ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS (EFFECTIVE 2013-14)
ACTIVITY/COURSE CODE: 5041
(COURSE WILL BE LISTED IN THE 2013-14 CATE STUDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES MANUAL)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In the Essential Communications course, students will learn to communicate in a clear, courteous, concise, complete, and correct manner on both personal and professional levels. Competency will be developed in oral, written, interpersonal, technological, and employment communication. Listening skills will be incorporated throughout the course.

OBJECTIVE: Given the necessary equipment, supplies, and appropriate software, students will gain a solid communication base to communicate effectively.

COURSE CREDIT: 1 Carnegie unit

RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVEL: 9-12

PREREQUISITE: None

A. SAFETY AND ETHICS

1. Identify major causes of work-related accidents in offices.
2. Describe the threats to a computer network, methods of avoiding attacks, and options in dealing with virus attacks.
3. Identify potential abuse and unethical uses of computers and networks.
4. Explain the consequences of illegal, social, and unethical uses of information technologies (e.g., piracy; illegal downloading; licensing infringement; inappropriate uses of software, hardware, and mobile devices).
5. Differentiate between freeware, shareware, and public domain software copyrights.
6. Discuss computer crimes, terms of use, and legal issues such as copyright laws, fair use laws, and ethics pertaining to scanned and downloaded clip art images, photographs, documents, video, recorded sounds and music, trademarks, and other elements for use in Web publications.
7. Identify netiquette including the use of e-mail, social networking, blogs, texting, and chatting.
8. Describe ethical and legal practices in business professions such as safeguarding the confidentiality of business-related information.

B. EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

1. Identify positive work practices (e.g., appropriate dress code for the workplace, personal grooming, punctuality, time management, organization).
2. Demonstrate positive interpersonal skills (e.g., communication, respect, teamwork).

C. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

1. Explain how related student organizations are integral parts of career and technology education courses.
2. Explain the goals and objectives of related student organizations.
3. List opportunities available to students through participation in related student organization conferences/competitions, community service, philanthropy, and other activities.
4. Explain how participation in career and technology education student organizations can promote lifelong responsibility for community service and professional development.

D. FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNICATION

(Students will apply basic verbal and non-verbal communication skills in both personal and professional settings.)

1. Identify the communication process and practice effective nonverbal communication skills.
    a. Identify the six steps of the communication process.
        1. Sender has an idea
        2. Sender encodes message
        3. Message is sent
        4. Receiver receives message
        5. Receiver decodes message
        6. Receiver sends feedback
    b. Practice acceptable nonverbal skills in personal and professional communication.
    c. Differentiate non-verbal from verbal communications, which includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking
    d. Communicate with one another using only nonverbal communications such as gesture, body language, eye contact, etc.

2. Develop reading strategies that will improve speed, comprehension, and retention.
    a. Use context clues to determine the meaning of technical terms and other unfamiliar words.
    b. Read and follow simple directions.

c. Select correct reading methods for a particular situation (e.g., skimming, scanning, summarizing, speed-reading, in-depth reading).
d. Identify propaganda; biased, literal, inferential, and factual statements.

3. Develop and practice proficient listening skills.
    a. Practice following oral directions.
    b. Demonstrate the proper use of telephone techniques and manners. Record complete and accurate telephone messages.
    c. Listen attentively by taking accurate notes and asking questions.
    d. Demonstrate courtesy and respect for the speaker through attentive listening.
    e. Identify and overcome major barriers to listening.

E. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

(Students will understand the nature of written communication by planning and writing documents that are appropriate for the situation, purpose, and audience.)

1. Communicate using correct usage and mechanics.
    a. Use correct spelling in oral and written communication.
    b. Use correct punctuation and grammar in written communication.
    c. Use complete sentences in a variety of sentence structures.
    d. Use grammatical conventions of written Standard American English.
    e. Identify and revise misplaced and dangling modifiers; redundant words or phrases; non-parallel words, phrases and clauses; and incorrect word choice.
    f. Communicate in a clear, courteous, concise, complete, and correct manner; select language benefiting the situation.

2. Compose effective written communications.
    a. Use the writing process to compose and format e-mails and letters including determining audience and purpose; brainstorming, outlining, and organizing to produce a rough draft; and revising to create polished documents that are logical, coherent, and unified.
    b. Compose and produce a variety of mailable business letters and e-mail messages in each of the following areas: formal, informal, persuasive, and bad news/good news.
    c. Edit and revise personal work as well as that of others.

3. Access and use information from a variety of sources.
    a. Design and carry out research projects by selecting a topic, constructing inquiry based questions, accessing resources, evaluating credibility, and organizing information.
        i. Clarify and refine a research topic.
        ii. Incorporate direct quotations, paraphrasing, or summaries into written, oral, auditory, or visual works from the information gathered.

iii. Use a standardized system of documentation (including a list of sources with full publication information and the use of in-text citations) to properly credit the work of others.
iv. Use vocabulary that is appropriate for the particular audience or purpose.
v. Create written works and presentations that are designed for a specific audience and purpose.
vi. Create responses to informational texts through a variety of methods (e.g., drawings, written works, oral and auditory presentations, discussions, and media productions).
vii. Analyze information from graphic features (e.g., charts and graphs) in informational texts.

b. Format business reports using a standardized system of documentation to credit the work of others.

F. ORAL COMMUNICATION

(Students will effectively demonstrate the ability to communicate using a variety of oral and listening techniques in business and personal environments.)

1. Develop and practice effective oral communication skills.
   a. Practice correct pronunciation and enunciation.
   b. Identify regional, international, and cultural differences in communication; use bias-free language.
   c. Participate in group discussions by expressing opinions and talking about current issues positively and tactfully.
   d. Plan and present short presentations individually or as a group member.
2. Use proper telephone techniques and etiquette.
3. Ask questions and respond to questions with confidence to elicit general and specific information.
4. Organize thoughts to reflect logical thinking before speaking.
5. Deliver impromptu and planned speeches/presentations with confidence.

G. PRESENTATION COMMUNICATION

(Students will apply basic presentation communication skills for effective speeches.)

1. Identify and demonstrate effective speech delivery techniques.
   a Verbal
   b Non-verbal
   c Parts of the speech
2. Prepare for delivering informal and impromptu speeches.
   a Effective listening
   b Audience identification
3. Develop and present formal speeches.
   a Introduction

b Body
c Conclusion

4. Develop and create a digital speech/presentation using a variety of digital media (PowerPoint, PhotoStory, MovieMaker, etc.).

H. SOCIETAL COMMUNICATION

(Students will apply basic social communication skills in personal and professional situations by demonstrating competence, ethics, leadership, and interpersonal skills.)

1. Demonstrate proper respect for authority.
2. Practice and consider the process(es) for conflict resolution by demonstrating correct responses to passive, assertive, and aggressive behaviors.
3. Explore positive leadership skills, techniques, and styles including conducting a meeting and preparing an agenda.
4. Explain the importance of following chains of command (upward, downward, and horizontal).
5. Incorporate standards of personal ethics into effective communication.

I. TECHNOLOGICAL COMMUNICATION

(Students will use technology to enhance the effectiveness of communication.)

1. Refine and enhance documents using electronic spell check, thesaurus, grammar check, layout, design, and graphics, as needed.
2. Use appropriate technology to plan, develop, edit, and present material to different types of audiences.

J. WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION

(Students will integrate all forms of communication in the successful pursuit and retention of employment by creating an employment portfolio.)

1. Explore job search strategies and sources for job placement.
2. Write a mailable application letter, resume (print and scannable), and follow-up letter for a simulated job opportunity.
3. Complete a job application form.
4. Role-play interviews and demonstrate appropriate nonverbal communication.
5. Differentiate among business attire (e.g., casual, business-casual, professional business, and formal attire) and select correct attire for specific situations.
6. Talk about qualities that employers expect in employees.
7. Examine legal and illegal employment practices.
8. Use correct strategies for accepting or rejecting an offer.
9. Prepare a list of questions to ask an interviewer and make a list of common mistakes made by interviewers and interviewees.
10. Practice basic etiquette and manners in given situations.