Course Syllabus - BCT 494 - Spring, 2013

Senior Integrative Experience

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TEXT & MATERIALS:

Essential Elements of a Good Business Plan. 2011. US Small Business Administration,

Online Readings

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Senior BCT students will explore their own perspectives on professional careers in Building and Construction Technology. They will collaborate in four-person teams to fully develop a business plan for a product/service of their choosing. They will assess their current skill sets and compare those to what is required for success in the business endeavor. They will learn the business planning process. Each week a different business professional meets with students in this class to discuss careers in the industry. Often, the speakers are potential employers who are accepting resumes. Some speakers will schedule interviews for internships and full-time job placement.

REQUIREMENTS: BCT Seniors Only, or by Permission of Instructor

CREDITS: Three

GENED INTEGRATIVE EXPERIENCE COURSE

SCHEDULE NO: Section 1:

MEETS: MWF 12:20-1:10PM, Holdsworth 305 (M & W) , Goodell 608 TBL Classroom on FRIDAYS

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide students an opportunity to reflect on the totality of their academic experiences and relate those with respect to career opportunities in Building and Construction Technology.
2. Through the Business Plan term project they will build on and integrate their general education and BCT major specific classes producing a comprehensive and interdisciplinary plan.
3. The term project will enhance group collaborative skills as applied to a feasible business plan.
4. Leadership, strategic thinking, decision-making and problem solving skills are honed through both the individual written papers, and the group term project.
5. Providing a structured context for students to reflect on and to integrate their learning and experience from the broad exposure in their General Education courses and the focus in their major

SPECIAL NEEDS:
All reasonable efforts will be made to meet the individual needs of the student. If you have a learning disability or need special accommodation please contact the instructor to discuss your needs. All discussions will be strictly confidential.

**COURSE WORK AND EXPECTATIONS:**
Class will be organized by Week with a different approach applied on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

- **Mondays:** Lecture – Theory and practice of writing a business plan will be delivered and discussed.
- **Wednesdays:** Guest Lectures – Students learn to write cover letters, create resumes, develop relevant interviewing skills and meet industry leaders. Each week a different business professional meets with students in this class to discuss careers in the industry. Often, the speakers are potential employers who are accepting resumes. Some speakers will schedule interviews for internships and full-time job placement.
- **Fridays:** Group Work/Discussion Section – Students will work together in their term project groups with the opportunity for individual instruction/analysis/discussion with Instructor and/or Teaching Assistant(s).
- **Forum/Discussion (Moodle)** – Each student will be asked to contribute their own thoughts and ideas regarding the discussion topic 50-100 words. Discussion topics will be tied to the Monday lecture topics and designed to stimulate higher level thinking on the topic.

**Business Plan Term Project**

**Learning Objectives:**
- Enhance oral and written communication skills.
- Enhance group/team collaboration skills.
- Practice interdisciplinary and critical thinking skills through multiple perspectives: community, economic/financial, marketing, and competitive analysis.

Teams of 4 students will be formed to develop a business plan, of their choosing, over the course of the semester. Based on their individual Large Written Reflection, students with similar interests and motivations will be grouped. Business strategic planning, and analyses will be presented in the Monday lectures. Topical Forum/Discussions (Moodle) will be assigned to stimulate deeper thinking and diverse perspectives in each topical area.

**Deliverable 1: Project Proposal (20% of Term Project Grade) – Week 3**
Proposal (3+ Pages) will include:
- Business Name
- Description of Product/Service
- Description of Market Need
- Description of Target Market/Customer
- Mini SWOT (Internal Strengths/Weaknesses, External Opportunities/Threats)
- PPT Presentation (5-10 slides describing above)

**Project Examples:**
- **Design Services:** Engineered Wood Design of Trusses, Floor Systems, Wall Systems, or Whole House Design
- **Construction Project Management:** Residential New construction (custom, or production), Commercial construction, Repair and Remodeling, Subcontractor
- **Supply Chain Provider:** Wholesale distributor, Retail materials

**Deliverable 2: Full Business Plan (80% of Term Project Grade) – Week 14**
To include the following fully-developed sections:
- Executive Summary
- Market Analysis
- Company Description
- Organization and Management
Large Written Reflection

In their in-take process upon joining the BCT major, and throughout their academic career as BCT majors, students have: been exposed to, developed skills in, and been asked to critically assess their strengths and weaknesses with respect to the following learning objectives.

Objective 1: Specify materials, methods, and building/structural systems common to residential and commercial construction projects.

Objective 2: Evaluate and specify building energy systems and materials with respect to their ecological impact and their contribution to sustainable design.

Objective 3: Understand physical, mechanical and environmental attributes of wood construction

Objective 4: Analyze, estimate and communicate building project requirements using a thorough knowledge of blueprint specifications, contractual documents, CAD (Computer-Aided Design) and BIM (Building Information Modeling).

Objective 5: Apply a breadth of management and communication skills and an understanding of key business aspects of design, construction and materials supply industries.

Objective 6: Contribute responsibly to a sustainable built environment.

In a 5 page (1,250 word) double-spaced paper. Covering all 6 of the learning objectives above students are asked to:

1) Reflect on how their own knowledge and understanding in that area have advanced over the 4 years of their Undergraduate Education based on their:
   a. academic experiences within the BCT major,
   b. GenEd and other academic experiences not in the BCT major
   c. and non-academic experiences.

2) Assess their individual strengths and weaknesses in this area and indicate whether they would be interested in pursuing a career path that required those skill sets.

3) Lastly they should provide a position title and position description for the "entry level dream job" they would like to pursue upon graduation.

Written Reflective Assignments (10)

For approximately 10 weeks of the semester students will be asked to attend a Guest Lecture from a practitioner in the Building and Construction Industry. These guest speakers will present their firm, what they do, their own personal career history, and current and future career opportunities with their firm.

Each week, after the presentation, students will be required to compose a 1 page (250 word) essay describing:

1) How do their own academic, GenEd and within major experiences, prepare them for a career with this firm?

2) Reflecting on their self-estimate of relevant skill sets, and their own personal goals for career fulfillment, how interested would they be in pursuing a position opening with that firm. What are their own strengths and weaknesses with respect to that potential opportunity?

GRADING AND EVALUATION:
Students are expected to have read the text and online material prior to class. Students are required to participate in class discussions.

The concepts and techniques being studied will be presented in textbook and online readings, video, PPT lectures, exercises, and discussions. Real world problems and examples will frequently be used to tie theory with practical issues in the design and construction industries.

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<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Large Written Reflection</td>
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<td>Written Reflective Assignments (10 Essays)</td>
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<td>Wednesday- Guest Speaker Attendance</td>
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<td>Discussions (Moodle)</td>
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<td>Business Plan Group Term Project</td>
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**Grade Range**

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**ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

The University requires honesty of all its members in their academic work. Honesty is necessary to the learning process, and is integral to the atmosphere of genuine inquiry and intellectual curiosity which the University seeks to foster. Academic dishonesty not only contradicts the expectations of a community whose central purpose is the pursuit of intellectual endeavor, it violates University rules and regulations, a fact of which all students must be aware. For a more complete definition visit the University Academic Honesty page.