

Tompkins – Cortland Community College Early Degree

Spencer – Van Etten has partnered with Tompkins – Cortland Community College to offer Early Degree in order to expand opportunities for our students. Early Degree is an option for ambitious high school students to complete the requirements for an Associate’s Degree while in high school. Early Degree students combine Concurrent Enrollment courses with CollegeNow Online courses, and occasionally on-campus and Advanced Placement courses, to fulfill an Associate’s Degree’s 60+ credits. Most courses are concurrent enrollment courses taken at the high school, allowing students to simultaneously earn high school and college credit for the same course. Requirements unavailable at the high school are taken online or on campus.

The Early Degree Student

Early Degree is an academically rigorous option that appeals to mature, highly-motivated students. The average Early Degree student graduates with honors from Tompkins Cortland with an average GPA of 3.54. Those who pursue the Early Degree should be fairly certain of their college major and career goals, skilled at time management, ready to enter college at junior-level coursework, and willing to dedicate the required time, energy, and money to earning the required credits.

Most Early Degree graduates are pursuing careers that require double majors or graduate degrees. Past Early Degree students have reported enjoying advanced standing and priority registration in their baccalaureate programs, maintaining NCAA eligibility into their graduate programs, and adding international learning and internship experiences while staying on track for their degree.

Available Degrees

Early Degree students earn either the Liberal Arts – General Studies A.S. Degree or the Liberal Arts – Math Science A.S. Degree. These degrees allow students to use the wide variety of SUNY General Education courses available at their high schools to fulfill degree requirements.

Academic Requirements

Minimum required GPA on Tompkins Cortland transcript at end of junior year: 3.0.

Minimum required High School average at end of junior year: 85.

Meet with high school guidance counselor and CollegeNow advisor by May 1st of junior year to solidify Early Degree plans.

Getting Started

A few concurrent enrollment courses may be available to students in their freshman or sophomore year. However, most courses are for juniors and seniors. CollegeNow Online courses are also for qualified juniors and seniors.

Ninth and tenth graders eager to start planning for Early Degree should ask their guidance counselor about which concurrent enrollment courses they are on track to take. A student’s main focus as a freshman and sophomore should be to earn excellent grades and build the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in college-level coursework.

Students interested in earning an Associate’s Degree while in high school should talk to their school counselor, who will contact the CollegeNow Office to discuss the student’s eligibility and draft an individualized plan for his or her college and career goals.