

**SYLLABUS**  
**Aurora University**  
**Course Number: OEDP 5078**  
**Course Title: Building Employability Skills**  
**for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
**3 Semester hours of Graduate Credit**

- 1. Catalog Description** *Career and Technical Education Teachers who participate in this course will develop highly motivating instructional units that integrate the interpersonal, communication, and creativity skills required for gainful employment and advancement into their courses, thus improving their students' short and long term employability.*
  
- 2. Course Overview** *Career and Technical Education Teachers enrolled in this course will examine the literature on the interpersonal, creative and communications skills (typically called "soft skills") needed by students to find and keep quality jobs, and to gain promotions in their chosen fields. Teachers enrolled in this class will also examine current best practices in motivating learners to determine how best to create motivating instructional units that will integrate these soft skills into their current curriculum. Then teachers enrolled in this class will research the literature concerning "emerging" types of soft skills that will be required in the future of employees in their various areas of specialization.*

*With this information, teachers enrolled in this class will then develop highly motivating instructional units to integrate into the classes they teach that will provide their student the opportunity to develop these soft skills, including at least one of the emerging skills identified in their research. An overview of these units will be presented to the class.*

### **3. Student Learning Objectives**

As a result of this course, the participant will:

- identify key interpersonal skills currently needed by workers in their training area to secure, keep, and be promoted in various careers. (*Illinois Teaching Standard #1, Content Knowledge*)
- identify key communications skills currently needed by workers in their training area to secure, keep, and be promoted in various careers. (*Illinois Teaching Standard #7, Communication*)
- identify key non-technical skills that will be needed by future workers in their training area to secure, keep, and be promoted in various careers. (*Illinois Teaching Standard #10, Professional Growth*)

- analyze various motivational techniques to determine which will be most effective in assuring that their students learn the key “soft skills” identified above (*Illinois Teaching Standard #4, Planning for Instruction*)
- create instructional units and activities that will promote student learning of the “soft skills” required to secure, keep and be promoted in various careers (*Illinois Learning Standard #6, Instructional Delivery*)

#### **4. Teaching Method/Class Format**

This class will consist of 10 four hour sessions. Each session will be highly interactive with students involved in a number of discovery activities, small and large group discussions, simulations, role plays and use of technology. Students will be expected to read the required text outside of class, and to read a variety of on-line sources as they prepare for discussions. Students will be expected to become conversant with current research on student motivation.

Students will be expected to synthesize the material covered in class to develop instructional units on various “soft skills” to be included in the classes they teach. Students will also be expected to present these units to their peers.

#### **5. Texts and Required Reading**

A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Future by Daniel H. Pink, 2006

#### **6. Units of Work**

<b>Session</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
6/16/08 Morning	Introduction to the course A Towering activity. What are Soft Skills? Why are Soft Skills important?	Read Pink, Chapters 1 - 3
6/16/08 Afternoon	Soft skills and job success How do I teach soft skills in my classroom? Development of soft skill teaching materials.	Small group presentation of soft skill instructional idea.
6/17/08 Morning	What is motivation? - Planning for motivation - Success and motivation - Intrinsic vs. extrinsic - teacher attitude - engagement and motivation	Read Pink, Chapters 4 - 6

6/17/08 Afternoon	Competition, cooperation and motivation Simulations and role plays	Small group presentation of simulation activities.
6/18/08 Morning	Future Soft Skills - visioning - creativity - design - originality	Read Pink, Chapters 7 - 9
6/18/08 Afternoon	Discussion of Daniel Pink's Book Internet research on future workplace skills (WebQuest)	
6/19/08 Morning	Introduction to Comic Times Creation of comic strip to teach a future soft skill.	
6/19/08 Afternoon	Presentation of Comic Strips	Present Comic Times new teaching materials
6/20/08 Morning	Pulling it all together - Identification of soft skills to be included in existing lesson plans - Identification of needed teaching materials to provide soft skills instruction - Writing of highly motivating instructional units to include in existing courses.	
6/20/08 Afternoon	Presentation of soft skills unit concepts and initial plans.	Present soft skill teaching units.

## 7. Class Assignments

#	Description	Evaluation
1	Read Daniel Pink's book <u>A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Future</u> and participate in a book discussion group.	Rubric I - 12 points possible
2	Work with a small group to create a traditional Soft Skill instructional unit and teach the unit to the class.	Rubric II - 16 points possible
3	Work with a small group to create or modify a simulation activity that teaches the importance of an interpersonal soft skill. Conduct the activity with members of the class.	Rubric II - 16 points possible
4	Work with a small group to create a Comic Times presentation on a soft skill that will be required of future workers and present the finished product to the class.	Rubric III - 20 points possible
5	Create an instructional unit to teach currently required soft skills to students who will be enrolled in your classes. The unit to include:	Rubric IV - 24 points possible.

#	Description	Evaluation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ a description of the skills</li> <li>○ a means for making the students aware of the importance of possessing these skills and the relevance to their future jobs</li> <li>○ a description of the instructional best practices that will be used to teach the skills including all instructional materials that will be used</li> <li>○ a description of motivational practices that will be used during the unit</li> <li>○ a description of how students will apply these skills in your class</li> <li>○ a description of how student mastery of these skills will be assessed.</li> </ul>	
6	<p>Conduct research on a soft skill that is likely to be required of future employees in you training area. Create an instructional unit to teach one of these skills to students who will be enrolled in your classes. The unit to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ a description of the skills</li> <li>○ a means for making the students aware of the importance of possessing these skills and the relevance to their future jobs</li> <li>○ a description of the instructional best practices that will be used to teach the skills including all instructional materials that will be used</li> <li>○ a description of motivational practices that will be used during the unit</li> <li>○ a description of how students will apply these skills in your class</li> <li>○ a description of how student mastery of these skills will be assessed</li> </ul>	Rubric IV - 24 points possible.

## 8. Evaluation and Grading Procedures

### Aurora University College of Education Graduate Grading System

The graduate grading system was reviewed by Deans' Council and forwarded to the Academic Standards Committee for deliberations. This was approved by the Academic Standards Committee as of 5 May 1992 for presentation to the Faculty Senate on 12 May 1992.

At the end of the course, letter grades are awarded as defined:

A (4 quality points per course unit) Excellent. Denoted work that is consistently at the highest level of achievement in a graduate college or university course.

B (3 quality points per course unit) Good. Denotes work that consistently meets the high level of college or university standards for academic performance in a graduate college or university course.

C (2 quality points per course unit) The lowest passing grade. Denotes work that does not meet in all respects college or university standards for academic performance in a course.

F (0 quality points per course unit) Failure. Denotes work that fails to meet the graduate college or university standards for academic performance in a course.

Revised 5 May 1992

Approved 12 May 1992

Grading will be based on quality of work with components weighted as follows. Grades are differentiated on the basis of quality. Quantity alone is not a significant factor for grade differentiation.

		<b>Grading Scale</b>	
<u>Assignment 1</u>	<u>12 points</u>		
<u>Assignment 2</u>	<u>16 points</u>		
<u>Assignment 3</u>	<u>16 points</u>	132 - 118	A
<u>Assignment 4</u>	<u>20 points</u>	117 - 105	B
<u>Assignment 5</u>	<u>24 points</u>	104 - 92	C
<u>Assignment 6</u>	<u>24 points</u>	92 -	F
<u>Class participation</u>	<u>20 points</u>		
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>132 points</u></b>		

**Rubric I - Assignment 1**

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
<b>Identifies Key Concepts in Text</b>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the text by identifying all key concepts described in the text	Demonstrates competent understanding of the text by identifying most key concepts described in the text	Demonstrates satisfactory understanding of the text by identifying some key concepts described in the text	Demonstrates limited understanding of the text by identifying a few key concepts described in the text
<b>Summarizing skills</b>	Demonstrates thorough understanding of the text by summarizing important ideas and citing supporting details.	Demonstrates competent understanding of the text by summarizing important ideas and citing supporting details.	Demonstrates satisfactory understanding of a variety of texts by summarizing important ideas and citing supporting details	Demonstrates limited understanding of a variety of texts by summarizing important ideas and citing supporting details
<b>Draws connections</b>	Demonstrates thorough understanding of text by connecting ideas with other sources.	Capably demonstrates understanding of text by connecting ideas with other sources,	With some clarity, demonstrates understanding of text by connecting the ideas with other sources.	Attempts to extend understanding of text by connecting ideas with other sources.

**Total points \_\_\_/12**

## Rubric II - Assignments 2 & 3

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Level of Participation	participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;	participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;	generally participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;	rarely participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;
Listening	listens respectfully and seeks clarification when others talk;	listens respectfully when others talk;	listens when others talk;	does not listen when others talk; disrupts the class group with private conversations;
Presentation Content	Content is presented and is accurate. All ideas are supported by details.	Most content is presented and is accurate. Most ideas are supported by details.	Some content is presented and is accurate. Some ideas are supported by details.	Little content is presented or is not accurate. Few ideas are supported by details.
Organization of Presentation	Material is presented in a very well organized Manner.	Material is presented in a well organized manner.	Material is presented in a way that is somewhat organized	Material is presented in an unorganized manner.

**Total Points** \_\_\_\_/16

### Rubric III - Assignment 4

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Level of Participation	participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;	participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;	generally participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;	rarely participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions;
Listening	listens respectfully and seeks clarification when others talk;	listens respectfully when others talk;	listens when others talk;	does not listen when others talk; disrupts the class group with private conversations;
Presentation Content	Content is presented and is accurate. All ideas are supported by details.	Most content is presented and is accurate. Most ideas are supported by details.	Some content is presented and is accurate. Some ideas are supported by details.	Little content is presented or is not accurate. Few ideas are supported by details.
Organization of Presentation	Material is presented in a very well organized Manner.	Material is presented in a well organized manner.	Material is presented in a way that is somewhat organized	Material is presented in an unorganized manner.
Use of Media	Media is used very effectively. Scenes are very well staged and appropriate.	Media is used effectively. Scenes are well staged and appropriate.	Media is used somewhat effectively. Scenes are staged and appropriate.	Media is not used effectively. Scenes are not well staged and/or not appropriate.

**Total Points** \_\_\_\_/20

### Rubric IV – Assignments 5 & 6

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Description of skill	The skill to be taught is very clearly identified and described	The skill to be taught is clearly identified and described	The skill to be taught is somewhat clearly identified and described	The skill to be taught is not clearly identified or described
Importance of skill	The reason that the skill is being taught is made very clear to the student	The reason that the skill is being taught is made clear to the student	The reason that the skill is being taught is made somewhat clear to the student	The reason that the skill is being taught is not made clear to the student
Instructional Activities	Instructional activities always follow accepted best practices	Instructional activities usually follow accepted best practices	Instructional activities sometimes follow accepted best practices	Instructional activities do not follow accepted best practices
Motivational strategies	Highly effective motivational strategies are embedded in all parts of the unit.	Highly effective motivational strategies are embedded in most parts of the unit.	Highly effective motivational strategies are embedded in some parts of the unit.	Effective motivational strategies are not embedded in the unit.
Application of Skill	The instructional unit includes frequent and distributed practice of the skill	The instructional unit includes occasional and distributed practice of the skill	The instructional unit includes some practice of the skill	The instructional unit does not include practice of the skill
Assessment	Several means to effectively assess students'	A means to effectively assess students' acquisition	A means to assess students' acquisition of the skill is	A means to assess students' acquisition of the skill is

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
	acquisition of the skill are included.	of the skill is included.	included.	not included.

**Total Points** \_\_\_/24

### **Rubric V – Class participation**

4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Is always prompt and in regular attendant; participates actively and regularly in class by offering ideas and asking questions. Always listens when others talk.	Is usually prompt and in regular attendant; participates actively and regularly in class by offering ideas and asking questions. Usually listens when others talk.	Generally participates in class by offering ideas and asking questions; makes fair contributions to class; listens when others talk.	Minimal participation in class by offering ideas and asking questions; occasionally listens when others talk, disrupts the class with private conversations:

**Total Points - 4 per day, total of** \_\_\_/20.

### **9. Bibliography**

**Barwa, Robert S.** *Motivating the Reluctant Learner*. Accord Educational Services, Elgin Il, 2007.

[http://www.accordeducationalservices.com/Motivating\\_Students\\_Research.pdf](http://www.accordeducationalservices.com/Motivating_Students_Research.pdf)

**Friedman, Thomas L..** *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century*. NewYork: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.

**Pink, Daniel H.** *A Whole New Mind: Moving From the Information Age to the Conceptual Age*. New York: Penguin, 2005.

**Zakaria, Fareed.** *The Rise of the Rest*. Newsweek (151: 19). May 12, 2008.

### **10. Attendance Policy**

Because instruction in this class is highly interactive, and because most assignments are group oriented, students are expected to be in attendance for each class session. Failure to attend or excessive tardiness will result in the student earning fewer points for class participation and may have a negative impact on the student's course grade.

### **11. Academic Honesty and Integrity Statement**

Students are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity as students of Aurora University by doing their own work to the best of their ability. Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the student's receiving a zero for that test, assignment, or paper.

### **12. Final Examination**

The completion and presentation of Assignments 5 and 6 shall make up the final examination for this course.

### **13. American Disability Act Compliance**

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. Adaptations of teaching methods, class materials, including text and reading materials or testing, may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.