

2. Committing to Seneca's Core Literacies

Version 3

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Principles and goals

2. Committing to Seneca's core literacies

Today more than ever, our students need to know more than the core professional content they study. From the day we opened our doors in 1967, our programs have included a foundation of broader general education subjects and a learning focus on “soft” skills. In a rapidly changing economy and society, our graduates will be called upon to extend their knowledge and skills in new directions, think critically, analyze information, comprehend disruptive new ideas, communicate clearly, collaborate in teams, solve problems, and make sound decisions.

The social and natural world in the 21st century faces unprecedented challenges. The cultural, political, environmental and economic changes underway demand new thinking and new literacies. This demands a fresh look at the core skills we are teaching and the way we define literacy. The traditional definitions of language literacy, numeracy and critical thinking need to be extended for students to become full participants in this knowledge-based society.

Promoting a culture in which teaching and learning the Seneca Core Literacies is “everybody’s business” emphasizes the critical role of all faculty and the academic supports at the college. The library, the learning centres, counselling, student leadership and development – all have a crucial role in helping our students develop the literacies necessary to be successful in the world. In the end, our goal is to empower our graduates to be leaders – in their careers, communities and personal lives – who help strengthen the world’s economic, social and natural fabrics.

We have taken the essential employability skills found in the learning outcomes of all programs and refreshed them from the perspective of the more complex set of global challenges facing this and future generations. By embedding the expanded view of core literacies into the existing skills, we create powerful teaching and learning outcomes across the entire curriculum of every program.

These are Seneca’s Core Literacies:

1. Written communication
2. Oral communication
3. Quantitative literacy
4. Information literacy
5. Creative thinking
6. Ethical reasoning, personal and social responsibility
7. Inquiry and analysis
8. Critical thinking and problem solving
9. Digital literacy
10. Intercultural knowledge and global perspective

Building on the extensive work underway across the College in the twin foundations of these literacies – English and mathematics – every new student will experience a common orientation to the standards, outcomes and expectations of a Seneca education.

Goals related to this principle:

At the end of five years:

1. We will have implemented a common orientation for every new Seneca student that provides an introduction to the standards, outcomes and expectations of our learning environment.
2. Every Seneca graduate will demonstrate competency in the Seneca Core Literacies.

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