SYLLABUS

GNST-111: Pathways to Student Success

Date: 09/08/2014
UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Lee University is a Christian institution which offers liberal arts and professional education on both the baccalaureate and graduate levels through residential and distance programs. It seeks to provide education that integrates biblical truth as revealed in the Holy Scriptures with truth discovered through the study of arts and sciences and in the practice of various professions. A personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior is the controlling perspective from which the educational enterprise is carried out. The foundational purpose of all educational programs is to develop within the students knowledge, appreciation, understanding, ability and skills which will prepare them for responsible Christian living in a complex world.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course has a two-fold intent: 1) The course is an initial exploration into the role personal strengths play in the undergraduate experience of adult non-traditional and distance learners. Students are introduced to the Clifton Strengths Finder instrument and probe its implications for their academic journey and projected vocations. This reflective investigation serves as one means for an acute exploration of personal calling and career choices. 2) The course is to introduce the student to a variety of software programs, demonstrate the application for professional, educational, and personal use, and establish a comfort level in using computers in today’s society.

REQUIRED TEXT(S) AND/OR SUPPORTING RESOURCES

Clifton, Donald O. and Edward Anderson with Laurie Schreiner. StrengthsQuest: Discover and Develop Your Strengths in Academics, Career, and Beyond. (NY: Gallup Press), 2006.
ISBN: 9781595620118

You have two options for obtaining this text and online assessment access code:
1. Purchase an access code, which comes with e-book access, from Lee University's Center for Calling and Career. Email your request to ccc@leeuniversity.edu or call 423-614-8630.
2. Purchase a new text with a one-time access code to take the StrengthsFinder online assessment. Used texts do not provide a usable access code.

Cross, Terry L. Answering the Call in the Spirit. (Cleveland, TN: Lee University), 2007.
ISBN: 9781596843301

PREREQUISITE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:

None.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPECIFIC DAL COURSES AND PROGRAM(S)

General Education Core: Communication
COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course traverses two distinct pathways to student success. One essential pathway involves the understanding and application of a variety of computer software programs, which are important in today’s educational, personal, and professional contexts. The second pathway introduces students to a strengths-based philosophy with applications for academics, relationships, calling and career. The StrengthsFinder instrument is used to assess personal signature themes, which can then be examined and applied to one’s life and learning. Both of these pathways encourage students to begin their educational journey with the tools and the mindset toward a successful educational experience.

General Learning Objectives (Course Goals):
This course seeks to:
• Introduce computer programs Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Internet Explorer using a Windows format.
• Explore a strengths-based approach to education.
• Interpret the StrengthsFinder assessment results as a way of understanding personal strengths.
• Assist students in connecting and applying strengths to academic success.
• Contextualize the discussion of strengths for this specific Christian Liberal Arts context.
• Understand strengths in relation to calling and career.

Specific Behavioral Objectives (Learning Outcomes):
As a result of the activities and study in this course, the student should be able to:
• Use Word to create flyers, schedules, bulletins, and format papers.
• Use Excel to prepare spreadsheets.
• Use PowerPoint to create presentations.
• Use the Internet to locate designated resources.
• Identify the biblical underpinnings of the Lee University mission statement.
• Define the concept of a ‘strengths-based approach’ to education.
• Define the Greek term, poiema, with an appreciation for the intentionality of God’s work.
• Offer reflective insights gained from an exploration of strengths.
• Connect the development of personal strengths to success in the educational journey.
• Articulate a general understanding of Critical Thinking using Bloom’s Taxonomy.
• Express an understanding of the integration of faith and learning.
• Project an integration of strengths with a possible or chosen major/career/calling.

MAJOR TOPICS

A. Computer Software Applications
   1. Word
   2. Excel
   3. PowerPoint
   4. Internet
B. Strengths-based Education
   1. The Lee University Mission Statement
   2. Poema: God’s work of art
   3. An introduction to a strengths-based education

C. The Clifton StrengthsFinder Instrument
   1. Your top five signature themes
   2. Affirmation of themes
   3. Insights from signature themes

D. Strengths and Your Academic Journey
   1. Development of Strengths
   2. Strengths and Academic Success
   3. Developing Your Strengths in College
   4. Applying Your Strengths in College

E. Calling & Career Planning
   1. Critical Thinking & Course Planning
   2. Taking Responsibility for Your Education
   3. Developing Leadership Strengths
   4. Strengths & Career/Vocational Choices

### COURSE ASSESSMENTS

A. **Text/Media.** All text/media is evaluated in the threaded discussions and assignments.

B. **Threaded Discussions.** The threaded discussions are an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge of the course material and interact with fellow students. Just doing an initial post and/or response will not guarantee any point value. Discussions will be evaluated as follows: a) on the depth of engagement with the discussion topic and/or issue; b) on the depth of understanding of the topic and/or issue; and c) on the depth of interaction with the other students. An initial post is required (evaluation of “a” and “b” above) and then response posts interacting to other students’ initial posts (evaluation of “c” above). Once the discussion deadline is reached, there will be no further opportunity to attain points for that discussion. If you have further questions on how these are evaluated, please contact your instructor. Once the discussion is closed, there will be no further opportunity to earn points for it. Instructions for the discussion is provided in the assignment.

C. **Unit Assignments (Exercises).** These are provided to assist in your learning process for both the computer applications assignments and the strengths papers. The exercises are not graded, and do not have to be submitted.

D. **Unit Assignments (Application).** To demonstrate your understanding of the various software programs, you will complete assignments using Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and the Internet. Each assignment will be explained in detail.

E. **Unit Assignments (Papers).** You are required to write three personal applications papers (4-5 pages each) related to your StrengthsFinder results. Each paper will be explained in detail in the assignment.
EVALUATION

A. Threaded Discussions  
B. Unit Assignments

GRADING SCALE

The standardized grading scale provides a uniform foundation from which to assess your performance.

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality Points per Credit</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>4.0</td>
<td>930 - 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>900 - 929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>870 - 899</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<td>830 – 869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>800 – 829</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>770 – 799</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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</table>

LETTER GRADE EQUIVALENCIES

A = Clearly stands out as excellent performance. Has unusually sharp insights into material and initiates thoughtful questions. Sees many sides of an issue. Articulates well and writes logically and clearly. Integrates ideas previously learned from this and other disciplines. Anticipates next steps in progression of ideas. Example "A" work should be of such nature that it could be put on reserve for all cohort members to review and emulate. The "A" cohort member is, in fact, an example for others to follow.

B = Demonstrates a solid comprehension of the subject matter and always accomplishes all course requirements. Serves as an active participant and listener. Communicates orally and in writing at an acceptable level for a cohort member. Work shows intuition and creativity. Example "B" work indicates good quality of performance and is given in recognition for solid work; a "B" should be considered a good grade and awarded to those who submit assignments of quality less than the exemplary work described above.
C = Quality and quantity of work in and out of class is average. Has average comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at least minimally.

D = Quality and quantity of work is below average. Has marginal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at below acceptable levels.

F = Quality and quantity of work is unacceptable and does not qualify the student to progress to a more advanced level of work.

**UNIT AND TIME DISTRIBUTION**

The time to complete each unit is approximately 17 hours per week on average for a three hour course. Actual assignment completion times will vary. A more detailed breakdown of each assignment can be found within the course.

**POLICIES**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

To stay in compliance with federal regulations as well as our regional accrediting agency, Lee University is required to maintain accurate attendance records in all courses. Online courses are no different from classroom courses in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner. Student "attendance" in online courses will be defined as active participation in the course as described in each course syllabus.

Online courses will have weekly mechanisms for student participation which can be documented by submission/completion of assignments, participation in threaded discussions, and/or specific communication with the instructor as outlined within the syllabus. A student is reported present for a Unit if at least one submission of the outlined assignments made during that Unit.

Under emergency circumstances, a student may be allowed two (2) absences in an eight (8) unit/week course. The student is responsible for notifying the faculty with regard to the absence.

According to university policy, if a student exceeds the allowed absences, a grade reduction can be made not to exceed one letter grade per term based on absence alone.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY/INFORMATION**

Cheating is defined as the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials or receiving unauthorized assistance or communication during any academic exercise.

Examples of cheating include:
- Submitting work for academic evaluation that is not the your own.
- Receiving assistance from another person during an examination.
• Using prepared notes or materials during an examination.
• Permitting another student to copy your work.
• Plagiarism.
• Falsification.
• Other misrepresentations of academic achievement submitted for evaluation or a grade.

As stated in the LEE UNIVERSITY Catalog, plagiarism is presenting as your own work the words, ideas, opinions, theories, or thoughts which are not common knowledge. Students who present others’ words or ideas as their own without fair attribution (documentation) are guilty of plagiarizing. Unfair attribution includes, but is not limited to, a direct quotation of all or part of another’s words without appropriately identifying the source. It is also unfair attribution to have included a source within a Works Cited page without having carefully cited the source within the text of the document. Plagiarism also includes, but is not limited to, the following acts when performed without fair attribution:
   a. directly quoting all or part of another person’s words without quotation marks, as appropriate to the discipline.
   b. paraphrasing all or part of another person’s words without documentation.
   c. stating an idea, theory, or formula as your own when it actually originated with another person.
   d. purchasing (or receiving in any other manner) a term paper or other assignment, which is the work of another person, and submitting that work as if it were one’s own.

LATE POLICY

• No credit is available for postings of any kind made in the Threaded Discussions after a given Unit ends.
• If your faculty approves your submission of late assignments, each assignment score will be penalized 10% per day up to five days late. After the fifth day, late assignments will not be accepted. (Note: An assignment is a paper, a project, a team presentation, etc., not a discussion)
• No late assignments will be accepted after the close of the final Unit.

EXPECTATIONS

FACULTY EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

• Have consistent access to a computer and possess baseline computer and information skills prior to taking online courses.
• Log into their courses within 24 hours of the beginning of the session to confirm their participation. (Students who register after the session has begun will be responsible for any assignments or material already covered.)
• Take an active role in each class, participating fully in class discussions, assignments and other activities throughout the entire session. If some event interferes with that participation, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor in advance.
• Review the course syllabus and other preliminary course materials thoroughly as early as possible during the first few days of class.
• Be responsible for raising any questions or seeking clarification about these materials, if necessary, within the first week of the session.
• Frequently check the course calendar for due dates.
• Submit assignments and papers on time, and take tests by the posted dates. Acceptance of late work and any penalties for late submissions are up to the discretion of the instructor, based on the expectations outlined in the course syllabus.
• Contribute meaningful, timely comments to online discussions according to guidelines provided.
• Contribute substantively to group assignments (if required in course).
• Check for University announcements each time you log onto the LMS. These postings are critical.
• Complete the "Student Survey of Instruction" for each class to evaluate the instructor and the course.

STUDENTS’ EXPECTATIONS OF FACULTY

• The opportunity to be active participants in a stimulating and challenging education that is global in scope, interactive in process and diverse in content and approach.
• A friendly, respectful, open, and encouraging learning environment.
• A course outline or syllabus that clearly provides information regarding course content, teaching methods, course objectives, grading, attendance/participation policies, due dates, and student assessment guidelines.
• Instructors who are responsive and available to discuss within 48 hours students' progress, course content, assignments, etc. at mutually convenient times from the first day of the term through the last day of the term. (Check the faculty contact information regarding weekends and holidays.)
• Individual instructor’s contact information, schedules, availability, and procedural details are located within the course.
• To have access to instructor feedback and grading on projects, exams, papers, quizzes, etc., within seven (7) days of assignment due date so students are able to determine where they have made errors or need additional work.
• Final grade/feedback provided within seven (7) days after the last date of class.

IMPORTANT STUDENT INFORMATION

SPECIAL NEEDS

Lee University is committed to the provision of reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, as defined in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students who think they may qualify for these accommodations should contact the Office of Academic Support to set up accommodations.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

KNOWLEDGE BASE/WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY (READING LIST)

http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/publications/sermons/670409.000_The_Three_Dimensions_of_a_Complete_Life.htm