Patrick & Henry
Community College

Instructor: Chelsea S. Curtis
ccurtis@pgsmst.com
www.pgsmst.com

Piedmont Governor's School
For Mathematics, Science, and Technology

All course correspondence outside of class will occur through email. Emails will be returned within 48 business hours (two business days).

Office Location: West Hall, 202
Office Hours: M-F, 11:00am - 3:00pm

CLASS MEETING TIME: 7:45 - 9:15 AM, M/W
CLASSROOM LOCATION: West Hall 136
Piedmont Governor's School of Mathematics, Science, & Technology (Martinsville)

PREREQUISITE(S): Placement of EDE 111/ENG 111

VCCS COURSE DESCRIPTION: Offers a review of organizational skills including paragraph writing and basic forms of technical communications, various forms of business correspondence, and basic procedures for research writing. Includes instruction and practice in oral communication skills. This course applies to career/technical education (CTE) programs.
Lecture. 3 Credit Hours.

PGSMST COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides students with the opportunity to explore an area of personal interest that promotes the mission of the school. Students take an active part in formulating the problems and the methods by which the problems are investigated. Appropriate investigative techniques are utilized to produce or analyze raw data and/or produce original interpretations rather than rely exclusively on the conclusions of others. When completing projects, students select from a wide range of alternative products and communicate their results to real, rather than a contrived audience in a professionally appropriate manner. Students actively participate during their junior year in planning their senior research experience.

A. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The PGSMST Junior Research course is a prerequisite and introduction to necessary skills and procedures for completing the Senior Research Project. Students will practice research design, data collection, presentation, and written communication in accordance with APA style. By the end of the course, all students will submit a topic proposal for their Senior Research Project and demonstrate the following objectives:

Written Communication (VCCS Core Competencies 1, 4)
- o Review and strengthen the writing process
  - ▪ utilize paragraph structure to organize and develop content
  - ▪ clarify purpose through introduction, thesis statement, and closing
  - ▪ apply appropriate transitions to achieve effective flow
- o Understand and apply formal rules of grammar and sentence structure
  - ▪ use parts of speech correctly

- understand construction of sentence clauses, fragments, and complete sentences
- identify simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentences
- apply punctuation properly
  - o Utilize the revision process to strengthen written communication
    - analyze overall structure to identify strengths and weaknesses
    - apply changes to both structure and grammar

Technical Writing (VCCS Core Competencies 1, 4, 6)
- o Understand utilize the unique style of technical writing:
  - identify the features of objective writing
  - analyze the purpose and application of technical writing in multiple fields

Resource Analysis (VCCS Core Competencies 2, 4, 6, 7)
- o Read/Analyze fiction/non-fiction selections for application to research
  - utilize fiction-based resources to analyze the non-fiction applications
  - utilize non-fiction-based resources to strengthen understanding of the field of research

APA Documentation (VCCS Core Competencies 4)
- *o* Obtain a working knowledge of the style outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association:*
  - understand the purpose of documentation in the field of research to avoid plagiarism and provide effective retrieval
  - analyze the structure of the manual to facilitate navigation
  - use the direction of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for citations (both in-text and reference), non-biased language, overall paper formatting, and technical/research writing skills

Research Foundations (VCCS Core Competencies 2, 4, 6, 7)
- o Understand and take ownership of the skills and concepts involved in the process of conducting inquiry:
  - understand the importance of maintaining academic integrity throughout the research process
  - read, understand, critique, and use published reports of research both primary and secondary
  - apply the principles of scientific inquiry to everyday problem solving
  - develop a healthy skepticism about "studies" that purport to advance our knowledge
  - understand the strengths and weaknesses of different methodologies used in research, including consideration of ethical issues
  - develop a knowledge of the way design and procedures may affect empirical findings
  - gain an understanding of how descriptive/inferential statistics are used in data analysis
  - prepare a logical and comprehensive outline for an investigative topic
  - work in groups to analyze inquiry utilizing the process of scientific research

Digital Literacy (VCCS Core Competencies 2, 4)
- o Make use of technology as a tool for research and word processing:
  - become familiar with a variety of online resources and gain an understanding of their value as learning tools
  - learn to effectively evaluate the credibility of online resources

Presentation Skills (VCCS Core Competencies 1, 4)
- o Prepare and deliver effective oral presentations for a variety of audiences:

- effectively demonstrate knowledge/use of online presentation tools
- emphasize strong content and design
- demonstrate professional presentation skills

Interpersonal Skills (VCCS Core Competency 1, 3)
- o Understand and demonstrate strategies that support effective relationships:
  - illustrate respect for others through communication skills
  - strengthen cultural awareness and appreciation of unique differences

B. TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED TOOLS OR SUPPLIES

Required:
- Binder
- Notebook
- Charged device

Suggested:
- Access to a quality APA style guide (many are free online)
- Divider tabs

C. STUDENT EVALUATION

Assignments will be averaged into the following weighted categories:

Daily Work (15%)

Short Assignments & Quizzes (35%)

Projects, Presentations, & Essays (50%)

NOTE: Assignments completed during group projects will receive both individual and collective grades.

GRADING SCALE:

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 – 69
F	59 – below

SEMESTER GRADE WEIGHTING

Each nine-week quarter will be worth 40% of a student's total semester grade, and the final exam will be worth 20% of a student's final grade.

END-OF-YEAR ACADEMIC DEFICIENCY EXIT
- At the end of the first semester of the junior year, any student with **less than a 2.0 unweighted GPA** for Governor's School dual enrolled classes will receive an **academic warning.**
- At the end of the second semester of the junior year, any student who does not successfully complete all junior courses or who has **less than a 2.0 unweighted GPA** for PGSMST classes, will receive a **letter of non-placemen**t at PGSMST for the senior year.

D. EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

1. **Communication with the Instructor:**

Communication outside of class should be conducted via PGSMST email. One-on-one conferences will be implemented throughout the course, and these are also a great opportunity to discuss academic goals. While this is the quickest, most efficient method, Mrs. Curtis may be reached via office phone between 11:00am - 3:00pm with urgent messages.

2. Attendance:

Attendance is recorded and reported daily to each base school. Students and parents/guardians or other persons having control of school-age students will comply with the state laws on compulsory school attendance (Virginia Section 22.1-254). Since the academic pace at the PGSMST is accelerated, it is important that student absences be kept to a minimum.

When a student is absent, a parent or guardian must call the PGSMST main office at Patrick & Henry Community College stating that the student will be absent and the reason for the absence. Within 24 hours of the student's return to PGSMST, a note must be received from the parent or guardian stating a valid reason for the student's absence. The following will be considered excused absences from PGSMST:
1. Illness (Parents must initiate contact with school administration each day of an absence. A doctor's note may be required when absences have become excessive.)
2. Death in the family
3. Medical appointments (must be confirmed with a note from the doctor)
4. Court proceedings (statement from court required)
5. Religious observances
6. Participation in a student activity that is confirmed with the base school.
7. College visits (students are given a max of two and must be approved ahead of time)
8. Emergencies (as determined by the Director on a case-by-case basis)

Tardiness to PGSMST will be excused under the same circumstances listed above under absences; documentation must be provided when the student arrives on campus in order to excuse a tardy. P&HCC students arriving late to PGSMST should *report to Mrs. East before reporting to their first class.* If a student has three (3) unexcused tardies during a semester, a parent will be contacted by the Director. When a student reaches four (4) unexcused tardies during a semester, the student's driving privileges will be revoked for two (2) weeks. **If a student reaches five (5) unexcused tardies during a semester, a parent will be contacted and the student's driving privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the semester or for a time to be decided by the Director if the semester is almost over.** If driving privileges are revoked, the student is expected to report to his/her base school in order to ride the bus to the PGSMST or may be brought to the PGSMST on time by a parent.

Early dismissals **MUST** be prearranged. An explanatory note signed by the student's parent/guardian must be approved by the **Director** before a student may leave the campus. P&HCC site students are required to sign out in the PGSMST office (room 115 West Hall) prior to leaving. If a student becomes ill during PGSMST hours, their parent/guardian will be contacted by school officials before the student can be dismissed. **Students are not permitted to leave PGSMST before their scheduled departure unless the above procedure is followed. Disciplinary actions will be taken if a student leaves campus for any reason prior to scheduled departure. It is the student's responsibility to follow these procedures.**

3. **Testing/Make-up Tests:**

Tests and quizzes will be administered during the designated class period as indicated by the project calendar. If absent, these may be taken at another time. Arrangements for make-up testing should be made in advance for all non-emergency absences.

4. **Assignments and Due Dates:**

In accordance with the course objectives, all assignments should be submitted in APA formatting. Google Docs is the preferred platform for coursework, but Microsoft Word will also work for most assignments. Assignments that are submitted electronically may be subject to plagiarism-detecting software (ex: TurnItIn), and this evaluation may also include AI-detection. Plagiarism refers to any unauthorized collaboration, uncited work, as well as self-plagiarism (using work from another course without permission). Please review the policy for AI use in this course in Section H of this syllabus. Assignments that are found to unethically use material (plagiarism or AI-generation) may be subject to a grade of '0' in addition to disciplinary action.

Assignment due dates will be determined by the instructor and indicated on the project calendar. Occasionally, these dates may shift due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances that affect PGS scheduling. In the event of such occurrences, the calendar will be updated.

Assignments that are submitted after the established due date are subject to a 10% deduction per day (including weekends and holiday breaks). Assignments that are submitted more than one week (seven days) late will receive feedback without grade. **Please note**: your absence is not an extension on coursework. Emergencies do arise and should be communicated with your instructor. Otherwise, deadlines will be upheld.

E. STUDENT SUPPORT/DISABILITY STATEMENT:

Patrick & Henry Community College is committed to providing equal educational opportunities and appropriate academic accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability or believe you may require reasonable accommodations to successfully complete this course, please contact the Accessibility Specialist, located in the Walker Fine Arts Building, Room 235, at 276-656-0257 or accessibility@patrickhenry.edu, to discuss your needs confidentially.

Early contact is encouraged to ensure timely access to accommodations and services.

F. EMERGENCY INFORMATION
See below for pertinent safety information.
https://www.patrickhenry.edu/campus-safety/alert-systems/

G. IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

PGSMST Calendar: https://www.pgsmst.com/academic-calendar/

P&HCC Calendar:
https://www.patrickhenry.edu/student-resources/what-about/academic-session-calendars/

Fall 2025

Classes Begin	August 7
Interim Reports	September 15
End of 1st Nine Weeks Grading Period	October 9
Report Cards	October 24
Interim Reports	November 17
Exams	December 12 - 17
End of 2nd Nine Weeks/End of Semester 1	December 19
Report Cards	January 16

H. SPECIFIC COLLEGE POLICIES AND SERVICES

Academic Integrity
Piedmont Governor's School will not tolerate any form of dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, knowingly furnishing false information to the school, forgery, or alteration or use of school documents or instruments of identification with intent to defraud. All students are expected to abide by the honor code and may be required to sign a pledge on their work, such as:

On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.

Plagiarism/Cheating

Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one's grade or obtaining course credit, including assisting another student to do so. Typically, such acts occur in relation to examinations, projects, labs, or graded homework. However, it is the intent of this definition that the term "cheating" not be limited to above listed situations only, but that it include any and all actions by a student that are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by fraudulent or deceptive means. Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of others by misrepresenting the material so used as one's own work. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism range from a 0 or F on a particular assignment, for the course or expulsion from the school. Plagiarism can include submitting a paper written by someone else as one's own.

Academic integrity is a fundamental value of the P&HCC community. All students are expected to exhibit conduct keeping with the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Behavior that violates this fundamental value will be handled in accordance with the college's Academic Integrity Policy.

The link to the P&HCC Academic Integrity Policy is
https://www.patrickhenry.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Academic-Integrity-Policy-REV1.7.2025.pdf

Other policies associated with student conduct may be found here:
https://catalog.patrickhenry.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=566

Artificial Intelligence

Conditional Generative AI Usage: In this course, the use of Generative AI is permissible only under specific circumstances, **as outlined in the assignment instructions**. When AI tool usage is allowed, exercise caution and ensure that you **appropriately cite and attribute any content generated** through their use. It is essential to strike a balance between leveraging the advantages of AI resources and preserving **your individual creativity and problem-solving abilities**. Failure to adhere to the specified Generative AI usage guidelines may result in academic consequences. Pay careful attention to the assignment requirements to determine whether AI tools are permitted and follow the instructions accordingly.

Testing Center and Learning Lab

The Testing Center and Learning Lab are located on the first floor of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) on the main campus. Students enrolled in face-to-face classes may be required to make up missed tests in the Testing Center. Online classes require the use of Respondus Lockdown or Respondus Monitor or similar proctoring programs. In some cases, students outside the service region may be required to take proctored tests at a different site. If this is the case, students must complete the Student-Proctor Agreement form (see form for proctor requirements/guidelines).
https://www.patrickhenry.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/StudentProctor.pdf

Tutoring and Academic Support

Free individual and group tutoring is available both in-person and online at P&HCC. Students can access Brainfuse, our primary platform for academic support, through Canvas or their MyP&HCC portal. Live help from a Brainfuse tutor is available 24/7. To connect with a P&HCC tutor, use the Tutor Match feature within Brainfuse to view subjects and schedule a session with our on-site staff.

For more information, visit: www.patrickhenry.edu/tutoring. If students need further assistance, they may contact Tutoring Coordinator, Greg Morrison, at gmorrison@patrickhenry.edu, or Coordinator of Academic Services, Valandrea Dillard, at vdillard@patrickhenry.edu.

I. OTHER POLICIES

In accordance with Executive Order 33, all cell phones and personal electronic devices must remain stored away during class time.

If Henry County Public Schools are delayed two hours, PGSMST classes **will be canceled** at the P&HCC site. Students should report to their base high schools at the time designated by their principals on a two-hour delay day.

P&HCC instructors will make every attempt possible to make grades available to students within **two weeks** of the due date. Exceptions to this policy may occur with essays and projects that require complex rubrics and significant feedback.

J. AFFIDAVIT

To confirm each student has read/understand the syllabus and has been given a copy to keep, he/she must complete a syllabus affidavit. **This syllabus affidavit is posted on Canvas as a question on the syllabus quiz (due Aug. 15, 2025).**

This syllabus conforms to the Patrick & Henry Community College syllabus guidelines.