Strategies for Academic Success
170:055-02 – Mondays 3:00 – 4:50 p.m.
ITTC 28
Fall 2008

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor

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Text and Materials

Downing, Skip (2008). On Course, 5th edition, Houghton Mifflin Company
University of Northern Iowa 2008-2010 Catalog
Fall 2008 Schedule of Classes

MISSION STATEMENT

The University of Northern Iowa Jump Start Program will assist incoming students in making a smooth transition to the University, acquaint them with campus life, and provide supportive services designed to retain and graduate the participants.

2008 Jump Start Motto

*"Do what you **have** to do so that you can do what you **want** to do."*
--The Great Debaters, 2007

Purpose of the Course

This course is designed to help you create greater success in college, and in life. In the coming weeks, you will learn many strategies for creating greater academic, professional, and personal success. We will use guided journal writings to explore these strategies, and as a bonus, you will learn to express yourself more effectively in writing. If you make the most of this experience, you will change the outcome of your life – for the better.

In this course, you will learn how to:

1. **Take charge of your life.** You will learn how to take greater personal responsibility, gaining more control over the outcomes that you create both in college, and in life.
2. **Discover self-motivation.** You will learn to create greater inner motivation by discovering your own personally meaningful goals and dreams.
3. **Improve self-management.** You will learn numerous strategies for taking control of your time and energy, allowing you to move more effectively and efficiently toward the accomplishment of your goals and dreams.
4. **Develop interdependence.** You will learn how to develop mutually supportive relationships with people who will help you achieve your goals and dreams as you assist them to achieve theirs.
5. **Increase self-awareness.** You will learn how to understand and revise your self-defeating patterns of behavior, thought, and emotions as well as your unconscious limiting beliefs.
6. **Maximize your learning.** You will discover the natural process of effective learning and understand how to apply that process according to your individual learning style preference. This knowledge will enable you not only to get better grades in college, but also to be a more effective lifelong learner.
7. **Develop emotional intelligence.** You will learn effective strategies for managing your emotional life, decreasing distress while increasing your inner sense of well-being.
8. **Raise your self-esteem.** You will learn how to develop self-acceptance, self-confidence, self-respect, self-love, and unconditional self-worth.
9. **Write more effectively.** You will learn how to improve your writing skills through the extensive writing practice offered by your guided journal entries.
10. **Improve creative and critical thinking skills.** You will learn how to enhance the thinking skills essential for analyzing and solving problems in your academic and personal lives.
11. **Master effective study skills.** You will learn how to raise your grades by improving essential skills like reading, note taking, memorizing, studying, and test taking.
12. **Work effectively within the University system.** You will learn how to complete an academic plan, register for classes, and access important campus resources and opportunities. Additionally, you will become familiar with the academic requirements and responsibilities of UNI college students (i.e., calculating and projecting grade point averages, satisfactory progress, academic standing, etc.).

Methods

Through this course, you will learn a variety of empowering strategies that have helped others create great success. By completing the various assessments given during Jump Start week, you (and I) will learn more about your needs, interests, and abilities. By writing selected journal entries from the text, you'll discover how to apply these success strategies to achieve your own goals and dreams. By participating in class activities and focused conversations. The course activities will culminate into a final a

project which will further improve your ability to stay on course to your success. Once you make these new strategies your own through application, you'll have the ability to dramatically improve the outcome of your life.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in class. Tardiness and absenteeism impact negatively on a student's ability to do well in class. Three tardies will count as one (1) unexcused absence. Twenty-five (25) points will be deducted from the final semester point total for each unexcused absence beyond two. Absence for an official University activity will be excused provided written verification is submitted prior to the event on appropriate UNI letterhead. Missing one-fourth (1/4) of the total number of class meetings without a written medical excuse from a doctor or a documented emergency will result in failing the course regardless of the total points acquired.

REPORTING A CLASS ABSENCE

Students needing to miss a class meeting due to illness, etc. must contact me prior to the absence. In cases where it is not possible to contact me prior to the absence, I must be contacted within 24 hours of the class meeting. Failure to contact me before the absence or within 24 hours of the absence will result in an unexcused absence.

Respect and common courtesy are expected of all students throughout the class sessions. To build trust, information of a personal nature that is shared in class by the instructor or students will remain confidential. Throughout each class meeting, students are expected to:

a. Be on time to class
b. Exhibit a positive attitude
c. Be attentive and listen while others are talking
d. Be prepared to class
e. Actively participate in class discussions and activities
f. Ask relevant questions
g. Offer encouragement and support to classmates
h. Be committed to your own success

At the end of each class meeting, you are to leave the classroom in the same condition than when you arrived. This includes pushing in chairs and throwing paper, food, pop cans, etc. in the trash container.

Weekly Readings/Topics

August 25, 2008	First day of class – Questions & Answers Assignment – Chapter 1 and Self-Assessment
September 1, 2008	No class – Labor Day Holiday
September 8, 2008	Career Fair Preparation and Assignment Will Keim video – "Welcome to the Time of Your Life"
September 15, 2008	Attend UNI Career Fair Attendance taken at McLeod Center Lobby
September 22, 2008	Chapter 1 Review Introduction to Calculating Grade Point Averages Read Chapter 2 – "Accepting Personal Responsibility"
September 29, 2008	Chapter 2 Discussion and Quiz Learning College Vocabulary -- Handout
October 6, 2008	Chapter 3 – "Discovering Self-Motivation" Effective Reading, Writing, and Notetaking
October 13, 2008	Chapter 4 – "Mastering Self-Management" Determining Grade Point Average
October 20, 2008	Chapter 5 – "Employing Interdependence" Time Management
October 27, 2008	Understanding Registration Tools: • Liberal Arts Core Requirements • Major Worksheets • Degree Audit
November 3, 2008	In-class work day on Plan of Study Assignment
November 10, 2008	Plan of Study Assignment Due
November 17, 2008	Chapter 6 – "Gaining Self-Awareness" Effective Test Taking
November 24, 2008	No Class – Thanksgiving Vacation
December 1, 2008	Chapter 7 – "Adopting Lifelong Learning" Effective Memorizing
December 8, 2008	Chapter 8 – "Developing Emotional Intelligence" Effective Money Management
December 17, 2008	Final Exam – 3:00 p.m.

Course Grades

A range = 540-600
B range = 480-539
C range = 420-479
D range = 360-419
F = 359 or below

Graded Projects

10 Quizzes (5 points each)	50
11 Success Journals (5 points each)	55
9 Focus Questions (10 points each)	45
5 Semester Assignments	50
1 Plan of Study Assignment	50
1 Final Exam/Project	100
20 Study Table Hours	100
Career Fair Assignment	50
Attendance/Positive Participation	100
Total Possible Points	600

Each of these three components of your grade is explained below:

Quizzes (50 possible points)

This is a course for students who wish to be successful in college and in life. One of the most important factors of success in any endeavor is consistent and active participation. To encourage and reward your preparation for active participation at every class quizzes will be given on the readings. If you have read the assignment and completed your journal entry, you should have no trouble earning the maximum points (5) for each quiz. Missed quizzes may not be made up.

Success Journals (55 possible points)

Your SUCCESS JOURNAL provides an opportunity to explore your thoughts and feelings as you experiment with the success strategies presented in On Course. By carefully examining each strategy in your journal, you will discover which ones will assist you in creating a rich, personally fulfilling life. Although I will be collecting your journals and looking through them, write your journal for yourself, not for me.

Journal Writings: During this semester, you will write eleven (11) journal entries from the textbook. These entries, for the most part, will be written outside of class. Additionally, you may be asked to write occasional lettered journal entries based on class exercises. These entries will be written in class. Therefore, bring your textbook and journal to every class.

Journal Evaluations: I will collect your journals on a random basis and return them at the next class. I will look through your journal to verify the completion of each assignment and to give credit for a job well done. I read the journal entries to get a sense of the issues you are working on. With this knowledge, I can be of greater assistance to you this semester. I may also comment on specific parts of your journal, but if you desire a response about a specific part of your journal, please note that at the top of your journal.

Journal Points: Each journal entry will be awarded up to 5 points. Thus, all eleven (11) journal entries will be worth a possible total of 55 points. A journal entry will be awarded the maximum of 5 points if it fulfills the following two criteria:

1. The entry is complete (all steps in the directions have been responded to), and
2. The entry is written with an obvious attempt being made to "dive deep". See the back of your textbook for the explanation of "dive deep".

IMPORTANT NOTE: All 11 journal entries must be completed to earn a passing grade in the course.

Focus Questions (45 possible points)

For each chapter of the textbook, you will respond in writing to **one** of the focus questions listed in each section of a chapter. As with the journals, each entry will be awarded up to 5 points. The focus question will be awarded the maximum of 5 points if it fulfills the following two criteria:

2. The entry is complete and the question(s) answered fully and
3. The entry is written with high standards with an obvious attempt being made to "dive deep". See the back of your textbook for the explanation of "dive deep".

NOTE: Grammar, spelling, and punctuation **will be** factors in awarding points in the Journals and Focus Questions. Major grammatical errors will result in lower points. The intent is to concentrate on what you are writing – and how you are expressing yourself.

Semester Assignments (50 possible points)

Throughout the semester, 5-10 assignments will be given that will focus on specific topics we cover in class. Advance notice, written instruction, and due dates will be given to you as the assignments occur.

Plan of Study Assignment (50 possible points)

The Plan of Study assignment will also involve in-class work sessions later in the semester. The final product will be a 4-5 year plan of study based on a major of your choosing that can be used to guide you in class selection, career selection, as well as involvement in other related programs. More detailed information will be provided throughout the semester.

Final Exam/Project (100 possible points)

The final exam will be tailored to the events of the semester. It may be an exam, project, or combination of both. Advance notice will be given to students in preparation for the final exam/project.

Study Session Hours (100 possible points)

In keeping with the mission of Jump Start and this course, I am requiring that each student put in 20 hours of study session time during the Fall 2006 semester. While this may seem like a lot of hours to some, the planning and implementation of study session hours is an individual responsibility. Unless otherwise approved by your instructor, the study session hours are to be conducted between the hours of 8:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and/or 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Friday in 008 Innovative Teaching and Technology Center.

Career Fair Assignment (50 possible points)

The annual UNI Career Fair is scheduled for Monday, September 19, 2005, from 2-6 p.m. in the UNI-Dome. Our class will perform this activity at the Dome instead of meeting in Lang Hall this day. Specific information will be given in class on Monday, September 12, 2005.

Attendance/Positive Participation (100 possible points)

See the Attendance heading of the "Course Expectations and Responsibilities" section of this syllabus.