



**A Curriculum Framework for
Contextualized Instruction in Workforce Readiness**

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PluggedInVA

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I. Introduction

PluggedInVA is a career pathways program that prepares adult learners with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in postsecondary education, training, and high-demand, high-wage careers in the 21st century.

The goal of PluggedInVA (PIVA) is to provide low-skilled adults with a career pathways program that incorporates 21st century skills into a traditional GED® curriculum to help them quickly develop the technology and workplace skills they need to succeed in a fast-paced, global economy.

Central to the PIVA curriculum is the development of digital literacy skills, 21st century skills, and professional soft skills to prepare learners for employment in a variety of industries as they complete their GED® credential, Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), and industry-recognized certificates.

Project Rationale

Although a certain degree of flexibility is necessary in the design of PluggedInVA projects to address a range of specific industries, fidelity to the core curriculum and to the essential elements of PIVA is critically important. The essential elements of any PluggedInVA project are

- industry-specific integrated and contextualized curriculum;
- GED® test preparation and basic skills instruction;
- Career Readiness Certificate preparation;
- instruction and certification in digital literacy skills;
- instruction in and demonstration of professional soft skills;
- integrated 21st century skills instruction;
- and a formal capstone project using the knowledge, skills, and experiences from the course.

Additionally, co-enrollment in a post-secondary institution, career coaching, and active business participation are required components of the model.

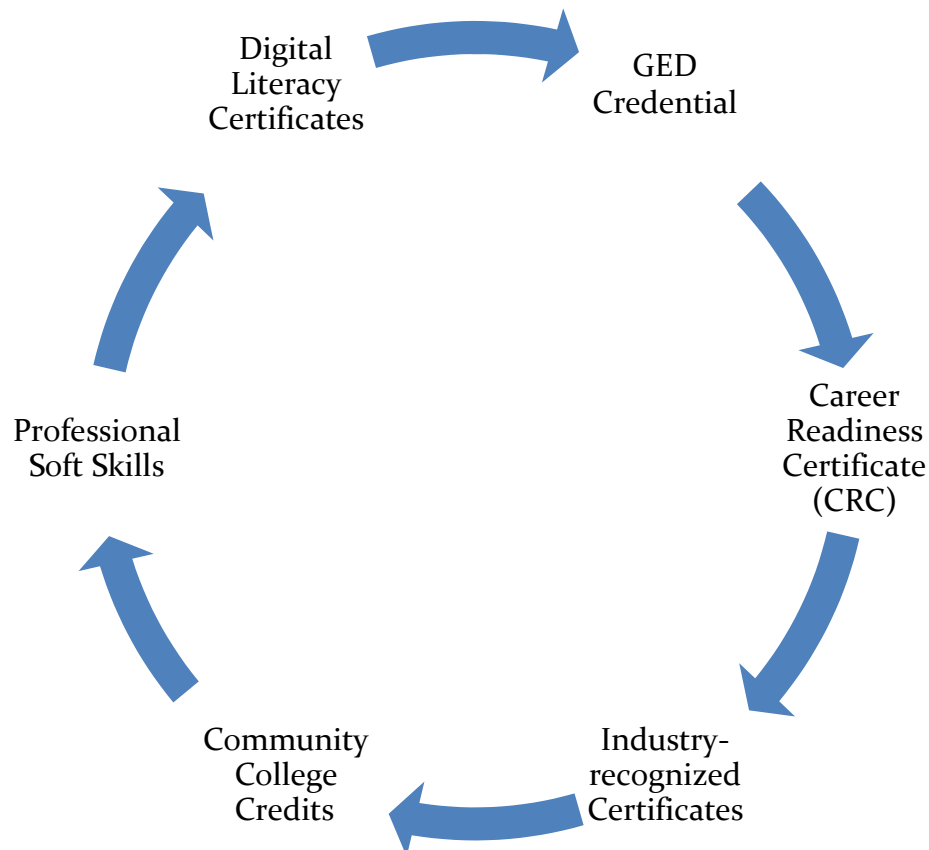
As PluggedInVA is implemented across the Commonwealth, it is imperative that PIVA projects demonstrate fidelity to the model in order to ensure effective evaluation across sponsoring programs. As a part of this effort, the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), as the creator of the PIVA model, will oversee the

development of the contextualized curriculum, train adult education teachers and community college instructors, and ensure that integrated and facilitative instructional approaches are carried out in the classroom. The PIVA Implementation Guide, written by VALRC, is the basis of this work.

PluggedInVA [Implementation Guide, Parts I and II](#) are freely available online.

Overarching Goal for Adult Educators in PluggedInVA

The goal for the adult education instructors and their staff in a PluggedInVA program is to create a bridge for lower-skilled adults to successfully complete coursework and training that will prepare them to succeed in life-sustaining careers. To do this the adult education team works to make postsecondary coursework relevant to their students' experiences; incorporates workplace and postsecondary expectations into class; consistently solicits learners' input to identify academic areas that need additional strengthening; and structures class activities in ways that develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, teamwork, leadership, and, above all, confidence.



II. Overarching Objectives PluggedInVA Cohorts

Workforce Readiness Goal: Demonstrate personal qualities and people skills, professional knowledge and skills, and technology skills necessary for success in high-demand, life-sustaining careers.

Learners who successfully complete the PluggedInVA program will have achieved the following certifications and credentials and have demonstrated proficiency in the following skills.

Overarching Objectives		
GED	GED® & Academic Skills	Earn a GED® Credential.
PSS	Professional Soft Skills	Speak with confidence; defuse emotionally charged situations; serve a range of customers; help the team work effectively; work well with different generations in the workplace.
DL	Digital Literacy	Earn the Microsoft Digital Literacy Certificate Demonstrate proficient keyboarding skills, internet security awareness, file management techniques, and industry-specific technology skills.
VPT	Virginia Placement Test (VPT)	Earn scores on the English and Math Virginia Placement Tests to bypass developmental education classes at the community college.
CRC	Career Readiness Certificate (CRC)	Earn a Career Readiness Certificate or improve a score on the CRC.
JR	Job Readiness	Develop employability skills that include resume-writing, written correspondence, oral communication and listening skills, interviewing skills, self-representation, organization, and time management skills.
21C	21st Century Skills & Postsecondary Success Skills	Demonstrate critical thinking skills, innovation and creativity, flexibility with new situations and concepts, teamwork and collaboration, diversity awareness, and clear communication skills. Develop awareness of personal learning preferences and styles, develop study habits that work well with personal abilities and preferences, manage a work-life balance.

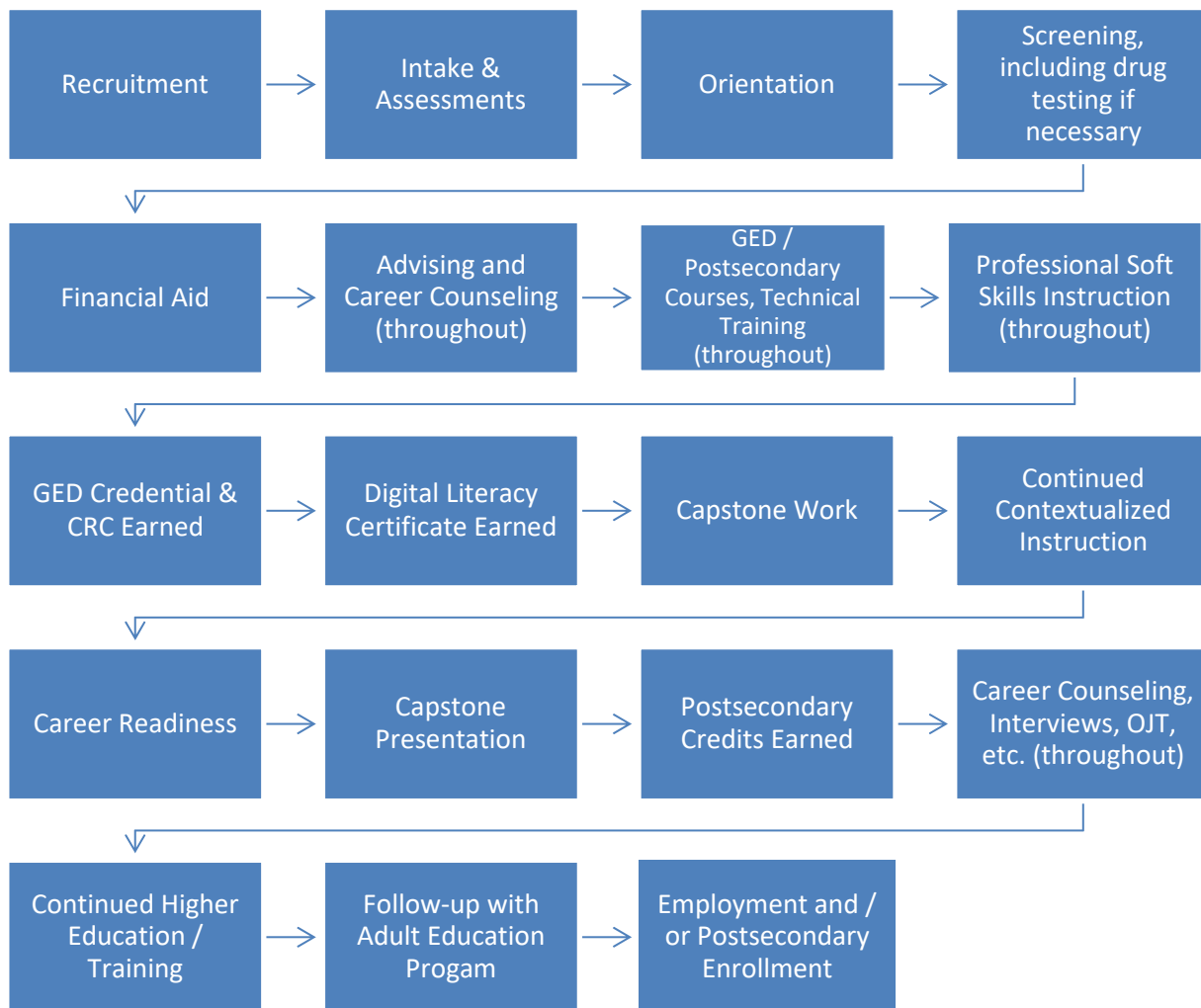
III. Curriculum Framework

PluggedInVA: Overview of the Curriculum Framework

Core	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
	PHASE 1			PHASE 2		
Phase	Orientation Period	Tour Businesses	Job Shadow	None	Mock Interviews	Job Fair
I. GED®	GED® Preparation and Career Readiness Certificate As learners successfully complete the GED® credential and earn their CRC, they will focus on digital literacy certifications until all learners pass the GED® test and obtain the CRC at Bronze, Silver, or Gold level.					
II. PSS	Professional Soft Skills and Business Etiquette As GED® instruction is completed and all learners successfully pass the GED® test, soft skills will become the emphasis of this block.					
III. DL	Digital Literacy Microsoft Digital Literacy (MSDL)	Microsoft Digital Literacy (MSDL) Or Internet and Computing Core (IC3) Certificates		Integrated Technology Instruction as part of core content and the capstone project.		
CC	Contextualized Content	Industry-specific content and skills development	<i>Breaking Through:</i> Allied Health (Medical Assisting/Phlebotomy) <i>Breaking Through:</i> Energy/Mining (Electrical/Welding) Construction/Weatherization			
IV. 21C	21st Century Skills Introduction to the 21 st Century Skills	Development of 21 st Century skills; participation in collaborative activities		Development and application of 21 st century skills; selection of team members for capstone projects	Capstone Teams Application of GED®, CRC, PSS, DL, CC, and 21C	
INT APP	Integrated Application with Collaborative Learning Activities	Digital portfolio; information challenges; mini capstone		Digital portfolio; information challenges; capstone project		Digital portfolio; information challenges; capstone project presentations

IV. Instructional Schedules

Learners will go through all of the steps in this timeline throughout their time in PluggedInVA. Most instructional elements last throughout the 6-month program, and others are emphasized near the end of the program but are still incorporated throughout its entirety.



Following are both monthly and weekly instructional schedule planning templates. Adult education instructors will collaborate with postsecondary instructors to align instructional topics throughout the six months. The design is flexible to give instructors the opportunity to focus more on areas that need strengthening and shorten areas that learners may have already mastered.

[Download fillable versions of the templates.](#)

Appendix iii illustrates an online tool that may be used for adult education and postsecondary instructors to plan units of instruction to ensure alignment throughout the six month program.

Monthly Objectives Instructional Template

Pharmacy Technical Cohort, Month 1	
Objectives: pharmacy technician content knowledge and skills	

Subject	Skills Practiced	Assignments and Resources
Math		
Language (reading, writing, vocabulary)		
Workplace and professional soft skills		
College survival and 21 st century skills practiced		

Activity	Activity Steps	Outcomes	Resources and Materials
Integrated activity 1: (Title of activity*)			
Integrated activity 2 (Title of Activity)*			

* Monthly activities emphasize the development of 21st century skills essential for the workplace and integrate the core components of the curriculum: industry-related knowledge and skills, basic math and language skills, digital literacy, professional soft skills, and 21st century skills (e.g., teamwork, critical thinking, problem-solving, research, innovation). These activities should be done in teams and form the backbone of the integrated curriculum. More information is available in Section V, Capstone Project.

Weekly Instructional Schedule Template

Pharmacy Technician Cohort: Weekly Instructional Goals
Content covered in postsecondary coursework:
Scheduled assessments or presentations:

Core Content Area	Objectives	Activities and Resources
Pharmacy Technician		
GED® Test Preparation	Language Arts	
	Applied Mathematics	
Digital Literacy		
Work Readiness & Professional Soft Skills (Including 7 Habits & 21 st Century Skills)		

Integrated Activity or Capstone Work (Activity steps/Objectives)
Instructor Notes:

V. Capstone Project

The Capstone Project offers each PluggedInVA student the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the 21st century skills, professional soft skills, technology skills, and work readiness skills practiced during the cohort. The objectives of the capstone project are

- to demonstrate knowledge and skills gained during the six-month PIVA program,
- to provide an opportunity for students to deliver a formal presentation to members of the community,
- to develop a project that learners may add to their resume to demonstrate otherwise immeasurable skills, such as professional soft skills and 21st century skills (i.e., teamwork, collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking, and innovation),
- and to serve as a culminating event for the PIVA cohort that encapsulates the rigor, dedication, and skills mastery of the entire class of learners.

The capstone project may take any form within these guidelines:

- Projects are approved by the instructor(s). Instructors assist in the development and selection of capstone projects.
- Projects must be rigorous enough to challenge students to develop essential professional soft skills and 21st century skills. Capstone projects generally take three months to complete.
- Projects are completed in teams where each team member has an explicit and collaborative role.
- Projects must incorporate technology skills and 21st century skills and demonstrate mastery of both academic and workplace skills relevant to the cohort.
- Team projects should address a perceived or expressed need of the community.
- Project presentations are formal events with invited guests from the community.

The following Capstone Project Plan is an example of a tool that can be used to organize each team's project. The project ideas may be brainstormed as a class, or the instructor may choose the project theme. Additionally, ideas to help learners stay motivated may be developed as a whole-group exercise. All capstone plans should be approved by an instructor. Teams may want to present their plans to the whole group as a practice presentation activity and as a way to increase accountability and motivation.

Download the [Capstone Project Plan](#).

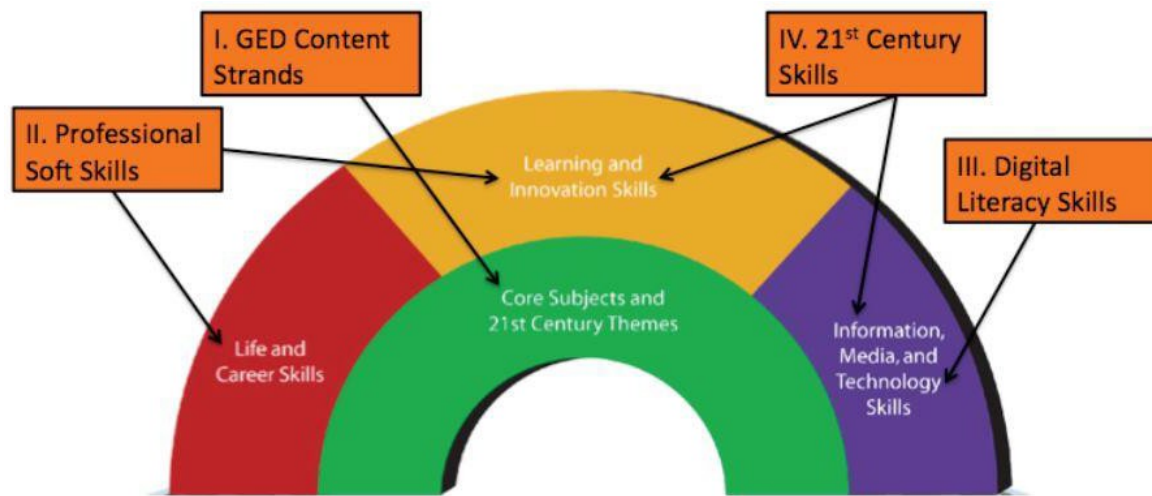
Capstone Project Plan	
Project Presentation Date:	Final Project Due Date:
Team members and Contact Information (Phone & Email)	
Project Ideas (community needs)	
Project Mission/Objective (approved by instructor)	

Project Action Steps (add as needed.)			
Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Due Date

Project Planning Questions	
How will team members communicate?	
How often will team members meet?	
How will team members report completed activities?	
How will back-up plans be developed in case of missed deadlines?	
What are some strategies your team can use to stay motivated?	

VI. Instructional Approaches & Strategies

Framework for 21st Century Learning with the PluggedInVA Core Content Overlay



Adapted from the Framework for 21st Century Learning: <http://p21.org/overview>. September 2013.

Instructional Approaches

The PluggedInVA model combines a contextualized and integrated curriculum with project-based learning done in teams. Below is more information on the instructional approaches utilized in the PIVA model.

► Project-based learning

Rationale: Project-based learning provides a sense of accomplishment with the completion of each project; promotes teamwork and collaboration; develops problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity; prepares learners for the final capstone project; and engages learners with industry-specific content in an authentic way.

► Inquiry learning

Here "inquiry learning" is used as an umbrella term for the project-based, contextualized group instruction that the PluggedInVA model utilizes. Following is a 5-step process for inquiry learning.

1. Identify an issue
2. Locate information
3. Critically evaluate information
4. Synthesize information
5. Communicate

► Contextualized and Integrated Instruction

- Instructors can think of contextualization as simply
 - the examples they use to illustrate concepts in class,
 - the topic used for a single lesson,
 - or the theme around which all instruction will revolve for several weeks.
- Learners should be involved in the planning process – their needs and interests point the way to the appropriate contexts for teaching and learning.
- Integrated instruction
 - Focuses on basic skills, content and higher level thinking;
 - Structures learning around themes, big ideas and meaningful concepts;
 - Provides connections among various curricular disciplines;
 - Provides learners opportunities to apply skills they have learned;
 - Encourages active participation in relevant real-life experiences;
 - Offers opportunities for more small group and industrialized instruction; and
 - Accommodates a variety of learning styles

Bell, T.; Urhahne, D.; Schanze, S.; & Ploetzner, R. (2010). Collaborative inquiry learning: models, tools, and challenges. *International Journal of Science Education* , 32(3).

Project-based learning activities in PluggedInVA

I. Mini-capstone projects may be completed in a week or two; they are done in teams; and they involve finding a solution to an identified problem.

► [Examples of Pharmacy Technician problem-solving activities.](#) [Other Pharmacy Technician and supplemental resources](#)

II. Information challenges involve research and presentation of a solution (either oral or written); these challenges may be completed in a single class.

► Cooperative learning in small groups

"In small groups, students can share strengths and also develop their weaker skills. They develop their interpersonal skills. They learn to deal with conflict. When cooperative groups are guided by clear objectives, students engage in numerous activities that improve their understanding of subjects explored.

In order to create an environment in which cooperative learning can take place, three things are necessary. First, students need to feel safe, but also challenged. Second, groups need to be small enough that everyone can contribute. Third, the task students work together on must be clearly defined."

[Educational Broadcasting Cooperation](#), May 2013.

Small group instruction: Small groups provide a learning mechanism through which

- learners actively participate;
- teachers become learners at times, and learners sometimes teach;
- respect is given to every member;
- projects and questions interest and challenge students;
- diversity is celebrated, and all contributions are valued;
- students learn skills for resolving conflicts when they arise;
- members draw upon their past experience and knowledge;
- goals are clearly identified and used as a guide;
- research tools such as Internet access are made available;
- and students are invested in their own learning.

[Educational Broadcasting Cooperation](#), May 2013.

Instructional strategies

Following are examples of instructional strategies to encourage the development of effective study skills and critical thinking skills.

► [Available as fillable documents](#)

K-W-L-Q Chart

The K-W-L-Q chart may be used for just about any topic, including potential employers or businesses, a training program, a new topic in students' courses, an historical event or cultural icon, a news event, a local organization, etc.

The K and W columns are filled in by students either individually or in groups before they dive into a new topic; the L and Q columns should be completed after learners have done some learning about the topic.

K	W	L	Q
Topic:			
We Know	We Want to know	We learned	Questions we still have

Information Synthesis Chart

Source(s)	Main Idea	My Thoughts and Questions
<i>Example:</i> CBS Evening News (December 18, 2009, 6:00 p.m.) US Department of Labor website	<i>Example:</i> Jobs decline nationwide for third straight quarter bringing unemployment rates to 10.0%. Unemployment in VA is 7.6% for March 2010.	<i>Example:</i> Is there data for the unemployment rate in the southwestern region of VA? How does it compare to the state and national rates of unemployment? What are possible causes for differences in the rates?

Group projects: as team members conduct their own research on their project topics, ask them to jot down notes in the "My Information" column. Team members should meet frequently to share information and create a group summary of research conducted. The template below is a tool to facilitate that process.

Project Research Information Synthesis Chart			
My Information	Information from:	Information from:	Information from:
How does my information compare to my teammates'? Circle or highlight any new or contradictory information. Cross out any information that is the same. Summarize the team's information here.			

Adapted from Henry & Zawilinski. *HOT Blogs: Using online writing spaces to develop higher order thinking skills*. 2008.

Skills Checklists: Learners may use these computer basics and inquiry process checklists as both guides that outlines the expectations of the program and as reviews of what skills they have practiced.

PluggedInVA Skills Checklist	
Computer Basics	Date skill demonstrated
<input type="checkbox"/> Turn a computer on/off	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use the mouse/track pad	
<input type="checkbox"/> Follow computer lab rules for computer use	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open programs and files using icons and/or the Start Menu	
<input type="checkbox"/> Create/open a new folder/file	
<input type="checkbox"/> Launch a word processor	
<input type="checkbox"/> Type a short entry in a word processing file	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy text	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cut text	
<input type="checkbox"/> Paste text	
<input type="checkbox"/> Delete text	
<input type="checkbox"/> Name a word processing file and save it	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open a new window	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open a new tab	
Web Searching Basics	
<input type="checkbox"/> Locate and open a search engine	
<input type="checkbox"/> Type key words in the correct location of a search engine	
<input type="checkbox"/> Type addresses in the address window	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use the refresh button	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use the "Back" and "Forward" buttons	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use a search engine for simple keyword searches (e.g., Google or Bing)	
General Navigation Basics	
<input type="checkbox"/> Maximize/minimize windows	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open and quit applications	
<input type="checkbox"/> Toggle between windows	
Email Basics	
<input type="checkbox"/> Locate and open an email program	
<input type="checkbox"/> Compose, edit, and send email messages	
<input type="checkbox"/> Receive and reply to messages	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attach documents or files to email messages	
Inquiry Process Skill Set	
Understand and Develop Questions	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Use strategies to ensure initial understanding of the question or information challenge, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rereading the question to ensure understanding ○ Paraphrasing the question ○ Taking notes about the question ○ Thinking about the needs of the person who asked the question 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Use strategies to monitor an understanding of the question, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knowing when to review the question ○ Checking an answer in relation to the question to ensure it is complete 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Determine what a useful initial question is, based on a variety of factors that include interest, audience, purpose, and the nature of the inquiry activity 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Determine a clear topic/focus for questions to guide the search for information 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Modify questions, when appropriate, using strategies as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Narrowing or expanding the focus of the question ○ Developing a new or revised question that is more appropriate after gathering information 	
Locate Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Locate at least one search engine 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Use the following general search engine strategies during keyword entry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Topic and focus ○ Single and multiple keyword entries 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Use specialized search engines for images, videos, and other media sources 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Select from a variety of search engine strategies to locate useful resources when an initial search is unsuccessful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knows the function of the "Did you mean....?" feature in Google ○ Adjusts keywords according to the results of a search ○ Narrows or expands the search ○ Reads search engine results to discover the correct vocabulary and then uses that vocabulary in a new search 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Read search engine results effectively to determine the most useful resource for a task using strategies such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knowing which portions of a search results page are sponsored, containing commercially placed links, and which are not ○ Skimming the main results before reading more closely ○ Understanding the meaning of URLs (.com, .org., .edu, .net, .gov) ○ Reading summaries carefully and inferring meaning in the search engine results page to determine the best possible site to visit ○ Knowing when the first item is not the best item for a question ○ Monitoring the extent to which a search results page matches the information needed 	
Reading to Locate Information on a Webpage	

<input type="checkbox"/> Skim information to determine if it is useful and worth more careful reading	
<input type="checkbox"/> Read more carefully at a site to determine if the required information is there	
<input type="checkbox"/> Predict/infer the information housed behind a link to make efficient choices	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use structural knowledge of web pages to help locate information, including the use of directories	
<input type="checkbox"/> Know when you have left a site and how to return to it using the history	
<input type="checkbox"/> Know how to use multiple browser windows or tabs to compare information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Know how to use an internal search feature to locate information on site (e.g., control F)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor the reading of a webpage and know when it contains useful information and recognize when it does not	
Critical Evaluation of Information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify, evaluate, and recognize that all websites have an agenda, purpose, perspective, or bias	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and evaluate the author and/or sponsorship of a website	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use author/sponsor information to identify and evaluate biases	
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigate multiple sources to compare and contrast reliability and accuracy of information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify several markers that may affect reliability of a site, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is it a commercial website? ○ Is the author an authority on the topic (e.g., professor or scientist)? ○ Does the website have links that are broken? ○ Does the information make sense? ○ Does the website include links to other reliable/reputable websites? ○ Does the website contain numerous typos? ○ Does the URL provide any clues regarding the reliability? ○ Do the images or videos appear to be altered? 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Understand that Wikipedia is a reasonable but imperfect information source	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify the main purpose of a website (educational, commercial, social, etc.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify the basic form of a website (blog, wiki, forum, informational, governmental, etc.) and use this information to consider reliability	
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate information based on the degree to which it is likely to be accurate by verifying and consulting alternative and/or reputable sources	
Synthesize Information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Synthesize/combine information from multiple media sources including written-audio, visual, video, and presented in tables, graphs, or charts	
<input type="checkbox"/> Separate relevant from irrelevant information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Organize information from multiple sources effectively	
<input type="checkbox"/> Manage multiple sources of information both online and offline, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choose tools to meet the needs of managing information (file folders, electronic file folders, bookmarking websites, notebooks, etc.) 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep reference lists of all sources referenced ○ Take notes with paper/pen or word processor document 	
Communicate Information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Understand that messages can elicit both positive and negative reactions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use a variety of writing/editing tools, such as a word processor, spell checker, dictionary, thesaurus, etc.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Copy/paste text and/or a URL to include in a message or document	
<input type="checkbox"/> Know how to use email efficiently to communicate information, including the ability to attach and download files	
<input type="checkbox"/> Know how to use multiple forms of online communication tools including blogs, instant messaging, forums, discussion boards, wikis, Google Docs, etc.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of audience and the relationship between audience, purpose, medium, and message	
<input type="checkbox"/> Know how to include multiple-media sources within messages	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use formatting techniques, such as headings and subheadings or bolded and underlined text, to organize information for effective communication	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare and present information orally to an audience	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare and present information visually to an audience	

VII. Materials and Online Resources

Pharmacy Technician Examination Preparation

National Pharmacy Technician Links

- National Certification Information: [Pharmacy Technician Certification Board \(PTCB\)](#)
- [American Society of Health System Pharmacists \(ASHP\)](http://www.ashp.org/) <http://www.ashp.org/>
- [The American Association of Pharmacy Technicians \(AAPT\)](#)
- [National Pharmacy Technician Association \(NPTA\)](#).

[Virginia Board of Pharmacy](#)

[Study Guide](#)

Pharmacy Technician Instructional Resources

Career and Technical Education Resource Center, Virginia

[Pharmacy Technician I](#)

[Pharmacy Technician II](#)

Professional Soft Skills

- Stephen R Covey, [The Community](#)
- Peggy Post & Peter Post, [The Etiquette Advantage in Business](#),
- [SPOKES Curriculum](#), West Virginia Department of Education, Customer Service and Job Readiness Skills

Job Readiness

- [Vocational Information Center](#)
- [Virginia's Career and Technical Education Resource Center](#)
- [Cover Letter and Resume Samples for Pharmacy Technician](#)
- [Pharmacy Tech Tips from the Pros](#)
- [Common Pharmacy Tech Interview Questions:](#)

21st Century Skills & College Survival

- [Partnership for 21st Century Skills](#)
- [Concept to Classroom, Inquiry-based Learning](#)

English

- [Read Write Think, International Reading Association](#)
- [Thinkfinity Resources](#)
- [Goodwill Community Foundation](#)
- [TV411, videos and web activities](#)
- [BBC Skills wise, English and Math for Adults](#)

Math

- [Khan Academy](#)
- [Goodwill Community Foundation](#)
- [TV411, videos and web activities](#) designed to reach learning goals
- [BBC Skills wise, English and Math for Adults](#)

Technology

- [Goodwill Community Foundation, free online classes](#)
- [Typing Web, free typing lessons and typing certifications](#)
- [Sense-Lang, typing tutor and games](#)
- [Macmillan McGraw-Hill Computer Literacy Lessons](#)

Capstone Project Design and Implementation

- [Master of Public Administration: Capstone Project](#)

PluggedInVA Resources

pluggedinva.com/resources.html

www.

- [PluggedInVA Instructors' Manual](#)
- [PluggedInVA Implementation Guide](#)

VII. Sample Instructional Activities

*See <https://sites.google.com/site/pluggedincurriculummaterials/home> for additional activities.

Team building

- Create a class mission statement and a code of conduct
- Use ice breakers to begin the program or to help alleviate stress during the program. A few sources for ice breakers follow:
 1. [8 Fun Activities to Help Build Your Team](#)
 2. [Team Building Activities for Adults](#)
 3. [Icebreakers, Energizers, and Team-building Activities](#) (some developed for youth but very appropriate for adults)

Study Skills & Postsecondary Readiness

- Learning styles and preferences survey: take a survey and design a learning plan with study habits and techniques outlined
 - [Learning Styles Inventory](#)
 - [Lesson: What's Your Learning Style?](#)
 - [Career Garden, Study Skills Module](#)
- K-W-L-Q: The job of a pharmacy technician / team research project
- Graphic organizers: job comparisons: community versus hospital pharmacies

Professional Soft Skills and Job Readiness

- Self-representation: create personal mission statement, goal-setting, resume writing
- Interview role plays: create a how-to and how-not-to guide; have students research job openings and, based on what they find there, prepare an interview with answers and follow-up questions (practice on each other and/or perform as role play for class)
- Workplace role-plays: with customers, co-workers, as part of a team, responding to a potential conflict
- Job readiness: develop job search plan (resume, cover letter, interview preparation)
- Job openings search: identify most common qualifications listed on job openings for pharmacy technicians; locate and identify appropriate job openings
- Resources:
 - [Department of Labor, Soft Skills to Pay the Bills](#)

Applied Math

- Measurements and calculations (e.g., use baking recipes for unit conversion practice)
- Retail math: budgeting, discounting

- Inventory (familiarity with databases)
- Games: matching parts of body to "routes of administration"; matching abbreviations with full words; matching equal measurement conversions (e.g., kilograms to pounds)
- Practice exams, quizzes, and workbook assignments
- Small- and large-group discussions (using critical thinking and discussion prompts)
- Small group projects and research
- Multimedia (e.g., YouTube videos and work training videos) with pre- and post-work
- Designing an exam review guide (small-group or individual work; guides may be shared with class)

IX. College Survival Resources

Time Management: Planning your 168-hour week

Each week has 168 hours. Estimate the number of hours per week that you will dedicate to each of the activities below; then add them together to get a total. Will you be able to fit everything in and maintain a healthy lifestyle?

Your time commitments:

Sleep (= _____ hours per night x 7)	_____ Hours
Meals (= _____ hours per day x 7)	_____ Hours
Class(es) (including commute to class)	_____ Hours
Studying and homework (expect 2 - 3 hours/week per credit hour)	_____ Hours
Work (including commute)	_____ Hours
Family and friends	_____ Hours
Activities (hobbies, exercise, volunteer work, spiritual practices, etc.)	_____ Hours
Extra responsibilities (chores, obligations, etc.)	_____ Hours
Personal care (grooming, appointments)	_____ Hours
Free time	_____ Hours
Other: _____	_____ Hours
	TOTAL=_____ Hours
	168 - Total = _____ Hours Remaining

What now?

If your total is more than 168, you will have to cut back. Reassess the time you have set aside above and decide what you can reasonably reduce.

If your total is between 165 and 168, you have a very busy schedule and may not be able to manage unpredictable events. Consider cutting back.

If your total is below 165, Congratulations! You have designed what should be manageable commitments of your time. The next step is to plan when you will accomplish your responsibilities.

Adapted from [University of Redlands](#), September 2013.

Test Preparation Tips

Adapted from <http://www.testtakingtips.com/test/genpre.htm>

Preparation for your first test should begin on the first day of class; this includes paying attention during class, taking good notes, studying, completing homework assignments and reviewing study materials on a regular basis.

Budget your time, make sure you have sufficient time to study so that you are well prepared for the test.

Go to review sessions, pay attention to hints that the instructor may give about the test. Take notes and ask questions about items you may be confused about.

Ask the instructor to specify the areas that will be emphasized on the test.

Make sure you go to the class right before the test; it's another prime time for the instructor to give out more hints or the format of the test.

Go over any material from practice tests, HW's, sample problems, review material, the textbook, class notes...

Eat before a test. Having food in your stomach will give you energy and help you focus but avoid heavy foods which can make you groggy.

Don't try to pull an all-nighter. Get at least 3 hours of sleep before the test (normally 8 hours of sleep a night is recommended but if you are short on time, get at least 3 hours so that you'll be well rested enough to focus during the test).

Put the main ideas/information/formulas onto a sheet that can be quickly reviewed many times, this makes it easier to retain the key concepts that will be on the test.

Try to show up at least 5 minutes before the test will start.

Set your alarm and have a backup alarm set as well.

Go to the bathroom before walking into the exam room. You don't want to waste anytime worrying about your bodily needs during the test.

Test-taking Tips

Bring at least two pens/pencils with good erasers, a calculator with enough batteries and any other resources that your instructor allows you to.

Bring a watch to the test so that you can better pace yourself.

Keep a positive attitude throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed. If you start to feel nervous take a few deep breaths to relax.

Keep your eyes on your own paper, you don't want to appear to be cheating and cause unnecessary trouble for yourself.

When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test so that you know how to efficiently budget your time.

Do the easiest problems first. Don't stay on a problem that you are stuck on, especially when time is a factor.

Do the problems that have the greatest point values first.

Pace yourself, don't rush. Read the entire question and pay attention to the details.

Ask the instructor for clarification if you don't understand what they are asking for on the test.

Write legibly. If the grader can't read what you wrote, they'll most likely mark it wrong.

Always read the whole question carefully. Don't make assumptions about what the question might be.

If you don't know an answer, skip it. Go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later. Other parts of the test may have some information that will help you out with that question.

Don't worry if others finish before you. Focus on the test in front of you.

If you have time left when you are finished, look over your test. Make sure that you have answered all the questions. Only change an answer if you misread or misinterpreted the question because the first answer that you put is usually the correct one. Watch out for careless mistakes and proofread your essay and/or short answer questions.

Double check to make sure that you put your first and last name on the test.

Adapted from [GenTest](#)

X. Collaboration tools

Critical to the success of a PIVA cohort is the collaboration of all involved partners, especially those involved in direct instruction, including the adult education team and the postsecondary instructors. Instructors can keep track of attendance across all classes, keep each other up to date with at-risk students, ensure that what they are teaching aligns to what the students are learning in their other classes, and create a more cohesive program for the learners by communicating with each other.

Instructors and other PIVA staff may regularly update a collaborative document to ensure consistent alignment of the curriculum across class and to keep all PIVA program staff updated on any challenging situations or concerns about students or the curriculum.

[Google Apps for Education](#)

Other online collaboration resources:

[PBWorks: Online Team Collaboration](#)

Teaching with Online Collaboration Tools: [University of Michigan Faculty Examples](#)
Center for Research on Learning and Teaching

This page features innovative uses of online collaboration tools (OCTs) for teaching and course management.

On the following page is a screen shot of a Google Excel file. In addition to regular face to face meetings, a living document similar to this will help ensure that course content is aligned throughout all sections of the PIVA project.

