Syllabus
MDS 489 - Multidisciplinary Studies Capstone
Spring 2019

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Office Hours: M/W 12:00 – 1:30; T/TH 11:30 – 12:30 and by appointment
Class Day, Time, and Location: T/TH 1:00 – 2:15 PM, Armstrong 119

Required Texts – All readings will be posted to eCampus in PDF format.

MDS 489 has been designated as a SpeakWrite course by the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences. As part of the Eberly College's commitment to fostering effective communication skills, this course will:

- *Emphasize informal and formal modes of communication*
- *Teach discipline-specific communication techniques*
- *Use a process-based approach to learning that provides opportunities for feedback and revision*
- *Base a substantial portion of the final grade on successful spoken and/or written performance*

For more information about the SpeakWrite program, please visit SpeakWrite.wvu.edu.

Expected Learning Outcomes/Goals:

The MDS capstone is one of the few classes that enroll only MDS students. The class is designed to prepare students in the program to understand the methods and advantages of their multidisciplinary education. The course is essentially split into three parts, each part linked to the other two parts. In the first part, students will demonstrate the ability to formulate, research, and solve problems through critical thinking exercises and the formulation of an analytical essay. Secondly, students will prepare themselves for graduation from the program by developing post-graduate, career-oriented skills. Finally, the capstone bridges practical and academic knowledge, while stressing the integration of the students' three minors into a cohesive whole, through a community-based service-learning project. These parts, once integrated, represent the skills and knowledge needed to successfully transition from university to life after graduation.

1. **Knowledge**
   A. Broad-based knowledge of three discrete areas of study
   B. Understanding of synergistic advantage of multidisciplinary curriculum
2. **Skills**
   A. Ability to think critically in each of three disciplines
   B. Ability to partition and interpret information or events using the most appropriate discipline's toolset
   C. Ability to write a professional resume, conduct a job interview, and apply to graduate school
   D. Ability to research and write an interdisciplinary analytical essay
3. **Attitudes**
   A. Positive attitude towards civic action and engagement
   B. Develop a familiarity and understanding of non-profit organizations
4. **Integrative Learning**
   A. Ability to explain Multidisciplinary Studies and its advantages to others
   B. Ability to apply academic knowledge to real world problems

Course Policies:

1. Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class period. However, if a student must be absent, the course attendance policy is as follows:

Two absences- no penalty
Third absence- ½ letter will be deducted from a student's final grade.
Fifth absence -the student will be advised to withdraw from the class. If the student does not do so, he or she will receive an "F."

Because MDS is a workshop class, there are no exceptions to this policy. Also because of the importance of each meeting of the class, there is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences. It the student's responsibility to follow up on missed materials, etc. from absences.

Lateness: lateness is rude and disruptive to the rest of the class. It is also a terrible habit to develop for a student transitioning to the workforce, graduate school, or professional school. Therefore, **if a student comes in late or leaves early, he/she is absent.** Also, if a student leaves class for any period of time, this also counts as an absence.

2. Late Work

No late work will be accepted.

Assignments must be received at the beginning of the assigned class to receive credit.

No assignments will be accepted via e-mail without prior consent from your instructor.

If you must miss class, you are responsible for turning in your assignments in a timely manner to be determined by consulting with your instructor.

3. Writing Guidelines

This course is designed as a writing intensive capstone. Students should prepare for writing assignments throughout the semester. The following guidelines are to be followed:

- The assignments will be due in exactly the timeline specified in the syllabus to allow time for grading.
- Your writing will be examined for grammar, spelling, MLA formatting, and presentation.
- Unless otherwise specified, all "writing" will be typed and printed or turned in through TurnItIn, per the instructor's direction.
- All sources must be cited, using the proper MLA format.

Writing assignments—with the exception of the analytical reflections and the rough draft essay assignment—will go through the draft and revision process. Each assignment must first be submitted in rough-draft form for peer review. Every effort should be made to submit exemplary work in the rough drafts. Following peer review, the professor will make comments, provide you with a preliminary grade, and return the work. You may rewrite the professor-reviewed copy for a final grade. The grade you receive on the final draft will supersede the previous grade.

If you do not submit a rough draft for peer review, you may not submit a revised assignment.

4. Plagiarism, Citation of Sources, and Classroom Etiquette

Turning in work you have not done yourself is considered plagiarism and is a serious academic crime. We will discuss how to incorporate other's ideas into your own work through the use of citations, but for now be aware that taking something from another written source without crediting that source is plagiarism. In this course, the MINIMUM punishment for plagiarism is an "F" in the course and being reported to the Office of Student Affairs.

West Virginia University
Recommended Academic Integrity
Syllabus Statement

> The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at http://www.arc.wvu.edu/rightsc.html. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me *before* the assignment is due to discuss the matter.
> [adopted: 2-11-08]

There are a number of plagiarism modules available here: http://graduate.wvu.edu/current-students/resources/plagiarism-information. The MDS department recommends you participate by completing the tutorial.

5. A Note on this Course

As one focus of the course is professionalism, you must treat this course as you would a job—**a job you would like to keep**: attend lecture regularly, complete class readings, and turn in your assignments on time.

Courtesy towards the professor and your fellow students is expected.

Do not eat, sleep, read, text message, do homework, surf the internet, or engage in other multi-tasking and/or disruptive activities during class time. The instructor may decide not to permit laptops in the classroom. **Any overly disruptive behavior is grounds for administrative deletion from the course.**

When communicating with the instructor about this course via email, please use the following email:
Eric.Myers@mail.wvu.edu

Please read the file "Writing Professional Email" before sending email correspondence. This document is available to students enrolled in this course, 24/7, on the course eCampus site.

Emails that fail to adhere to the guidelines in "Writing Professional Email" will receive the following response:

"This email does not adhere to the guidelines in 'Writing Professional Email.' Please re-send your correspondence to reflect these guidelines. Thank you."

Note: Email is one of the most commonly used—and abused—forms of communication in the workforce. One of the most practical things you will learn in this course is how to compose a professional email.

6. Adverse Weather Commitment

In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use his or her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Safety should be the main concern. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, you should contact me as soon as possible. Similarly, if I am unable to reach our class location, I will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible, using your MIX email, to prevent you from embarking on any unnecessary travel. If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, I may make allowances relative to required attendance policies, as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments.

7. Campus Safety

WVU Police are committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Part of this mission includes educating the campus community on how to respond to potential campus threats, such as the threat of an active shooter on campus or other suspicious behaviors. Fortunately, WVU Police offer training – both online and in-person - on how to handle a variety of campus safety scenarios. All students are encouraged to visit the webpage (http://police.wvu.edu), in particular the content under the Active Shooter training program (http://police.wvu.edu/training/active-shooter). Students are also encouraged to report any suspicious behaviors on campus using the Report a Threat portion of the webpagehttp://police.wvu.edu/special-notices/threat-assessment.

Grading:

Service-Learning Group Project Assignments	Points
Turn in Student/Partner Organization Service-Learning Contract	20
1st Meeting with Service-Learning Coordinator	10
10 Hours of Service Completed	10
2nd Meeting with Service-Learning Coordinator	10
20 Hours of Service Completed	10
Service-Learning Group Presentations/Personal Reflection	100
Project Evaluation from Community Partner	240
Essay Assignments	
Review of Sources/Introduction/Outline (must be submitted to turn in a Rough Draft)	60
Rough Draft (must be submitted to turn in a Final Draft)	70
Final Draft	150
Professional Preparation Assignments	
Networking Basics	20
Resume/CV	60
Cover Letter/ Graduate School Assignment	60
Interview	80
Using Your Degree	
Analytical Reflections (3)	90
Understanding Your Minors	10
Total Points Possible	**1000**

Grading Scale:

A 900-1000 Points
B 800-899 Points
C 700-799 Points

In order to graduate you must obtain a C or above

D 600-699 Points
F 0-599 Points

MDS 489 Course Calendar—Subject to Change!

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS DUE/READINGS ASSIGNED
Week 1 1/8	Syllabus overview; Assignment explanations; Graduation (see end of syllabus);	Reading: "Writing Professional Email"
1/10	Interdisciplinary studies defined	Readings: "Interdisciplinary Studies Defined" by Repko, Szostak, and Buchberger
Week 2 1/15	Introduction to service-learning and service-learning projects	**Due: Analytical Reflection One on Service-Learning** Readings: "Does Service Learning Really Help" by Stephanie Strom; "Service Learning" from MDS Reader; "Service-Learning" by Furco **NOTE: Friday, January 16—Last day to Register, Add New Courses, Make Section Changes**
1/17	Service-learning project description and assignment details	
Week 3 1/22	Critical Thinking, Writing Skills, and Communicating	**Due: Understanding Your Minors** Readings: "Writing Well" from MDS Reader; "Writing Tips"; "Critical Thinking" article
1/24	A Case Study in Interdisciplinarity	**Due: Analytical Reflection Two on Interdisciplinarity** Reading: eCampus assignment
Week 4 1/29	Career Development: Selling Your Degree	Readings: "Find Opportunities" by Lindsay Pollack and "Late Bloomers" by Gladwell
1/31	Career Development: Resume/Cover Letter/ Grad School/Interviewing	**Due: Networking Basics; Service-Learning Contracts need submitted by Friday, February 1st** Readings: "Writing Cover Letters," "Resume Content," and "Resume Design" from MDS Reader
Week 5 2/5	Career Development: Landing the Job You Want	**Due: Analytical Reflection Three on Landing the Job; bring a job posting to class**
2/7	Career Development: Understanding the Lingo	**Due: Resume and Cover Letter or Grad School statement and resume** Readings: "Interviewing" from MDS Reader; "SOAR Interview Prep"
Week 6 2/12	Service-Learning Work Day – No Class	
2/14	Interviews – There is no class this day, but you should use this time to complete your interview.	
Week 7 2/19	Career Development: Interviewing for the Job	Readings: Review readings from 2/7
2/21	Synthesis of Career Development: What to Expect after Graduation	**Due: Interview Write-Up; First Meeting with Service-Learning Coordinator by Friday, February 22nd**
Week 8 2/26	Essay Development: Library Research; Proper Citation and Formatting; The Nature of Argument	Reading: "Plagiarism" from Purdue Owl
2/28	Essay Development: Library Research; Proper Citation and Formatting; The Nature of Argument	Readings: "Conducting Research" and "MLA Guide" from the Purdue Owl
Week 9 3/5	Essay Development: Review of Sources/Thesis Statement/Outline	Readings: "Thesis Statements," and "Invention: Starting the Writing Process" from the Purdue Owl

3/7	Essay Development: Review of Sources/Thesis Statement/Outline, cont.	**Due: 10 hours of service logged by Friday, March 8th** Reading: "Developing an Outline" from the Purdue Owl
Week 10 3/12 & 3/14	No Class – SPRING BREAK	
Week 11 3/19	Discussion and Peer-Review of Review of Sources/Thesis Statement/ Outline	**Due: Review of Sources/Thesis Statement/Outline** Readings: "Paragraphs" and "Proofreading" from the Purdue Owl; Review "Writing Well" (esp. revision)
3/21	In-Class Essay Development (bring a copy of what you have written to class)	**Due: Second Meeting with Service-Learning Coordinator by Friday, March 22nd**
Week 12 3/26	In-Class Essay Development (bring a copy of what you have written to class	
3/28	Discussion and Peer-review of Essays; Sign up for Student-Instructor Conference	**Due: Rough Draft of Essay**
Week 13 4/2 & 4/4	Student-Instructor Conferences on Essays	
Week 14 4/9	Public Speaking and Presentations	Reading: "Effective Presentation Skills" from MDS Reader **NOTE: Friday, March 22—Last Day to Drop a Class with a "W"**
4/11	Synthesize: What Have You Learned over the course of the semester	
Week 15 4/16	Service-Learning Day; Work on Essay	
4/18	Service-Learning Day; Work on Essay	**Due: Final Essay need submitted to my office by 4:00 PM on Friday, April 19th; All service-learning hours completed by Friday, April 19th**
Week 16 4/23	Final Service-Learning Presentations	**Due: Service-Learning Personal Reflection**
4/25	Final Service-Learning Presentations Student evaluations	**Due: Service-Learning Personal Reflection; Final Revisions**

Graduation:

May Graduation

Application Opens:	January 15, 2019
Application Deadline:	March 1, 2019
Degree Posting:	Mid to late May

How to Apply

You'll need to provide a mailing address for your diploma/certificate before you start the application process.

1. Go to the portal and click on the STAR Tab
2. Sign in using your username and password
3. Click on the link "Student Services and Housing"
4. Click "Student Records"
5. Click "Apply to graduate"

Near the end of the semester, you will be able to RSVP for the graduation ceremony at http://graduation.wvu.edu. The ceremony will take place on Sunday, May 12th.

Please note that applying for and participating in the graduation ceremony has nothing to do with the actual process of graduating and receiving a diploma.