



Professional Development and Disabilities

Developed by Paul Hippolitus this course is the centerpiece of the C2C Program. In its current use it is a one semester credited course on three California campuses: San Diego State University, Cal State Fullerton and the University of California Berkeley. Beginning in Fall 2016, the course will be taught at Florida Atlantic University and Broward College. With two more schools to join in 2016.

The course is currently being adapted for use as a two week course for students with NeuroDiversity in Florida.

70 individuals representing 11 states and 4 countries have accessed the course online at www.interwork.sdsu.edu/c2c/. The course is available at no charge to non-profit organizations and educational institutions because of the sponsorship of the Kessler Foundation.

Course Description

This course prepares students with disabilities (and other students interested in supporting the employment outcomes of people with disabilities) in the principles and practices related to disability employment strategies. Students will learn about disability related employment history, messaging, legal requirements, policies and best practices; gain experience with career exploration approaches designed to increase a job seeker's self- confidence, choices and knowledge of career options; explore accommodation strategies in the workplace; begin to make career decisions through personal development activities; and, discuss disability disclosure strategies. This course will also review the broader workplace skills necessary for career success such as "soft skills" and more.

Course Goals and Objectives

Upon completion, participants will be prepared to:

- Present disability as an asset in the workplace (pride, self-advocacy, self- marketing, accommodations, benefits planning);
- Advance individual self-assessment around career planning by collecting information about occupations and industries, utilizing various resources including career search websites and informational interviewing techniques;
- Improved professional skills needed to execute a successful job searching effort as well as to achieve lifelong career success;
- Developing immediate employment related materials (resume, interview preparation, career plan, etc.);
- Partner with an employer mentor;
- Develop individualized internship and job search plans; and,
- Consider Graduate school options.

Course Subjects

Elements of instruction shall include:

- The Disability Experience
- Creating a New Experience



- A New Perspective for the Workplace
- Disability Pride & Self-Determination (consumerism)
- Discrimination Threat and Performance
- The Disability Message You Want to Send
- Accommodation Strategies
- Disclosure Strategies
- A Brief Disability History
- Disability Employment Laws
- Social Security Work Incentives
- How to Represent the Disability Demographic
- The Emotional Response
- Voices of Experience
- Workplace presence or “soft skills” (how to be your best self)
- Workplace practices or “medium skills” (work place rules of the road)
- Workplace proficiencies or “hard skills” (your ability to do the job)
- Workplace patterns (understanding individual and group differences)
- Workplace protocols (how find and win a job)
- Workplace pathways (resources to assist you with your employment)
- Workplace planning (developing and implementing your career plan)

Requirements**

- Weekly attendance
- Participation in classroom discussions and activities
- Myers-Briggs Assessment
- Attendance at a Career Fair
- Participate in Silicon Valley Business Leadership Network mentoring effort
- Participate in internship program
- Participate in data collection effort
- Cooperate with Employment Peer Mentor and Placement Specialist
- Completion final requirements or projects:
Final = 1) personal resume, 2) anticipated job interview questions; and,
3) student’s answers to anticipated interview questions.

** All items above must be met to pass the class

Text Books Required (to be provided by instructor):

Peggy Klaus, *The Hard Truth About Soft Skills*

Peggy Klaus, *Brag! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It*

For more information, check out the online course which includes: lecture notes, PowerPoint slides, video clips and other material that can help any instructor teach this life-changing course.