UNIVERSAL ACCESS: SUNY Empire State College offers nonmatriculated study that allows you to earn college credit. Perhaps you’re not ready to begin a degree program right now. SUNY Empire State College offers nonmatriculated study that allows you to earn college credit. However you choose to learn, SUNY Empire is dedicated to providing you with the best education in a time-efficient and affordable way.

Faculty Mentors
The more than 200 full- and part-time members of SUNY Empire State College’s undergraduate faculty come from a variety of backgrounds, from business to the arts. Ninety-six percent of the full-time faculty hold doctoral or other terminal degrees.

What the faculty have in common is a passion for teaching adult students. Our faculty are called mentors because they are partners and guides in your education. Every undergraduate student at SUNY Empire is assigned a mentor who serves as their own academic guide and resource from orientation to graduation. They respect the years of experience and knowledge that adults bring to an academic program, and are glad to share their own expertise. Our students confer with their mentors on a regular basis to receive advice, to develop their degree plans, and to carry out learning activities. Students maintain contact with their mentors in a variety of ways: face-to-face, email, online discussion areas, or even by mail. Most students value the personal attention, and when our students graduate, often it is their mentors whom they celebrate when they look back on their college years.

Planning Your Degree Program
Working with a faculty mentor, you design your own degree program. The degree you design reflects your goals and meets college requirements. You can incorporate prior learning from credit earned at other colleges, and college-level learning gained from work, volunteer or community activities, military training, reading, research and travel, and plan your additional study.

You formally begin degree planning through an educational planning course. For an associate or bachelor’s degree, the college requires at least 4 credits of educational planning.

As you work through your educational planning course with your mentor, you will review college requirements, and for individualized programs, define a concentration that meets your goals. When designing your degree program, consult the information on the "Program..."
Guidelines” tab in this catalog’s Undergraduate Programs section (http://catalog.esc.edu/undergraduate/areas-study-degrees-certificates/).

Once you and your mentor complete the development of your degree program proposal, the proposal is submitted to the Office of Academic Review for review and approval by a faculty committee. The final step is a policy review and approval by the Office of the Registrar.

Detailed information on planning your degree is available in the Student Degree Planning Guide (http://www.esc.edu/degree-planning-academic-review/degree-program/student-degree-planning-guide/) and the Individualized Prior Learning Assessment (iPLA) Guide (http://www.esc.edu/degree-planning-academic-review/prior-learning-assessment/individualized-prior-learning-assessment/). Both publications are available at your location and online on MyESC (http://my.esc.edu/). Additionally, the college provides an online degree program planning tool called DP Planner available through MyESC to help you organize your degree program and submit it for review.