

Dear Incoming TCNJ Student,

I'd like to welcome you to The College of New Jersey and introduce you to our Liberal Learning program, a set of courses completed by all students at TCNJ. Liberal Learning forms the core of your undergraduate degree and provides the foundation for the signature experiences that make your TCNJ education unique.

Liberal Learning will provide you with the skills you need to be successful at TCNJ and beyond. The skills you build through Liberal Learning will be essential to your major, ready you for your career, allow you to become a life-long learner, equip you to contribute to your community, prepare you to help solve society's most complex and difficult problems, and enrich you as a human being.

Let me say just a bit about each of the three main elements of Liberal Learning; for more information, please see the Liberal Learning [web page](#).

Intellectual and Scholarly Growth: At its heart, your college education is about developing your mind, and this portion of Liberal Learning prepares you to embark on that "life of the mind." Through the [First-Year Program](#), you will learn to think deeply about intriguing, complex subjects, write effectively, and locate and evaluate reliable sources of knowledge. During your first semester, you will take a small, seminar-style course that will challenge you to think critically about a subject you may have not studied before and that is, in the words of our students, "eye-opening," "fascinating," and will provide you with "a new perspective." The fact that you will be housed in the same dorm as your classmates means you will engage with the course outside the classroom.

Civic Responsibilities: As an educated member of society, you will play an important role in sustaining and advancing the community in which you live. Coursework in Liberal Learning will provide you with a critical understanding of the racial, ethnic, and gender issues facing our communities, as well as the global understanding required to be a citizen of the world. In your first year, you will have a community engagement experience through which you will make a real difference in the lives of others while building the skills you need to contribute to your community in the future.

Human Inquiry: Our world today demands more than just the knowledge you will gain from your major. The problems confronting the world can only be solved by tapping into knowledge from disparate disciplines, and your success in your chosen career will depend on your ability to approach challenges from multiple perspectives. Liberal Learning will provide you with knowledge from six broad areas of human inquiry. You can complete this requirement in one of three ways:

- Option A – Complete a [faculty-designed interdisciplinary concentration](#) or second major – a great option for those with specific interests.
- Option B – Complete a 'self-designed' interdisciplinary concentration or second major – an awesome option because you create a unique experience that satisfies your curiosity!
- Option C – Choose from a broad array of great courses – the perfect option for those who want to branch out in a number of directions.

Early in your first year, you should consult with your advisor about which option is best for you. For now, please look at your First Semester Sequence for guidance on what Liberal Learning courses to take during your first semester. You have two sets of Liberal Learning courses to place in your shopping cart. First, choose six FSP sections based on the recommendations in the First Semester Sequence. Second, place five or six other Liberal Learning courses to your shopping cart from any of your prescribed Liberal Learning categories so that we can build your Fall schedule before you arrive at Orientation in July. Finally, if you have any questions about Liberal Learning, don't hesitate to contact me at liberal@tcnj.edu.

Sincerely,

Christopher G. Murphy

Associate Provost for Curriculum and Liberal Learning, Green Hall 109