative Office
Research Outcomes		
Enrollment & Success by Core Area	Annually	eCore Administrative Office
** (Exempted All Affiliates in FY 2012) Regents Exam Pass Rate	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Course Preparation Comparison – English Composition, Spanish, Chemistry	Annually	eCore Admin. Office and Affiliates
Learning Outcomes		
General Education Assessment	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Course Level Outcomes	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office
Outcome Assessment Matrix	End of each term	eCore Administrative Office



eCore Affiliates

In 2012, eCore courses were offered for credit by eight USG institutions (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Clayton State University, Dalton State College, Fort Valley State University, Macon State College, Southern Polytechnic State University, University of West Georgia, and Valdosta State University) referred to as affiliates. Affiliates were identified through a self-nomination process. Each institution conducted a careful analysis of participation criteria, including institutional academic review of eCore courses. Affiliate presidents and chief academic officers signed letters of commitment documenting their faculty’s

endorsement of eCore, including their willingness to support students and accept eCore as a parallel core curriculum on their campus. Affiliate institutions admit and enroll students, maintain student records, provide financial aid, and provide services, such as advising, to eCore students, as appropriate, beyond those provided centrally.

Affiliate History

Eleven affiliating institutions have participated in the eCore program over the last 12 years.

- Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC)
 - Clayton State University (CLSU)
 - Columbus State University (CSU)
 - Dalton State College (DSC)
 - Fort Valley State University (FVSU)
 - Georgia Highlands College (GHC)
 - Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW)
 - Macon State College (MSC)
 - Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU)
 - University of West Georgia (UWG)
 - Valdosta State University (VSU)
- UWG and VSU have been with the eCore Program since inception.
 - Clayton State University (CLSU) joined at inception (2001 through 2004) and returned beginning Spring 2011.
 - Macon State College (MSC) became an affiliate in Fall 2010.
 - Dalton State College became an affiliate in Summer 2011.
 - Fort Valley State University became an affiliate in Fall 2011.
 - Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College became an affiliate in Spring 2012.

Affiliates Participation Timeline

YEAR	UWG	VSU	SPSU	GSW	CSU	GHC	CLSU	MSC	DSC	FVSU	ABAC
FY 2012	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
FY 2011	X	X	X				X	X			
FY 2010	X	X	X	X							
FY 2009	X	X	X	X	X	X					
FY 2008	X	X	X	X	X	X					
FY 2007	X	X	X	X	X	X					
FY 2006	X	X	X	X	X	X					
FY 2005	X	X	X	X	X	X					
FY 2004	X	X		X	X	X	X				
FY 2003	X	X		X	X	X	X				
FY 2002	X	X		X	X	X	X				
FY 2001	X	X		X	X	X	X				

* For FY 2012, the affiliate institutions have provided demographic, campus comparative grade, and course preparation data.

Ongoing Affiliate Support

The eCore Marketing Team's aggressive promotional efforts play a vital role in the popularity, and growth of eCore.

Through social media outlets, email and telephone blasts, promotions during high school, college, and military fairs, on-site presentations, and face-to-face contact with potential students and their parents, the eCore Marketing Team effectively shares relevant information to increase awareness of its online opportunities.

To better promote eCore at the affiliate institutions, members of eCore's Marketing/Enrollment and Student Success teams make individual campus visits with campus advisement groups and other key personnel to raise awareness of the benefits of online learning and key components of eCore student success. Question and answer sessions are provided to help the campus advisement groups better understand how the eCore curriculum fits into core requirements and how to best advise their students about eCore so that students have the greatest opportunity for success in the program.

During eCore Administrative Services annual eCore Advisor retreat, July 7-8, 2012, the eCore Advisors from across the affiliate institutions came together to discuss advising practices, student success initiatives, policies/procedures, INGRESS related functions, and strategies for increasing enrollment.

In FY2013, eCore's Marketing/Enrollment and Success Teams will have greater visibility on the affiliate campuses. Beginning August 2012, the teams will visit two affiliate campuses per month and disseminate information about eCore to help increase enrollment and growth as well as promote student success in the program. The teams will continue to attend campus events including open houses, orientation days, preview days, or special events such as Earth Day, etc., to help increase eCore's visibility and maintain a presence on the affiliate campuses.

Links to Degree Completion for the Adult Learner

One eCore goal is to offer options for non-traditional students, military personnel, and professionals who may have difficulty taking classes by traditional means, yet desire to pursue a degree while managing family and/or workplace responsibilities.

In support of our adult learners, the University System of Georgia partners with eCore to deliver complete online degree options for non-traditional students through our affiliate institutions. Such offerings include degrees in Criminal Justice, Political Science, Psychology, Criminology and Organizational Leadership.

eCore helps ensure the success of all students by placing emphasis on providing advisement, offering flexibility, providing support and promoting degree completion to and for both traditional and non-traditional students.

Military Initiative

Currently, the University System of Georgia is in the process of expanding its military-centered programs and other state-wide initiatives to support military personnel and their families who wish to pursue educational opportunities in Georgia.

Moreover, through this initiative, military students have the opportunity to expand their educational experiences independent of time, location, and physical barriers. With an active online community, military students have opportunities to interact with their professors and fellow students through classroom discussions, the eCore blog, and student Facebook groups. Also, they receive a high level of student support services to help ensure their success in the program.

During FY 2012, eCore continued to provide flexible and convenient options for military students pursuing degrees from USG institutions. The total number of military students enrolled increased from FY 2011 to FY 2012 by 96%. With a steady increase in military enrollment (204), eCore and other outreach programs will continue to offer additional alternatives to soldiers that are transitioning to civilian life.

Complete College Georgia

An eCore goal is to offer options for non-traditional students, military personnel, and professionals who may have difficulty taking classes by traditional means, yet desire to pursue a degree even when they have family and/or workplace responsibilities.

In support of our adult learners, the University System of Georgia partners with eCore to deliver complete online degree options for non-traditional students through our affiliate institutions. Such offerings include degrees in Criminal Justice, Political Science, Psychology, Criminology and Organizational Leadership.

Placing emphasis on providing advisement, flexibility, support and degree completion to both traditional and non-traditional students helps eCore ensure the success of all students.