Student Guide

Welcome to Sophia Pathways

We're glad you've chosen Sophia to take the next step in planning your educational journey and significantly reducing the cost of your college tuition.

Your Sophia Pathways online college course is designed to be completed in 60 days or less. You may start at any time and learn on your own schedule. There are no classes to attend or weekly assignments to complete.

Using Sophia courses to earn college credit and lower the cost of your college education is simple:

- Dive right into problem solving mode with our Challenges, learning new concepts along the way through our instructional tutorials.
- Successfully complete timed Milestones, demonstrating your mastery of the concepts.
- Successfully complete the Final Milestone, demonstrating your retention of key course concepts.
- Submit your final score, and we will provide you with instructions on requesting your official transcript.

HOW IT WORKS

To earn a Sophia transcript, you must:

- Complete each Challenge by attempting each of the questions.
- Pass each Unit Milestone by getting at least half of the points in each assessment.
- Achieve a total average score of 70% or better across all Challenges and Milestones.
- Pass your Final Milestone with a score of 50% or higher, which contributes to your overall course score.

WHAT IS A CHALLENGE?

Sophia courses are designed using a problem-based learning model. You can expect to engage in real world scenarios. To assist you in solving these Challenges, we provide tutorials that help you understand the key concepts behind each problem.

Each Challenge encompasses an average of 5-10 practical problems to solve. You have multiple attempts to solve these problems and you may leave and return to Challenges whenever you want to continue your learning and improve your score (as long as you have remaining attempts). You must attempt all of the Challenge questions at least once in order to advance to the Milestone for that unit.

WHAT IS A MILESTONE?

Milestones test your mastery of the concepts taught in the course. Each Milestone consists of 20-30 questions on average. You have a set amount of time to complete each Milestone, which is displayed on the Course Dashboard. You must get at least half of the questions correct to pass— but keep in mind that you need to achieve an average score of 70% across all Challenges and Milestones. Milestones are weighted two to three times as much as Challenges for the purpose of calculating your final score. If you do not pass a Milestone, you will be given one opportunity to retake it.

Each Milestone has a corresponding Practice Milestone that you can use to check your readiness before attempting the actual Milestone. You'll find similar questions to the actual Milestone, along with answers. Note: Some courses may have Touchstones in lieu of Milestones, while others may have both. Your Course Dashboard will display the assessment types you can expect in your course.

WHAT IS A TOUCHSTONE?

For students in certain courses, a Touchstone is a project-based assessment that helps you apply mastery of the concepts to solve an authentic problem. Each Touchstone consists of a project-based deliverable. Each Touchstone is checked for originality and then submitted for manual grading, and all submissions must be unique to the course— you may not submit work you have written for previous courses. You can work on a Touchstone whenever you want; however, you must pass the Unit Milestone before you can submit the Touchstone for that Unit for grading. Please be aware that it could take up to seven business days to get a Touchstone grade back. You must get at least half of the available points to pass a Touchstone— but keep in mind that you need to average 70% across all Challenges, Milestones, and Touchstones to pass the course. If you do not pass a Touchstone, you will be given one opportunity to resubmit it.

WHAT IS THE FINAL MILESTONE?

Upon successful completion of all Challenges and Milestones, you will be ready to take the Final Milestone. A score of 50% or higher is needed to pass the Final Milestone and complete your course. One-unit courses, as well as certain courses that include Touchstone assignments, may not have a Final Milestone.

BEST PRACTICES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL STUDENT

Challenges

- Read through each of the questions in the Challenge first so that you have a general idea of what to look for as you watch/read tutorials.
- View all the tutorials linked to the Challenges. They can be found under the tab "Helpful Tutorials" to the right of the Challenge "Question" tab, or may be displayed on the right side of the question itself, and provide the information needed to complete that Challenge.
- Take notes on the tutorials as you watch them and write down key terms and definitions, processes, diagrams, etc.
- Use our "Many Ways to LearnTM" format to view, read, or listen to tutorials from various instructors. This will allow you to find the instructor or tutorial that you prefer based on your learning style.
- Use your notes to complete the Challenge questions.

- If you struggle with a concept, reach out to the Learning Coach team, who will review your message and respond with guidance.

Milestones

- Review all Challenges prior to taking the Milestone.
- Complete the Practice Milestone before attempting the actual Milestone.
- Review tutorials related to the concepts you got incorrect on the Practice Milestone.
- If you continue to struggle with a concept, contact a Learning Coach for assistance.
- Take the Milestone at a time and location when you can have sufficient undisturbed time, so you can focus on completing the Milestone successfully.
- Milestones are "open book," so have two browser windows or tabs open. Use one for viewing relevant tutorials, and the other for the Milestone.

Touchstones

- Review the Touchstone description thoroughly at the start of the Unit in order to understand the requirements.
- Give yourself enough time to develop your Touchstone over a few days as you go through the Unit, versus attempting to rush through it in one sitting.
- Familiarize yourself with the scoring rubric to understand how the Touchstone will be graded.
- If you are unclear about any section of the Touchstone, contact a Learning Coach for assistance.
- Before you submit a Touchstone, proofread and make appropriate edits.
- Touchstone submissions are checked for originality and manually graded. If a Touchstone is determined to contain plagiarized content or large amounts of material that you have previously submitted to another course, it will be rejected and you will be given a single opportunity to submit a new, original version.

STUDENT HONOR CODE

To take a Sophia course, students must abide by the following Honor Code:

- You are permitted to register only one account. Maintaining multiple accounts is considered a violation of this Honor Code.
- The answers to all assessments will be your work, and your work alone.
- You will not make solutions to assessment questions available to anyone else.
- You will not engage in any other activities that could dishonestly improve your results or improve/hinder the results of others.

Failure to comply with the Student Honor Code will result in removal from the course, removal of courses from your transcript, and/or disqualification to enroll in future courses.

EXTENSION POLICY

We want you to be successful in learning your academic subject. If you do not complete your Sophia course in the allotted 60 days, we do grant one extension, not to exceed 30 days. You will see a link in your course to request an extension if you are running out of time. Please contact a Learning Coach at

learningcoach@sophia.org with any questions on your course extension.

RETAKE POLICY

We allow one (1) retake per Challenge and one (1) retake per Milestone. You will be prompted to contact the Sophia Learning Coach team if you fail an assessment in the course.

30 DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

We want you to be completely satisfied with your learning experience. We offer a 30-day money back guarantee prior to completion. Please contact a Learning Coach at learningcoach@sophia.org to drop your course and receive a full refund within 30 days of your membership start date.

OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE SOPHIA PATHWAYS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

CHAT FEATURE - ("Questions? Lets Chat")

Learning Coaches are available via this Live Chat feature during our office hours.

PROGRESS AND SCORE INDICATORS

Track your progress! Your Course Dashboard page provides real time feedback on your progress to help you stay on track. The Progress Bar gives you a recommended schedule to ensure a successful completion. The Score Indicator plots your current score against the 70% passing mark. The "View Report" page provides more details on your activity and progress throughout the course.

THIRD-PARTY TUTORING FROM PEARSON SMARTHINKING

The following courses include up to ten (10) hours of tutoring services from the team at Pearson SmarThinking:

- College Algebra
- Introduction to Statistics
- Foundations of English Composition
- English Composition I
- English Composition II

Subject matter tutors for these courses are available on a pre-scheduled or on-demand basis via the "Access a Tutor" link on your Course Dashboard. Time is deducted from your ten hour allotment as follows:

Service Used	Time Charge
Drop-In Tutoring ("on-demand")	Metered to the minute plus 7 minutes per session for processing and administration
Pre-scheduled Session	30 minute minimum increments plus 7 minutes per session for processing

with Tutor	and administration
Offline Question Submission	27 minutes

REQUESTING YOUR TRANSCRIPT

Once you have successfully completed a course, you may request an official transcript.

Depending on your institution, we provide transcripts through three separate options:

- Automatic notification to some partner institutions
- Processing through Parchment (fee charged)
- ACE transcripts through the American Council on Education (fee charged)

CONTACT US

If you have questions about any of the guidelines in this Student Guide or any other elements of your Sophia experience, you can reach a Learning Coach by:

- Email: learningcoach@sophia.org
- or Phone: 1-800-341-0327