

CLUSTER PROPOSAL

Business Empowerment in Uncertain Environments

My cluster supports future employment and educational goals to benefit impoverished populations and to oversee technological development. I have thought about empowerment during field work in China, The Gambia, the Katrina hurricane relief zone, and rural South Carolina. I researched these regions through on-the-job training before realizing that I needed to develop more systematic technical skills in a university to meet the diverse needs. I would like to continue my education to earn a Master in Business Administration with a concentration in Technology Management. My cluster focuses on specialization in business standards, the human sciences, and communication arts to prepare me to enter careers as an operational team manager on the field and community solution researcher in the office. The following cluster of choices will prepare me for graduate level study and a career path in economic development.

I chose MGT 323 (Organizational and Interpersonal Behavior) in order to develop interpersonal relationships within an organization and to build up motivating factors in peoples' lives. This class also taught me tools to facilitate teamwork and discussion in the internet media. The internet requires new ground rules and skills in order to reach and surpass the same level of effectiveness found in face-to-face communication. I chose MGT 325 (Legal Environment) because my work often involves careful research and understanding of local statutes and case law for decision making in the changing business and political environment. The class taught me how to negotiate a fair contract because contracts enable communication between groups for a mutual benefit. I chose ECON 455 (Industrial Organization) because the course offered insight into business decision making from an advanced economic perspective. The class explored industry models in which no individual or group operates a monopoly, but the industry has failed to reach the best outcome for consumers. Strong economic organizations dominate many poor

areas. I cannot set realistic goals without the ability to anticipate these entities profit motivated moves. I chose ACC 401 (Financial Reporting I) in order to learn how to prepare basic financial statements and properly depreciate an organization's capital. This class provided knowledge about keeping the doors open once a project begins and producing reports in standard financial language. I chose FIN 301 (Principles of Managerial Finance) because I wanted to learn how to read and interpret financial statements in addition to how to calculate the present value of future cash flows. I produce informational, fund-raising, and planning reports as the primary vehicle to empower community and business organizers. These reports need accurate information and the financial classes provide the tools I need to scrutinize unclear data and report feasible options.

From the college of Liberal Arts, I chose coursework from the English, Psychology, Sociology, and Political Science departments. I chose ENG 321 (Expository Writing) in order to write with more clarity and to develop critical analysis of argument. This class challenged me to relearn to write. Good writers command verbs, and the Toulmin model revolutionized my ability to write to the same degree as learning the alphabet. I will complete PSY UELC (Human Motivation from the University of Phoenix – see Appendix A) to learn human motivational theories, to apply current research, and to write reports to evaluate complex environments. People need to perceive and receive benefits equal to their project input. I will learn how to listen to ideas and deliver meaningful rewards and quality work environments to make good judgments and to lead individuals to achieve personal goals. I will take SOC UELC (Cultural Diversity from the University of Phoenix – see Appendix B) in order to learn how to interact and value diverse practices and integrate team members into one synergistic unit. Socioeconomic classes form barriers between valuable partners to a community's detriment. Leaders must help stakeholders form relationships to network resources. I chose PSC 403C (Environmental Policy)

because my work as an economic developer will involve interactions with the environmental policy of government. In this course, we discussed the interrelated nature of socio-economic status and environmental protection. The people operating under environmental and poverty programs must find common ground in order to work as a team to accomplish the goals of each. I will take ENG 427A (Women and Literature) to apply expository writing to analyze women writers. I hope to identify common pitfalls in the way that women are portrayed in order to be better equipped to challenge stereotypes and restrictions. The majority of the world's poor are women; frequently, women undertake the task to raise and to sustain children. Therefore, poverty issues inextricably tie to women's issues.

This cluster will prepare me for graduate studies in business management without ignoring the human sciences neglected in many business ventures. I hope to be equipped to illustrate and achieve value through ethical business practices. This program will give me a foundation to choose career positions to help shape more compassionate entrepreneurial development in America and abroad.

Appendix A

PSY320 Human Motivation – PSY UELC

Course Description

This course seeks to synthesize the many theories of human motivation with the practical application of motivating employees. To this end, the course will examine historical theories as well as recent developments in the field of motivation and their relationship to management practices. The primary concepts of goals, quality of work, and rewards will be examined and applied to the workplace.

Topics and Objectives

Historical Background of Motivational Psychology

- Describe key concepts from the major historical theories of motivation.
- Identify the need for new models of motivation in today's changing workplace.

Interface of Motivation Theory and Productivity

- Describe how motivation affects productivity in the workplace.
- Apply various motivational theories across workplace situations.
- Assess the impact of various motivational theories on both managers and employees.

Intrinsic Motivation and Quality of Work

- Explore the nature of intrinsic motivation.
- Contrast intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
- Describe how the concepts of quality of work, self-management, and sense of choice impact motivation.

Reward Systems

- Identify human needs and their relationship to motivation.
- Explore the relationship between employee needs and effective rewards.
- Calculate the appropriateness of different reward systems on employee motivation

Goal Theory and Goal-Setting

- Examine the underlying principles and concepts of goal theory.
- Explore the applications of goal-setting in the workplace.
- Assess the impact of goal-setting on employee motivation.

Applying Motivational Principles

- Synthesize motivational theory into practical business applications.
- Evaluate the relationship of motivation theory to the discipline of management.
- Integrate additional factors that can affect motivation, including leadership, trust, corporate culture, interpersonal skills, and the impact on customer satisfaction.

University of Phoenix. (2009). PSY320 Human Motivation. *Course Catalog*. Retrieved August

28, 2009, From <http://www.phoenix.edu/courses/psy/psy320.html>

Appendix B

SOC315 Cultural Diversity – SOC UELC

Course Description

This course focuses on the issues, challenges, and opportunities presented by U.S. population diversity. Workplace issues related to employee diversity in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic class, and cultural background are emphasized.

Topics and Objectives

Culture and Multiculturalism

- Examine the concept of culture and how it is used to construct group identity.
- Define descriptive categories that contribute to diversity, including age, ethnic/racial status, socio-economic class, gender, physical abilities, sexual orientation, national origin, and religion.
- Compare theories of multiculturalism with the process of cultural assimilation.
- Recognize the value of diversity.

Diversity in America

- Examine the diversity issues related to race and ethnicity in America.
- Examine the diversity issues related to gender and sexual orientation in America.
- Evaluate how diversity is represented in the media.

Communication in a Multicultural Environment

- Examine the manner in which language reflects diversity.
- Profile "best practices" in regard to communicating in a multicultural environment.

Employment Practices and Legal Issues in Diversity

- Examine organizational issues of diversity, including structure, communication channels, and principles for valuing a diverse workforce.
- Analyze challenges and opportunities presented by employee diversity in the workplace.
- Examine Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity (AA/EEO) laws, The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and legislation relevant to harassment in the workplace.

Global Demographics and the Future of Diversity

- Summarize current trends related to how different cultures are meeting the challenges and opportunities posed by diversity and change, with emphasis on increasing cultural sensitivity and knowledge.
- Examine future trends in population growth and diversity and how these trends relate to global competitiveness, specifically among Europe, Asia, and the United States.

University of Phoenix. (2009). SOC315 Cultural Diversity. *Course Catalog*. Retrieved August

28, 2009, From <http://www.phoenix.edu/courses/soc/soc315.html>