SOUTHERN POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY

Course Syllabus For

HNRS 3102

Honors Peer Mentoring

Instructor
Nancy Reichert, Ph.D.

Office
D103

Office Hours
Mon. 8-9:30 a.m., 1 - 2 p.m.;
Tues. By appointment only;
Wed. 8 - 9:30 a.m. 1 - 2 p.m.,
Thurs. 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 – 1:45 p.m.;
Fri. 8 - 9:30 a.m., 1 – 2 p.m.
Please make appointments when possible.

Phone
Work: 678-915-3928
FAX: 678-915-3932
Home: 770-619-9336
E-mail: nreicher@spsu.edu
Website: http://educate.spsu.edu/nreicher/index.htm

Class Location and Time
Fall 2012, D138 M 12 – 12:50 p.m.

Course Description
This class is intended to help students develop mentoring and leadership skills within their major field, a field of interest or within a service program (Student Affairs, Housing, the ATTIC, and so on) at SPSU. Students can work with a professor, a department chair, a program director, or an administrator in Academic Affairs or in Student Services in roles that ask them to assist a student or a group of students. The class teaches students interpersonal skills as well as a variety of teaching methods and study skill methods. All skills taught will be used to assist students.

Credits
2 hours

Course Outcomes
After completing Honors 3102 the students should be able to:

1. Communicate ideas to mentees concerning program guidelines (whether an academic or service program) and/or study skills
2. Understand pedagogical ideas that impact the success of the mentor/mentee dynamic or of a small group.
3. Assist students individually or within groups in problem-solving as it relates to course material or program guidelines using critical and creative thinking skills.

Required Materials
The SPSU 1001, Honors Hitchhikers Guide to the SPSU Galaxy available at the bookstore.
A pocket folder for student log and reflections
Disabilities
Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the ATTIC at 678-915-7244 or 678-915-7361 as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

THE ATTIC
The ATTIC provides opportunities for individualized assistance/tutoring to all Southern Polytechnic students in core subjects such as Math, English, Physics, Biology Chemistry, and Computer Science. The ATTIC Services are located on the bottom floor of the Student Center. You can phone 678-915-7361 for additional information.

The General IT Lab: The Knowledge Commons, Library
The General IT Lab is located in the LIBRARY and is available for students who need access to computers and printers. Keep in mind that you do need to pay for printing.

Attendance Expectations
• Because the mentors’ dialogue and mentees’ dialogue is essential for this course, you are expected to attend all class meetings as well as to hold weekly peer mentoring meetings with your group.
• Students taking this course for service credit will lose an hour of service credit for every missed class and for every time you do not meet with your group.
• Students taking this course for academic credit will be allowed no more than two absences for the class and no more than one absence for a missed group meeting. I reserve the right to fail students who go beyond this number.

Honor Code
As a member of the Southern Polytechnic State University community of scholars and as a member of the University Honors Program, I understand that my actions are not only a reflection on myself, but also a reflection on the University and the larger body of scholars of which it is a part. Acting unethically, no matter how minor the offense, will be detrimental to my academic progress and self-image. It will also adversely affect all students, faculty, staff, the reputation of this University, and the value of the degrees it awards. I promise that I will not participate in any form of academic misconduct. I also understand that it is my responsibility to hold others to these same standards by addressing actions that deviate from the University-wide commitment to working, living, and learning in an environment conducive to a quality education.

I recognize that the following actions will result in a charge of academic misconduct and may result in dismissal from the University Honors Program.
• Collaboration or cheating on examinations will result in a grade of zero, a reduction in the course grade, and possibly other penalties including failure of the course, dismissal from the honors program, and dismissal from the University.
• Plagiarism, fabrication, or other academic misconduct will result in a grade of zero, a reduction in the course grade, and possibly other penalties, including failure of the course, dismissal from the honors program, and dismissal from the University.
• Any work submitted for credit must be completely the work of the individual student unless professors make it clear in writing in their syllabi that collaboration on homework or lab work is welcome.

Late Work
Students taking the class for academic credit and service credit are expected to turn in the assignments since they’re critical for reflection and for growing as a person and as a mentor. All work should be turned in on time. Late work will affect grades and service hours granted to students.

Evaluation
The following components make up your grade for this class:
• Participation and Discussion for class: 20%
• Log book concerning group meetings: 40%
• Participation in the creation of the honors guide for mentors book and poster session: 20%
• Final Reflection Paper: 20%

Assignments

Participation and Discussion for Class: 20%
I want you to know up front that I consider this class a discussion-based class. Discussion-based classes assume that inquiry is an important part of learning. In other words, they assume that some issues are important enough that we must question them, explore our assumptions about them, and arrive at our own understanding of these issues through talking and listening as well as through the more traditional means of reading and writing. Answers to difficult questions are often complex and ambiguous. Discussion will help us to explore these questions using critical and creative thinking skills with the understanding that there are no easy answers and no one right way to handle things.

Discussion is valuable to your learning for the following reasons:

• It increases your ability to learn more deeply. Talking, writing, listening, and reading about a subject help us to more thoroughly learn about a topic than if we listen, memorize, and regurgitate for an exam.
• It affirms that we are all involved in the creation of knowledge. Teachers and other authorities have informed opinions about their topics, but no one person ever knows everything there is to know about a topic. I’ve learned a lot by listening to my students in discussions.
• Discussion-based classes will help you, the student, to take authority and leadership within the classroom. These skills will benefit you outside of the classroom as well. The honors program privileges the building of leadership skills.

To earn credit for discussion follow all of the guidelines below:
1. Keep your absences to two absences for the semester for this class and only cancel your peer-group meetings when you have an emergency arise.
2. Students who are taking this class for service credit should ensure they log their class and mentoring hours in Orgysnc. They should fill out most of their log information and reflection through this site.
3. Be late no more than two times for the semester;
4. Be prepared for class. Complete your assignments before class, read your materials ahead of time for class, and bring the necessary materials to class.
5. Participate well in classroom activities such as discussions. Participating well means respectfully listening to your classmates and the professor and thoughtfully entering the dialogue among students and professor.

Log Book: 40%
In your log book you should do the following:
1. Give Date of meeting and list which students were in attendance.
2. Indicate where you met the students you are mentoring.
3. Indicate the total amount of time—ideally you should meet for at least 50 minutes.
4. Activities: we will run this class on the Complexity Model of Mentoring. I would like you to always begin with asking each student for his or her question (early on have the students introduce themselves before asking the question). Your next move is to get the opinions of the other students concerning the answers. You should then give your input. All questions that need an objective answer that you cannot give should then come to me and we should then also discuss the issue in our class meeting. For your log you want to always indicate the questions that were asked.
5. Since you always want to end with discussing the weekly assignments for the SPSU 1001 class, indicate that you did so and indicate any concerns that arose about the assignment.
6. You also want to note the behaviors of your students since you are trying to draw them out and engage them in the honors community. You can note any of the following:
   a. Which students seem outgoing—which seem withdrawn?
   b. How willing is each student to ask questions or to open up to you?
   c. Which students are enjoying meeting with you and which seem bored?
   d. What is the level of involvement for each student?
   e. Which students seemed the most cooperative and which seemed unwilling to cooperate?
7. Finally write a short note concerning your reaction to each meeting. Were you happy with how the meeting went? Why or why not? What else could you do to create more interaction with your group?

Guide Book: 20%
As you can see I have already put some thought into how I would like the mentoring to go. However, I know that you all will get insight into what could also be done through the research I’ll ask you to do and through your experience as a mentor. The guide book we will create will cover information that can be used for next year’s mentors. Active participation in researching and writing the guide as well as active participation in creating the poster and presenting it are crucial for this grade.

Reflection Paper: 20%
For the reflection paper you will want to cover the following:
• Before you began to mentor your students, what were your goals for your mentoring sessions? What did you hope would happen by the end of the semester?
• Read through your log and mark meetings that were productive and write about why these session were productive. What happened to make them productive?
• Read through your log and mark meetings that seemed unproductive. What do you think happened here?
• Reflect on your notes about the students themselves. Which students seemed to benefit most from these meetings and which seemed to benefit least? Why do you think this is the case?
• What happened while mentoring that made doing so a challenge?
• Reflect on what you learned about yourself while mentoring. Was it harder or easier to mentor than you thought it would be? How hard did you have to work to engage the students?
• What would you do differently if you were to mentor a new small group?

PROPOSED CALENDAR
Week One, August 15 - 17
During Class: No class.

Week Two, August 20 – 24 (Monday, end of drop/add—last day to pay for fall classes)
During Class: Discuss strategies for the first meeting with mentees. Discuss helping students register for Orgsync and emphasizing the need to join (we will use it for service credit) and put a picture in. Finally discuss the assignment due this week.
Homework: Read the article on peer mentoring that I will email you. Be ready to comment on it and to discuss it with the class.

Week Three, August 27 – August 31
During Class: Begin with discussing group sessions and then we will discuss the article. We will always try to end with discussing what is due for peer mentoring.
Homework: Read the article on peer mentoring that I will email you. Be ready to comment on it and to discuss it with the class.

Week Four, September 3 – 7 (No class Monday-Labor Day, Wednesday Student Engagement Reports Due)
During Class: NO class.

Week Five, September 10 - 14
During Class: We will discuss your peer group sessions and then the article.
Homework: Read the assigned article. Be prepared to discuss it.

Week Six, September 17 – 21
During Class: Discuss group sessions and the article. I will hand out grade sheets this week in SPSU 1001. Talk to students about ensuring they get them to their professors and get them back in time for their portfolios.
Homework: Read article assigned by the first small group of mentors. Be prepared to discuss it.
Week Seven, 24 - 28
During Class: Discuss peer group session and assigned article. Coming up will be advising meetings for the SPSU 1001 class. Go over finding the proper documents for getting advised and the importance of setting up advising meetings early. Discuss Degree Works with the group.
Homework: Read article assigned by the second small group of mentors. Be prepared to discuss it.

Week Eight, October 1 – 5 (Monday, Mid-term Grades due, Thursday--last Day to withdraw with a W)
During Class: Discuss small group session and assigned article. Coming up for the SPSU class is the Midterm Reflection. Start sounding your mentees out on how they would answer the questions and on how things are going so far for them.
Homework: Read article assigned by the third small group of mentors. Be prepared to discuss it.

Week Nine, October 8 - 12
During Class: We will discuss your peer group sessions and the assigned articles.
Homework: Reflect on the articles we have read for class and on your peer sessions so far. Begin to think about what you would like to write for the guide. What information that we have read should make it in the guide?

Week Ten, October 15-19
During Class: We will discuss your group sessions and we will begin brainstorming on the Guide.
Homework: Write a proposal for the information you would like to write that will be included in the guide. This should be about 250 words.

Week Eleven, October 22 – October 26
During Class: Discuss your group sessions and the proposals for the guide. Assign short papers to be written based on the proposals.
Homework: Work on your papers.

Week Twelve, October 29 – November 2
During Class: Discuss small group sessions and your ideas for your papers.
Homework: Write your first draft for the article.

Week Thirteen, November 5 - 9
During Class: We will discuss the group sessions and workshop draft one of your paper.
Homework: Write draft two of your paper.

Week Fourteen, November 12 – 16 (NCHC Conference)
During Class: We will discuss the group sessions and workshop draft two of your paper.
Homework: Write your final draft for your paper.

Week Fifteen, November 19 – 23 (Thanksgiving Holiday Wednesday – Friday)
During Class: Final Written sections for the Guide are due. We will discuss group sessions, the guide, and the log and reflection paper due next time.
Homework: Complete your log (as far as you can do so) and write your reflection paper.

Week Sixteen, November 26 – 30
During Class: Log and Reflection Paper Due. We will discuss group sessions. We will discuss the logs and the reflection papers. We will pull together any final ideas for the poster session.
Homework: Write the final reflection and place it and your midterm reflection sheet, your service and event sheet(s), your In-class entries and your midterm grade reports in a pocket folder.
Week Seventeen, December 3 – 7 No Class—Participate in the Poster session on December 4th at noon.