

Dutchess Community College
Think Ahead
FAQ's

Think Ahead is a two-year program (four- 15 week semesters) leading toward earning a certificate at graduation. Think Ahead is a work readiness training program that prepares people to enter the work force or supported employment so they can be competitively employed. Think Ahead is offered through collaboration with Abilities First Inc, ARC Greater Hudson Valley, Dutchess Community College, the Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro's ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative, Maplebrook School and Taconic Resources for Independence.

- **Is there an age limit for participation?**
 - Yes - At least 18 years old

- **Do I have to be a Dutchess County resident?**
 - Yes

- **How do I apply?**
 - Go on-line to [Dutchess Community College – Think Ahead](#) to complete an application.
 - Applications for the 2021/2022 cohort will be available on April 1, 2021.
 - Send the completed application and supporting documentation to Sandi Pearson - spierson@dutchessny.gov with T/A Fall 2021 in subject line.
 - Applications and supporting documentation must be submitted by May 15, 2021.

- **Admission requirements:**
 - Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) wavier eligible at time of admission to the program;
 - Have a life plan or Individual Educational Plan (IEP) with goals that support job readiness skill building and vocational aspirations;
 - Have a vocational evaluation such as school to work program or pre-vocational assessment;
 - Achieved minimum of one hour of unsupervised time;
 - Graduated, or separated from secondary school program.

- **Provide two letters of recommendation:**
 - One letter from an HCBS provider (i.e.; agency service provider)
 - One letter from an employer volunteer supervisor, job coach or teacher (specific to work ethic).

- **What is next in the application process?**
 - Completed applications will be reviewed by the Think Ahead admission committee and evaluated for potential success in the Think Ahead program;
 - Supported applications will be selected and interviews will begin the first week in June 2021;
 - Students will interview with the Think Ahead selection committee;
 - Family members and/or service providers can accompany them to/at the interview with the consent of the potential student;
 - Selected students will receive their acceptance letter on or about June 25, 2021;

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- Acceptance letters will have information on the required Orientation Day and first day of classes;
- Students must accept the DCC code of conduct and sign an attendance/conduct contract.

- **Is Transportation Provided?**

- No - students must have access to transportation; or
- Be able or willing to learn to use the Dutchess County Transit system; or
- Discuss transportation options with agency that supports you.

- **What costs and/or supplies are needed?**

- Dutchess Community College currently provides classroom supplies;
- Tuition is currently supported by Dutchess County Government, Dutchess Community College Foundation and the College;
- Computers are available for student use on campus, participants should anticipate having access to internet services, and a tablet or laptop for use at home. Electronic devices may be available through DCC on a limited basis;
- Participants should provide their own meals, or meal plans can be purchased for use at the Dining Hall;

- **What does the day look like?**

Class is held MWF from 9 – 12 and is required to complete the certificate. Activities may continue on campus until 2:00 pending transportation and agency support if needed. Work experiences are unpaid, and held on campus for the first year with options for off campus experiences the second year. An optional summer program is also available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 – 12 during the months of June and July. **Remote participation may be required pending COVID-19 protocol which would substantially limit work experiences and would require internet access with an electronic device.**

Students are supported during the day by staff from Abilities First and the ARC of Dutchess.

- Optional activities on T/Th from 9 – 2 that are offered:
 - work experience,
 - audit credit bearing courses,
 - campus clubs,
 - campus fitness center,
 - Library & writing center,
 - create connections with college students

- **What does the curriculum include?**

- Daily living skills;

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- Job readiness skills for employment;
 - Improving communication and interpersonal skills;
 - Strengthening basic reading & writing;
 - Developing lifelong learning and study skills;
 - Stress management;
 - Career exploration and internships;
 - Vocational development
- **Is there support on campus?**
 - Yes:
 - [Office of Accommodative Services: accommodativeservices@sunydutchess.edu](mailto:accommodativeservices@sunydutchess.edu)
 - [DCC Cares : dcccares@sunydutchess.edu](mailto:dcccares@sunydutchess.edu)
 - Campus Academic Support Centers
 - Math and Science Center: masc@sunydutchess.edu
 - Writing Center: writingcenter@sunydutchess.edu
 - 24/7 Mental Health Telehealth Counseling- dutchesscounseling.com

If I audit a class, what can I expect?

A course audit allows a student to participate in a classroom experience without earning a grade or credit for the course. Think Ahead students are not required to cover the tuition cost for these courses, and may enroll in one credit bearing course each semester. Registration is facilitated by the Director of Accommodative Services.

Think of this as an observation of the class, students are not required to meet all assignment deadlines, complete assignments or take exams. They may do so however but will be ungraded.

- Students auditing a class may purchase the text book, however this is not required. Textbooks for each course are available in the DCC Library.
- You may take exams and submit assignments for practice and the experience, this is not required.
- Students auditing credit courses should be ready to attend the first class when the credit bearing courses begin, usually a week before the Think Ahead program begins.
- The Office of Accommodative Services is available to provide classroom accommodations and assist with assignments.

Updated March 2021