Course Title: IST 204 Help Desk Technology & Services

Course Leader: Karen Weil-Yates

Expected Learning Outcomes for Course

- *Demonstrate competence in working with a call center system and professional help desk software*
- *Assist and support others in applying appropriate technology in a business environment in a variety of methods: one-on-one consultation, formalized training, written documentation*
- *Apply critical thinking skills to implement effective strategies to evaluate computer products and define standards for an organization*
- *Analyze and assess user needs for computer systems, software and network products*
- *Implement good facilities management procedures, including: security, media backups, preventative maintenance, ergonomics, recycling*
- *Utilize user support information resources*

Assessment
(How do students demonstrate achievement of these outcomes?)

Students complete assignments from the textbook (Activities and Case Study per chapter); since the course is on-line, they create and post to a blog. This way their classmates can see and comment on their efforts. Some assessments are emailed to the instructor. There is one group project that is assigned and worked on throughout the semester. **Examples** of assessment include:

- 15 hours of job shadowing with help desk personnel and writing a report based on that experience; install and learn Help Desk software (comes with textbook) and complete Activities (outcomes #1, #2 & #6)
- Complete Case Study on Evaluating Help Desk software; Case Study on Product Comparisons (outcome #3)
- Learn and utilize project management software (outcomes #2, & #5)
- Evaluating themselves in terms of communication skills, personalities, interactions with others (outcomes #1 & 2)
- Develop troubleshooting methods to assist users (flowcharts); critical thinking skills; knowledge bases (research & critique valid Internet sites, subscribe to and use RSS feeds & aggregators) (outcomes #2 & #3)
- Plan, develop, implement and evaluate a training session (outcome #2 & #6)
- Review a situation and write step-by-step instructions to solve; create a survey to evaluate the results of a Help Desk scenario (outcome #2 & #4)
- Review and compare Acceptable Use Policies of a company with basic guidelines (outcome #3)
- Create a disaster plan for a home user (outcomes #2 & #5)

Validation
(What methods are used to validate your assessment?**)**

Other assignments are the result of the instructor's externships, advisory committee suggestions, site visits with internships, and on-site interviews with various local technical personnel. The textbook is published by a leading technology publisher and utilizes Microsoft Office in its assignments and case studies. In addition this course has transferred as a graduation requirement for Carroll Community College. I also have had several students who work in the Help Desk field and are coming back to take this specific course.

Results
(What does the data show?)
This is considered to be a capstone course. There are no exams; so I will be comparing a few of the major assessments:

	Training Module	Disaster Plan	Job Shadowing
Average	80%	51%	91%

NOTE: Two students walked away/failed the course; their scores are not included in the above averages.

 The training module was a project that students were encouraged to work on from the beginning of the semester and then present on campus during the last 14th week of the semester to an audience of their peers. This project revision was a recommendation by the advisory committee. The Disaster plan low scores are due to students not reading the instructions and following instructions. Job Shadowing scores are excellent—another assignment that the Advisory Committee "insisted" remain in the course.

Follow-up
(How have you used the data to improve student learning?**)**

The training module continues to be successful as is the Job Shadowing assignment.

For the situation with the Disaster Plan, I will create more extensive set of instructions and make it the topic of one of the class chats/on-line meetings early in the semester. Google's blog remains a great tool for assignments—it is easier to set up, manage, include classmates, track everyone's progress than the others that I have tried.

Budget Justification
(What resources are necessary to improve student learning?) Students receive requirement software with their texts and through the MSDNA Alliance; Adobe Connect (webinar software for on-line meetings); Camtasia (for recording vidcasts).