Creative Exchange & Life Skills Programs

Office of Community Educational Engagement
Generously sponsored by the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

Other sponsors include the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

View program calendar and register online at csi.cuny.edu/creative
Creative Exchange & Life Skills Programs

Established in 1975 exclusively at the College of Staten Island/CUNY (CSI), Creative Exchange is one of the first post-secondary programs of its kind nationally, serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities age 21 and over in a non-degree lifelong learning program.

Creative Exchange also offers a more demanding non-degree lifelong program for adults 21 and over with intellectual and developmental disabilities called Life Skills. Established at CSI in 1998, Life Skills serves a cohort of adults with the goal of building independent living competencies.

Through educational and social initiatives, we foster a unique, safe, and collaborative environment for personal growth and community-building, regardless of ability as part of CSI’s legacy of place initiative.

Creative Exchange and Life Skills use person-centered approaches to inform programming. We will engage students for their feedback, ideas, and opinions throughout the academic year.

Eligibility Requirements:
- Must be 21 years old, or older
- Recognized by NYSOPWDD as having a Developmental Disability
- Motivated to participate independently

Tuition:
- Free

Contact:
- Michael.Green@csi.cuny.edu
  718.982.2723

For distance learning participation, students will need:
- A computer or tablet
- Internet access
- A familiarity or willingness to learn how to use the Zoom platform
- An email addresses where they can receive Zoom links & course materials from instructors

Visit csi.cuny.edu/creative for program calendar and to register!
Math Appreciation

Mondays  P1  6:30–7:30pm

Description: Students will learn adding and subtracting single and multi-digit numbers, fractions, decimals, percentages, and identifying missing numbers.

Objectives:
- Identifying the difference between a decimal and percentage
- Adding and subtracting multi-column numbers
- Using math in everyday activities

Course Topics:
- Adding single and multi-digit numbers
- Subtracting single and multi-digit numbers
- Fractions
- Using number-lines to identify missing numbers
- Using decimals when counting money
- Learning shapes and angles

Instructor: Evan Fersko

Reading Comprehension and Recall

Mondays  P1  6:30–7:30pm

Description: Students will learn to improve reading comprehension and recall skills.

Objectives:
- Teach students how to read information and retain important points of what was read.
- Improve focus and attention when reading.
Course Topics:
- Reading fluency skills
- Vocabulary skills
- Grammar
- Spelling
- Focusing skills
- Variety of reading passages
- Comprehension activities and tasks
- Memory skills tasks
- Understanding written materials
- Auditory processing skills

Materials:
- Pen/pencil and notebook

Instructor: Amy Lenza

Health and the Human Body

Mondays 7:30–8:30pm

Description: Students will learn about the organ systems of the human body, healthy lifestyle choices, diseases, conditions, and medications.

Objectives:
- Improve students’ knowledge of health and human body systems.
- Improve students’ ability to advocate for themselves in regard to health decisions by increasing their knowledge of basic health, human biology, and medical tests/treatments/medications.

Course Topics:
- Overall review of the human body
- Cardiovascular system
- Digestive system
- Respiratory system
- Nervous system
- Renal system
- The senses
- Exercise and physical activities
- How to ask questions during a doctor’s appointment
- Making healthy lifestyle choices

Materials:
- Pen/pencil and notebook

Instructor: Amy Lenza
Virtual Arts

**Mondays  P2  7:30–8:30pm**

**Description:** This course will explore virtual arts through the Internet, using tutoring, and illustration to learn how to draw. The student with instruction oversight will work on projects that might focus on holidays (New Year’s, Black History Month, Halloween, etc.) or events (birthdays, anniversaries). Students taking this class will learn how to improve their patience and explore their creative nature using virtual arts.

**Objectives:**
- Art through everyday life
- Use of technology to help students draw

**Course Topics:**
- Holiday art
- Topics of the month
- Learning lines
- Special occasions
- Friends
- Cartooning

**Instructor:** Evan Fersko

Music Production

**Mondays  P1 P2  6:30–8:30pm**

**Description:** Students will learn the basics of music production. Using different music platforms, students will explore how songs are created and produced.

**Objectives:**
- Socialization
- Song creation
- Exploring technology for music production

**Course Topics:**
- Song creation
- Exploring instruments
- Exploring music production platforms

**Instructor:** To be determined

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All About Animals

M W  Mondays and Wednesdays  P1 6:30–7:30pm

Description: Students will learn about the different categories of animals and their characteristics, home, habitats, food, and socialization.

Objectives:
- Identify animals and where they live
- How animals survive
- Animal socialization

Course Topics:
- Habitats
- Environments
- Species
- What do they eat (carnivores, herbivores, omnivores)
- Socialization

Instructor: Sharon Bottaro

Disney

M W  Mondays and Wednesdays  P2 7:30–8:30pm

Description: This course will be an overview of Walt Disney and his entire empire.

Objectives:
- Learn about what Disney’s life and how he was able to build his business
- Learn how animation evolved from hand-drawn animation to computer animation

Course Topics:
- History of Walt Disney and his empire
- History of Disneyland
- History of Disney World
- History of animation
- Lessons learned from Disney princesses
- Lessons learned from Disney villains
- Secrets of Disneyland
- Secrets of Disney World

Instructor: Sharon Bottaro
Games and Social Skills

W  Wednesdays  Pl  6:30–7:30pm

Description: Students will participate in various types of games to enhance social skills. Students will be encouraged to take turns, interact respectfully with others, and learn game skills needed to participate in activities.

Objectives:
- Teach students social skills in a group setting.
- Teach students various game rules and skills to participate in activities.
- Provide students with recreation activities they enjoy.

Course Topics:
- Game participation skills
- Socialization skills (i.e., interacting with others)
- Self-regulatory skills (i.e., taking turns)
- Allowing others to speak
- Learning to play the following games: Bing, Hangman, Family Feud, trivia games, Pictionary, etc.

Instructor: Amy Lenza

Art History and Technique

W  Wednesdays  P2  7:30–8:30pm

Description: Students will learn about the history of art, famous artists, and how to complete basic art tasks.

Objectives:
- Improve student’s awareness of various art forms and artists.
- Teach students how to analyze works of art and improve their art appreciation.
- Offer students the opportunity to complete art activities based on the artists and art forms studied.

Course Topics:
- American Art
- French Art
- English Art
- Japanese Art
- Indian Art
- Ancient Egyptian Art
- Ancient Greek and Roman Art
- Paintings
- Sculptures
- Drawings

View program calendar and register online at csi.cuny.edu/creative
- Various art styles
  (Impressionism, Pointillism, Abstract Art, Expressionism, Cubism, etc.)

Materials:
- Pencils, pens, markers, colored pencils, crayons, paper

Instructor: Amy Lenza

**Music Appreciation**

**W**<br>Wednesdays<br>P1 6:30–8:30pm

Description: Using different music platforms, students will explore songs, artists, genres, or eras of music of their choosing, identify artists, the feelings songs elicit, and getting a sense of meaning from music. This class will also use video lyrics for the students to follow the music with words. Students will also be exposed to genres or songs they would not normally listen to.

Objectives:
- Socialization
- Song and genre recognition
- Exploring nostalgia — matching songs to memories

Course Topics:
- 50s Doo Wop
- 60s New Age Rock
- 70s Rock and Disco Era
- 80s Hair Bands
- 90s Hip Hop
- Heavy Metal Rock
- Big Band
- Jazz
- Songs from Broadway Musicals

Instructor: Evan Fersko

**American History**

**T**<br>Tuesdays<br>P1 6:30–7:30pm

Description: Students will learn about the occurrences and history that shaped present-day life in the United States of America. This class also teaches students how to use maps and the Internet in identifying different locations on the Earth that have shaped the formation of U.S.A.
American History, continued

Objectives:

- Identify world events that caused the need for exploration throughout the world, and the countries that promoted exploration.
- After settlements were made in the New World, what issues did the inhabitants face in everyday life on the continent of North America?
- Issues and occurrences that caused the American Revolution and American Civil War.

Course Topics:

- Understanding how and why the exploration of new lands caused the formation of the United States of America.
- Understanding the occurrences and incidents that shaped the new nation into becoming the present-day United States of America.
- Writings of different explorers, inhabitants, leaders, and poets, pre-Revolutionary War and during the American Revolution.
- Maps and GPS to pinpoint colonial territories.
- Early American History.
- Civil War History.
- Participating in group discussions on topics covered in class, including events and reasons why occurrences took place.

Instructor: Robert Yurman

Everyday Writing for Future Authors

**T** Tuesdays  **P** 6:30–7:30pm

Description: A hands-on approach to building literacy skills, simple sentences, and notes for the purpose of creating a children’s book over the course of the year.

Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of sentence structure.
- Identification of everyday commonly used words.
- Composing notes, postings on social media, greeting cards for birthdays, holidays, etc.
- Compile a glossary of commonly used everyday words.
- Practice good printing penmanship.
- Develop as everyday writers with renewed confidence and self-esteem toward the completion of a children’s book.
Courses

Poetry

T  Tuesdays  P2  7:30–8:30pm

Description: Students will understand and practice rhyming, types of poetry, such as haiku, couplet, nursery rhymes, and inspirational poetry.

Objectives:
- Recognition of rhyming words.
- Developing an appreciation of poetry across the genres
- Composing couplets and haikus
- Participation in a poetry celebration
- Public speaking opportunities for everyday life

Course Topics:
- Acrostic poems
- Rhyming
- Stanzas
- Nursery rhymes
- Humorous poems
- Inspirational and seasonal poems
- Poet’s purpose
- Student’s choice
- Poetry sharing

Instructor: Lenore Marchese

World History and Geography

T  Tuesdays  P2  7:30–8:30pm

Description: This class will encourage students to learn about major events that have occurred in the past, shaping the world as it exists today. This class will also teach students how to use maps and world globes, identifying different locations on Earth.

Objectives:
- Identify the seven continents and four major oceans
- Identify three great ancient civilizations, their cultures, and accomplishments
World History and Geography, continued

- Students will be able to name and identify at least three explorers and talk about their accomplishments and explorations.

Course Topics:

- Maps, globes, and GPS systems
- Writings on essential historic figures
- Artwork and inventions, and their impact on societies.
- Use of visual aids and Websites to gather information on all subject matters, describe land masses, oceans, seas, mountains, etc.
- Using oral language to describe or write about the achievements of essential figures covered in class
- Contributing to group discussions on topics covered in class
- Understanding how and why the world got to be the way it is today
- Focusing on nations and civilizations, identifying differences and similarities

Instructor: Robert Yurman

Book Club

T-Th Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:30–7:30pm

Description: The course will explore various genres to develop and broaden student exposure to classic and modern literature. Three genres will be offered. Different genres offer opportunities to explore the world and gain understanding. Students will make text selections by majority vote.

Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of the main characters, settings, lessons, and key takeaways of the stories
- Provide descriptions of student’s favorite scene and character(s)
- Assessing conflict and conflict resolution between characters
- Awareness of the differences in text and student preferences in reading and genres
- Appropriate class interactions and discussion skills
Documenting notes and comments to develop a journal

Course Topics:
- Answering questions
- Critical thinking
- Grammar
- Inference
- Predicting
- Punctuation
- Sentence structure
- Summarize/retell
- Word recognition
- Word usage

Instructor: Brenda J. Stanton

Fairy Tales, Fantasy in Literature and Film

T Th Tuesdays and Thursdays  P2 7:30–8:30pm

Description: Through reading, film, and discussion, students will explore the lessons taught in one of three course texts, and how a conflict is resolved. Students will make text selections by majority vote.

Objectives:
- Develop an understanding of heroes and villains
- Identification of the problem and possible resolutions
- Improving literacy skills and demonstrating comprehension
- Articulating questions and responses to class discussion
- Exploring student’s view and personal opinion
- Develop and increase analytic skills and attentive listening

Course Topics:
- Answer questions
- Critical thinking
- Grammar
- Inference
- Predicting
- Punctuation
- Sentence structure
- Word recognition
- Word usage

Instructor: Brenda J. Stanton
Famous Movies and Musicals

T Th Tuesdays and Thursdays  P1 6:30–7:30pm

Description: Students will watch clips from movies and musicals and have a discussion to understand the concepts.

Objectives:
- Compare movies and musicals to each other
- Discuss main ideas and characters

Course Topics:
- Identify the movie or musical
- When possible, compare old and new version of the movie or musical
- Identify characters
- Learn about film mechanics
- Learn about theater
- Criticize movies

Materials:
- Paper, pen, or pencil

Instructor: Sharon Bottaro

Origins of Jokes, Riddles, Songs, and Popular Games

T Th Tuesdays and Thursdays  P2 7:30–8:30pm

Description: Students will engage in, and learn the origin of jokes, riddles, and songs associated with historical figures, and popular games.

Objectives:
- Students will learn how their lives are influenced by jokes, songs, and riddles
- Students will be able to tell a joke when they see a friend
- Identify origins and time period of your favorite jokes, riddles, songs, or popular games

Course Topics:
- Interpersonal skills
- Social skills
- Social studies
- Content
- Music movement

Instructor: Sharon Bottaro
Life Skills

T Th Tuesdays and Thursdays  P1 P2 6:30–8:30pm

Description: Life Skills is a course designed to sharpen competencies and interpersonal skills to help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically, empathize, and manage their lives in a healthy holistic way.

Objectives:
- Identify basic life skills such as financial planning, health and wellness, time management, social emotional well-being, and building positive relationships
- Teach students basic computer competency
- Foster student autonomy, allowing students to have ownership of ideas, build communication skills, and build community

Course Topics:
- Getting to know you. What are your goals in life?
- What are life skills and how do we use them to be successful?
- How do we promote health and wellness, and self-care in our lives? Why?
- What are some ways you are using health and wellness in your life, and with your family and friends?
- What is empathy? Why is it important for us have it and spread it around our social circle?
- Financial planning/making a budget
- What are the requirements needed to open a bank account?
- How do we Interact with people who want to borrow money from us?
- How can we communicate the impact that Life Skills is having on us so far? Videos of testimonies and what they consist of.
- What is time management? And why do we need it?
- What can we accomplish with proper time management?
- Building positive relationships
- Making good decisions
- How do we authentically share our understanding?
- Where do I use all the things I learned?

Instructor: Tamasia Wright
Creative Writing

Thurdays 6:30–7:30pm

Description: This class will encourage students to use their senses to talk and write about the world around them. They will share their thoughts and feelings in individual and group poems/stories that will be included in a book at the course conclusion.

Objectives:
- Identify how your senses impact your feelings
- Explore the ways people interpret the world around them
- Describe feelings and observations using language, first through speech and then through writing
- Explore the meanings of words like imagination. Example: One day I was out for a walk and when I turned the corner I saw the scariest sight. It looked like ________.

Course Topics:
- Stories and poems
- Understanding words to explore and write about emotions, places, people, or objects
- Writing about friends, famous places, dreams, and our thoughts
- Writing about the future or the past
- Using oral language to describe student work, first through speech, and then through writing, or having their thoughts transcribed
- Completing story starters to create a new scenario
- Contributing to group writings by adding appropriate lines
- Reading what was written, hearing what poets had written by listening to selected poems, i.e., Emily Dickinson, Ogden Nash and other short works
- Students will engaging in discussion

Instructor: Robert Yurman
Pre-Historic Earth

**Description:** This class will focus on pre-historic times and animals that lived during the Mesozoic Era, also known as the age of the dinosaurs. Included in this course are three consecutive geologic time periods: the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods.

**Objectives:**
- Natural resources and their importance for human, plant, and animal existence
- Dinosaur species within the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods
- Differences between carnivores, herbivores, and omnivores
- Dinosaur extinction

**Course Topics:**
- Sun, water, and oxygen’s impact during the pre-historic period
- Pre-historic climate
- A different dinosaur species, including their diets and habitat, approximately once a week

**Instructor:** Evan Fersko

Earth, Planets, and Our Solar System

**Description:** This class will help develop the basic knowledge of the planet we live on and other planets in our solar system.

**Objectives:**
- Number of planets in our solar system
- Resources needed in order to live on another planet
- Natural resources and their importance for human/plant/animal existence
- Technology’s impact on everyday living and using natural and artificial resources to answer questions
Course Topics:
- Solar system
- Natural satellites
- Manmade satellites
- Importance of the sun
- Volcanoes
- Hurricanes
- Earthquakes
- Climate change

Instructor: Evan Fersko

Famous People and Civilizations: Past and Present

Thursdays  P2 7:30–8:30pm

Description: This class will encourage students to learn about people of the past and present. Students will teach one another how to use maps and globes to identify locations on Earth, and to learn about different parts of the world and various cultures including ancient civilizations.

Objectives:
- Identify the leaders of each civilization and culture. Students will also be able to cite an accomplishment of each leader.
- Provide examples on how each civilization or culture affected life in ancient times and how they affect lives to this day
- Students will cite present-day leaders and give examples of their accomplishments in present times.

Course Topics:
- Ancient accomplishments, inventions, and policy making, and its impact on today’s society
- Participating in group discussion or writing to describe the achievements of individuals or groups covered in class
- Understanding how people and civilizations have changed over periods of time
- Understanding the accomplishments of people and cultures and relating these achievements to present-day life
- Identifying common needs and requirements for all civilizations, people, and cultures
- Focusing on nations and civilizations, identifying differences, and similarities

Instructor: Robert Yurman

View program calendar and register online at csi.cuny.edu/creative
Office of Community Educational Engagement Overview

The Office of Community Educational Engagement (OCEE) is a central resource and bridge connecting the College and community. OCEE’s programs draw upon the College’s legacy and commitment to civic prosperity, as well as CUNY’s public purpose for educational access and excellence: providing all of our stakeholders with opportunities to ascend at the College of Staten Island.

Our purpose is to prepare students to more fully participate and thrive in the 21st Century through academic programs, supportive learning communities, and collaborations across campus and within the community. The OCEE serves as a gateway into CSI for:

- Incoming English Language Learners by providing comprehensive advisement and academic preparation,
- Cross-campus and community engagement,
- Adults 21 and over seeking their high school equivalency diploma,
- Adults 55 and over seeking non-credit-bearing programs for enrichment and lifelong learning, and
- Staten Island residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including Creative Exchange, Life Skills, and the Melissa Riggio Higher Education Program.

Melissa Riggio Higher Education Program (MRHEP)

In 2008, AHRC NYC’s Melissa Riggio Higher Education Program (MRHEP) launched one of its first, fully inclusive college experiences for non-matriculated students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at CSI. Mirroring the baccalaureate degree track, this program has persisted as a successful model, enabling participants to immerse themselves in college classes, co-curricular programs, civic engagement, and carefully designed learning experiences to support self-sufficiency.

For more information on MRHEP, please visit csi.cuny.edu/melissariggio or contact 718.982.2109 or Jessica.Giorgio@csi.cuny.edu.