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Accelerated Studies for Adults Program Offers Online Courses as Part of Consortium

KEUKA PARK, N.Y.—Keuka College’s Accelerated Studies for Adults Program (ASAP) has made it simpler for working adults to earn a degree fast.

Now, students needing credits outside of their program can take certain general elective and liberal arts courses online, according to Gary Smith, associate dean for professional studies and international programs.

This semester, five online courses were offered for the first time to ASAP students: *World Religious Traditions*, *Critical Reading and Writing*, *Community Influences on Government*, *Organizational Behavior*, and *Contemporary Mathematics*.

The courses were offered through a consortium of approximately 30 colleges that is managed by Regis University in Colorado. Courses and instructors pass rigorous standards set by the consortium members.

“As a member of the consortium, we can share online courses from other members of the consortium and offer them to our students as our own,” said Smith. “They are not taught by our faculty, but they are pre-approved and students register for them just as they would any other Keuka College course. This saves our students time and offers a convenient alternative to searching elsewhere. This also ensures a stable technology platform and support so our students don’t have to worry about the course technology crashing.”

The Center for Adult Learning and Special Programs decides what courses to offer to ASAP students each semester based on students’ needs, according to Smith.

“Say a nursing student needs a humanities course but can not find or fit one into his or her schedule. Say they find a course but the location or time does not fit their schedule. The online course option allows students another way to complete course work with Keuka without searching elsewhere,” said Smith. “The course is pre-approved, so there is no hassle getting approvals or transferring the credit. It is a Keuka course so the registration, financial aid and billing is simplified.”

As a consortium member, Keuka can also offer online courses into the consortium, taught by Keuka College faculty.

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“That means we can market our courses to thousands of potential students,” said Smith.

Despite the large potential audience, the class size is still small so students get the individual attention they expect.

One online course being considered for the consortium is a genetics course taught by Jeanine Seguin, associate professor of nursing.

About 20 ASAP students took advantage of the online offerings this semester.

Nursing major Eric Jansen completed *Organizational Behavior* and *World Religious Traditions*.

“Both courses utilized weekly discussion boards to answer topic questions and have discussions with the instructor and the other students in the class,” said Jansen. “Each required three to four written papers, four to five pages in length, that had to be submitted by e-mail.

“The syllabi were spelled out and all aspects of the discussion forums, the weekly online readings, and the papers worked flawlessly,” added Jansen. “These courses required 10-plus hours per week, but fit very easily into my schedule due to their flexibility.”

“At this time, we don’t see [the online courses] being an option for traditional students,” said Smith. “It is designed to serve adult students. In the future, we may look at ways to offer it to our traditional students.”