

**COURSE TITLE:** TRADE SECRETS: Exploring Opportunities in the Skilled Trades  
**WA CLOCK HRS:** 60  
**OREGON PDUs:** 60  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 60

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 6 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 4.00 credits]

**INSTRUCTOR:** Jake Gordon  
oregonfieldclass@gmail.com

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Mike Rowe, of Dirty Jobs TV fame, has said that we are “Profoundly Disconnected” from blue-collar work, which has led to a PR issue for skilled trades and significant decline in young people pursuing a trade. This is at a time when shortages of these workers is a pressing economic issue and college debt has risen to crippling levels. This course aims to address these issues by providing educators with the knowledge they need to inspire their students to consider careers in the trades.

This course is designed for K-12 educators who want to learn more about skilled trades and how to incorporate this knowledge into their teaching role. The course will cover various aspects of skilled trades, including their importance in our society, the apprenticeship system of education, union vs non-union as it pertains to training and career development, and how to find opportunities for apprenticeships in your area. Additionally, the course will explore how skilled trades can benefit some of our most struggling groups.

The course is designed for all educators working within the K-12 school setting.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

- Learned to define what skilled trades are and why they are important in our society.
- Gained an understanding of the apprenticeship system of education and how it works.
- Compared and contrasted the differences between union vs non-union opportunities.
- Interviewed a skilled tradesperson to learn about their journey to success and their advice for introducing their trade to students.
- Discussed the benefits of a career in the trades.
- Identified resources for teaching about the trades in the classroom.
- Applied this knowledge to their teaching role by creating a lesson plan and activities that incorporate information about skilled trades.
- Explored a variety of websites, articles, and videos that expanded knowledge of skilled trades.
- Discussed the integration of skilled trades education in K-12 levels.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

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**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

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**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**  
**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
  2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
  3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%
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### **CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

### **ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

#### **REQUIRED TEXT**

Profoundly Disconnected: A True Confession, by Mike Rowe. 2014

**OPTIONAL SUPPLEMENTAL READING.** Book is not necessary to complete the course, and money from purchase goes to support scholarships for students pursuing the skilled trades.

View Online

None. All reading is online.

#### **MATERIALS FEE**

None Optional Text: \$16 plus shipping

### **ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

#### **A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #1: Introduce Yourself**

Welcome to Skilled Trades! Your first assignment will be to review the material listed below and then write a response to the introduction prompt in the course forum.

**Step 1: Watch the following introduction video** by the instructor.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/nOMw4zla0LY>

**Step 2: Watch the video introducing the current situation of trades education**

"With millions looking for work, stigmas create a dearth of skilled tradespeople" PBS NewsHour

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/c4s-4fK5r0w>

**Step 3: Write a response to the following prompt:**

- What is your current teaching assignment?
- What do you hope to gain from this course?
- What were your thoughts about the message in the videos?
- What is your experience with skilled trades? (e.g., hiring contractors to do work on your home, relatives, current/former students pursuing a trade, perhaps you worked in a trade, etc.)

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators active in the course. You are welcome and encouraged to read and respond to others' comments.

## Assignment #2: What are Skilled Trades? / Follow your Passion?

### Step 1: Complete Readings Defining Skilled Trade

- "What is Classified as a Skilled Trade?" Link to article: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OCC91WPfn2okeUbWkRZ4CeLEEHfBlmEv/view?usp=sharing>
- "Skilled Trade Careers: know all the options" Link to article: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sNFKcKjgti50dK6LTTLkAmI9qFeSNw0S/view?usp=sharing>
- "Skilled Trades: A Promising Career Path After High School" Link to article: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yNfCaxCbnQBdt8eFpAOYXfeOs640wJUF/view?usp=sharing>

### Step 2: Watch Video

- Watch the "Think Twice About Following Your Passion" Mike Rowe Jordan Harbinger Clip

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/T3cuhuFbJwM>

- Spend time thinking over the phrase: "Never follow your passion, but always bring it with you!"

### Step 3: Write a 250-500 word reflection about the following prompts:

- The definition of a skilled trade, as discussed in the articles, is pretty straightforward. For this reflection, you will be responding to Mike Rowe's claim that it is better to "never follow your passion, but always bring it with you."
- Most, if not all, teachers are passionate about the work they do. The idea that one should not follow their passion was at first disturbing to me, but I challenged myself to consider this point and explore Rowe's claim in-depth, and it has grown on me. Therefore, I'm curious about what you thought of Rowe's claim.
  - a) How did you first respond to the claim?
  - b) Did hearing his whole explanation change your initial thoughts?
- Discuss why this mindset shift can be beneficial to those pursuing a trade?
- Could this mindset shift also benefit students pursuing a college education?

## Assignment #3: Why are they important in our society?

Skilled tradespeople have built the physical elements of our modern society and work to maintain it and keep it functioning. To illustrate how essential the trades are to our quality of life and health, you will read an article and then watch an episode of "How America Works" and an episode of "Dirty Jobs". After completing the reading and watching the episodes, you will respond to the discussion prompt.

### Step 1: Read Article

- "The Importance of Skilled Trades" article by PeopleReady 2023 <https://skilled.peopleready.com/the-importance-of-skilled-trades/>

### Step 2: Watch "How America Works" episode

- Pick an episode of the "How America Works" show to watch. To watch the full hour-long episodes you will need a Fox Nation subscription or if you have cable with the Fox channel, check the programming schedule for showtimes. A free trial membership is available. If you do the trial please make sure to set a calendar reminder to cancel before you are charged! <https://nation.foxnews.com/watch/8e009cdae13d996b892cbb35a3c77e15/>
- If you wish to not do the free trial, or it is unavailable, please check out the videos below. They are partial segments of the full episodes.  
Homepage for all "How America Works" partial episode segments: <https://www.foxbusiness.com/shows/how-america-works>

### Step 3: Watch "Dirty Jobs" episode

- Pick an episode of the "Dirty Jobs" show to watch. To watch full episodes, you will need a Discover+ subscription, or if you have cable with the Discovery channel, check the programming schedule for showtimes. A free trial membership is available. If you do

the trial please make sure to set a calendar reminder to cancel before you are charged!

<https://www.discoveryplus.com/show/dirty-jobs>

??If you wish to not do the free trial, or it is unavailable, please check out the videos below. They are partial segments of the full episodes.

- Dirty Jobs - San Francisco Sewer Inspector. 15 Dec. 2009, <https://youtu.be/1CjRAVGWk30>.
- Mike Rowe Discovers the Hardest Job in Construction: Dirty Jobs. 24 Mar. 2022, <https://youtu.be/5dSj2B-Ahtg>.
- Mike Rowe Cleans out the Grime inside a Water Tower!: Dirty Jobs. 17 Feb. 2022, <https://youtu.be/vwu3qscFyOA>.
- Non Dirty Jobs videos that illustrate essential nature of skilled trades workers:
- How Wind Turbine Technicians Risk Their Lives to Keep Blades Spinning: Risky Business. 27 Feb. 2022, <https://youtu.be/bNBQKHt6rg>.
- The Life of a Lineman. 30 May 2019, <https://youtu.be/rFf9zJ4Sbgw>.
- Jacobson, Rebecca. "The Life of the Linemen Who Keep Your Lights On." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, 18 Apr. 2016, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/the-life-of-the-linemen-who-keep-your-lights-on>.

#### Step 4: Write a 250+ word reflection about the following prompts:

- What claims does the article make about the importance of skilled trades?
- Which "How America Works" episode(s) did you choose to watch? Please summarize the type of work that was shown, why this work is essential, and the skills necessary for this type of work. Also, feel free to add any additional thoughts you might have about what you saw.
- Which "Dirty Jobs" episode(s) did you choose to watch? Please summarize the type of work that was shown, why this work is essential, and the skills necessary for this type of work. Also, feel free to add any additional thoughts you might have about what you saw.
- Did this activity increase or change your perception of the skilled trades?

#### Assignment #4: Profoundly Disconnected: The PR Problem

Uh oh, we have a problem! The trades have a PR issue, and for a variety of reasons, the vocational arts have largely disappeared from K-12 education. This was not always the case. For example, in Portland, Oregon, Benson High School was founded in 1908 as the Portland School of Trades and continues to be a technical public high school today.

In this assignment, we will cover the PR problem in greater depth by reading an article and writing a reflection. Students will reflect on their observations and personal experience with this phenomenon.

#### Step 1: Read the "We've got a PR Problem" Article by Mike Rowe

- Link to article: "We've Got a PR Problem." MikeroweWORKS Foundation, <https://www.mikeroweworks.org/about/>.

#### Step 2: Review Work Smart Not Hard & Work Smart AND Hard Posters

1977 = Work Smart Not Hard Poster ([file link](#))

Present = Work Smart AND Hard Poster ([file link](#))

#### Step 3: Discussion Forum Response

After reviewing each poster, please write a 250+ word response to the prompt below in the discussion forum.

#### Discussion Prompt:

- What is the message conveyed by Mike Rowe in the article? What are your thoughts about the message?
- How were trades portrayed at school when you were a K-12 student? Is the current portrayal different?
- As educators, we often decorate our classrooms to inspire students. How would you feel about hanging the Work Hard AND Smart poster in your classroom?
- Are efforts by the Mike Rowe Works Foundation and others working? Are the schools in your community renewing their focus on providing vocational training?

#### Assignment #5: Benefits of a career in the trades

In this assignment, you will complete several readings explaining the benefits of pursuing a career in the skilled trades.

You will then select several skilled trades from the list and do research about them. Then you will write up your research in a 250-500 word discussion forum post.

### Step 1: Read 5 Benefits Article:

**NOTE:** The article below comes from The Art of Manliness, the largest independent men's interest magazine on the web. However, the message in the article applies to all our students.

- Anderberg, Jeremy. "Reviving Blue Collar Work: 5 Benefits of Working in the Skilled Trades." The Art of Manliness, 31 May 2021. <https://www.artofmanliness.com/career-wealth/career/reviving-blue-collar-work-5-benefits-of-working-in-the-skilled-trades/>.

### Step 2: Read USA Today Article:

Webster, MaryJo. "Where the Jobs Are: The New Blue Collar." USA Today, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 12 Jan. 2015. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/09/30/job-economy-middle-skill-growth-wage-blue-collar/14797413/>.

### Step 3: Discussion Forum Post

In 250-500 words, respond to the questions below in the discussion forum. You are encouraged to read and respond to your fellow classmates' postings.

- Which of the five benefits in the first article did you find most compelling as a reason to pursue work in the skilled trades?
- The article covers the main benefits, but are there any benefits that you would like to add to the list?
- How could you share these benefits with your students?

### Optional Additional Readings:

- Anderberg, Jeremy. "Reviving Blue Collar Work: 4 Myths about the Skilled Trades." The Art of Manliness, 6 June 2021. <https://www.artofmanliness.com/career-wealth/career/reviving-blue-collar-4-myths-about-the-skilled-trades/>.
- Top Paying Trades in 2023. 31 Jan. 2023, <https://youtu.be/KuCeQYN99Iq>.
- Marcus, Jon. "Long Disparaged, Education for the Skilled Trades Is Slowly Coming into Fashion." The Hechinger Report, 9 Feb. 2022, <https://hechingerreport.org/long-disparaged-education-for-the-skilled-trades-is-slowly-coming-into-fashion/>.
- "Millennials Are Abandoning the Gig Economy for the Trades." Paschal Air, Plumbing & Electric, 19 Oct. 2021, <https://gopaschal.com/millennials-are-abandoning-the-gig-economy-for-the-trades/>.

### Assignment #6: How can trades benefits our most struggling students?

This assignment will explore how trades can benefit our most struggling students. Our exploration will be split into two categories: boys in trouble and increasing diversity in the trades.

Watch Instructor Video: <https://youtu.be/vWSube-96nQ>

#### Step 1: Boys in Trouble

I recently took Heritage Institute instructor Lori Gibson's course titled "Boys in Trouble: Turnaround Strategies For Educators" ([link to course](#)). In the course description, Gibson notes;

"More and more boys are struggling. They are academically disengaged. They are facing social challenges alone. And they are struggling to imagine what their place will be in the wider world once they leave high school (if they even make it that far in school). It is estimated that only 35% of new college enrollees will be boys. Rosalind Wiseman, best-selling author, wrote *Masterminds and Wingmen* about boys, believes educators are in a prime position to reverse some of these trends."

Therefore, as trades have traditionally attracted a greater percentage of male students, it is important to evaluate the skilled trades as a way to help reconnect those who are disengaged with a meaningful and beneficial career.

Please watch the CBS Mornings report and read the Washington Post op-ed to learn more about the extent of the problem and how integrating skilled trades into K-12 education could be one of the solutions.

- CBS Mornings. Millions of Men in Their Prime Working Age Are Leaving the Labor Force, Creating a Hole in the Economy. 26 Jan. 2023.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/TDokADZfwwc>

- Yang, Andrew. "Opinion | the Data Are Clear: The Boys Are Not All Right." The Washington Post, 18 Feb. 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/02/08/andrew-yang-boys-are-not-all-right/>.
- Link to Washington Post article file: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Dy0Yaf\\_8mjhZIIFB\\_JNkAFFz\\_qk7oqRp/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Dy0Yaf_8mjhZIIFB_JNkAFFz_qk7oqRp/view?usp=share_link)

#### Step 2: Diversity in the Trades

As discussed in the assignment introduction video, many of the skilled trades have traditionally not been very diverse. However, this is changing, and many organizations are working hard to open up paths in the trades to groups that have been previously left out.

- "Diversity in the Trades." Contractor Magazine, <https://www.contractormag.com/training/article/21235927/diversity-in-the-trades>.
- Solman, Paul, and Lee Koromvokis. "Black Americans and Women Continue to Face Discrimination in Skilled Trades." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, 12 Mar. 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/black-americans-and-women-continue-to-face-discrimination-in-skilled-trades>

- Riddle, Katia. "Women Are Underrepresented in the Trades Industry." NPR, NPR, 8 Aug. 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/08/1025845773/women-are-underrepresented-in-the-trades-industry>.
- Check out success stories from OregonApprenticeship.org of how people from all backgrounds can succeed in the trades. <https://oregonapprenticeship.org/success-stories/>

## Resources

- <https://womeninapprenticeship.org/>
- <https://oregontradeswomen.org/>
- <https://www.wawomenintrades.com/>
- <https://apprenticeshipusa.workforcegaps.org/resources/2017/03/10/15/45/Expanding-Apprenticeship-for-Minorities>

## Step 3: Discussion Forum Prompt

After reading and watching all the materials above, please write a 250+ word response to the prompt below in the discussion forum.

- The ways many boys and young men are falling behind and struggling was highlighted in part one this assignment. Have you noticed this trend in your school/teaching experience? Do you see these trends in the community?
- Discuss how expanding access to vocational trades throughout K-12 education could help boys and young men find successful and meaningful careers.
- In part two, the lack of diversity in the trades, especially in regard to the number of black Americans and women, was examined. What ways can you think of that could help increase people from all backgrounds pursuing the skilled trades? What role do educators play in increasing diversity in trades?

## Assignment #7: The Apprenticeship System of Education

In this assignment, you will learn about the apprenticeship system of education. Much of the content is about apprenticeships in Oregon, but the structure and system of apprenticeships will be virtually the same across North America. Therefore, if you live outside of Oregon, the information is still relevant. The apprenticeship model in America originated from the trades in Europe. Therefore, we will begin with a look at the structure of apprenticeships in Germany before moving on to examples closer to home.

### Step 1: Watch Videos

History of Apprenticeships "Dual Vocational Training—Germany's successful system"

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/fzNM2BqKsxs>

"Deutsche Welle: German Apprenticeship Program Goes US!"

Youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8O9AkyrqnK0>

"Introduction to Registered Apprenticeship in Oregon"

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/F8BEc\\_RLTD4](https://www.youtube.com/embed/F8BEc_RLTD4)

"2021 NECA-IBEW Apprentice Recruitment"

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Z1h1QSRRyC0>

### Step 2: Read Articles

- "The History of Apprenticeships in the US" article  
<https://www.bizcatalyst360.com/the-history-of-apprenticeships-in-the-us/>
- "Jobs Now! Learning From The Swiss Apprenticeship Model!" Forbes article  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nicholaswyman/2017/10/20/jobs-now-learning-from-the-swiss-apprenticeship-model/?sh=66316d5b6b54>
- "How history explains America's struggle to revive apprenticeships" Brookings Institution.  
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2018/05/23/how-history-explains-americas-struggle-to-revive-apprenticeships/>
- To help prepare you to answer student questions the General Questions on OregonApprenticeship.org's website:  
<https://oregonapprenticeship.org/faqs/>
- Select and read through several examples of apprentices from the Success Stories page:  
<https://oregonapprenticeship.org/success-stories/>

### Step 3: Explain the Apprenticeship Model of Education

Complete one of the following options:

**Option 1:**

Write a short essay (250-500 words) briefly describing the history of apprenticeships, what an apprenticeship today looks like, and the general timeline from application to becoming a journeyman skilled tradesperson. Include in your essay at least one example of an apprentice posted on the Oregon Apprenticeship website.

**Option 2:**

Create a presentation (Google Slides, PowerPoint, etc.) briefly describing the history of apprenticeships, what an apprenticeship today looks like, and the general timeline from application to becoming a journeyman skilled tradesperson. Include in your essay at least one example of an apprentice posted on the Oregon Apprenticeship website. REQUIREMENTS: Minimum of 25 slides and include visuals such as diagrams.

**Additional Optional Readings:**

"Apprenticeship in the United States" detailed history

<https://eh.net/encyclopedia/apprenticeship-in-the-united-states/>

**Assignment #8: Explore Apprenticeship Opportunities**

In this assignment, you will take the role of one of your K-12 students and conduct a search through skilled trade apprenticeships. After you search through the different paths you will respond to the discussion forum prompt about your experience.

**Step 1:**

- View Assignment Instructions Video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/L5fGIEX-uFO>
- To better understand what one of our students would experience searching for an apprenticeship you will search through the various apprenticeships. Please look through 3 apprenticeships.

**Step 2:**

- After reading and watching all the materials above, please write a 250+ word response to the prompt below in the discussion forum.
1. What three apprenticeships did you explore?
  2. Select one of those three to discuss in more detail. Please describe the differences in total on-the-job (OTJ) training hours, how the training is structured/what areas it focuses on, other training provided, the apprentice-to-journey-level worker ratios, and pay.

**Assignment #9: Community College & Trade Schools**

In this assignment, you will learn about the skilled trade paths that community colleges and trade schools can offer. You will first read several articles and watch several videos about these schools before researching programs at your local community college and a trade school of your choice.

**Step 1: Read articles and watch videos about Community College vocational programs**

Community colleges and trade schools offer a way for students to gain the necessary skills to begin a career in the trades. Most community college and trade school programs teach skills necessary to start working or earn an entry-level certificate; however, some programs connect with the apprenticeship model by teaching the prerequisites required for a successful apprenticeship. These programs are referred to as pre-apprenticeships.

**Please complete the following readings:**

- "Community college enrollment is down, but skilled-trades programs are booming" NPR  
<https://www.npr.org/2022/03/28/1086454046/2-year-skilled-trades-programs-booming>
- "Which Oregon Community College Programs Net Students the Highest Pay" OregonLive Google Drive File:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/116HHoVrgQJblaYHbulyuZT-8yruii-ef/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/116HHoVrgQJblaYHbulyuZT-8yruii-ef/view?usp=share_link)
- "More people with bachelor's degrees go back to school to learn skilled trades" Hechinger Report  
<https://hechingerreport.org/more-people-with-bachelors-degrees-go-back-to-school-to-learn-skilled-trades/>
- "Skilled trade programs are having a moment" NPR Marketplace <https://www.marketplace.org/2022/11/08/skilled-trade-programs-are-having-a-moment/>
- Instructor Video About Community College Programs:

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/5MHYOSINW-c>

**Step 2: Read articles and watch videos about trade school programs**

Trade schools generally function similarly to a community college trade program. The trade school can operate as either a non-profit or a for-profit institution. There are many excellent trade schools that connect students to a career in the trades by building foundational knowledge, skills, and certifications. Typically, trades schools do not offer degrees; rather, they offer certificates of completion. You will



complete readings and watch several videos about trade school. Also included is information about how some trade schools under the for-profit model have been caught over promising students and leaving them in debt and with few options upon completion.

### Trade School Info:

Instructor Video About Trade School Experience:

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/9Oo7MJXzYul>

“Guide to For-Profit Colleges: How to Avoid Predatory Schools” The Best Schools article

<https://thebestschools.org/resources/for-profit-colleges/>

“For-Profit Education Investigation” ABC News

<https://youtu.be/eXH-uNMwbVE>

“What for-profit trade schools do not want you to know” YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/NVBPaLxQYWc>

### Step 3: Research your local community college for programs.

For this part of the assignment, you will go to your local community college’s website and research the skilled trade programs they offer. Spend time exploring the different programs and options offered. Pay attention to the cost, duration, and opportunities offered by each program. If your local community college does not offer skilled trade courses, search for the next closest one that offers such programs.

### Step 4: Research trade school

Similar to how you just researched skilled trade programs at your local community college, you will now pick a trade school of your choice and explore the programs it offers. Spend time exploring the different programs and options offered. Pay attention to the cost, duration, and opportunities offered by each program. If you are having trouble finding a trade school some (non-vetted) examples are provided below:

- United Bicycle Institute <https://bikeschool.com/>
- Oregon Farrier School <https://www.oregonfarrierschool.com/>
- Institute of Technology <https://www.iot.edu/>
- VOLTA: Vocational Outside Lineworker School <https://nwlinejatc.com/volta-training-academy/>
- Universal Technical Institute <https://www.uti.edu/schools>
- Randy Potter School of Piano Technology <https://www.pianotuning.com/>
- WW NDT Services/Weld School <http://www.weldcerts.com/>
- Link to more Oregon trade schools by Oregon State Government <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/private/Documents/PCS/Trade-Schools.pdf>

### Step 5: Discussion Forum Post

Respond to the following question prompts and post your answer in the assignment discussion forum.

- What programs are offered by your local community college?
- How much does these programs cost?
- How long are these programs?
- What opportunities will be available upon completion?
- What programs are offered by the trade school you researched?
- How much do these programs cost?
- How long are these programs?
- What opportunities will be available upon completion?
- What were the differences and similarities between community college vocational programs and trade school? Any additional thoughts or information you wish to share about community college and trade schools.

## Assignment #10: Labor. Union vs. Non-Union Work in the Skilled Trades

### Step 1: Read articles and watch videos about Union vs. Non-Union paths

“The Labor Movement in the United States | History”

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/ewu-v36szIE>

“Trade (or Labor) Unions Explained in One Minute: Definition/Meaning, History & Arguments For/Against”

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/1SAzPoYEG0I>

“Union vs Non Union – There is a difference!”

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/pu2cbXZYrb0>



“What Are the Pros and Cons of Labor Unions?” Maryville University  
<https://online.maryville.edu/blog/pros-and-cons-of-unions/>

“Union Plumbing vs Non-Union Plumbing? Ask a Plumber”

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/HmBiQFMXBTK>

“Union vs Open Shop Electrical Contractors: Union vs Non-Union Apprenticeship.” ElectricianSchoolEdu.org, 20 Jan. 2017.  
<https://www.electricianschooledu.org/union-vs-open-shop-apprenticeship/>.

“Union vs. Non-Union Electrical Apprenticeship Programs.” Electrical Career Now, <https://electricalcareernow.com/articles/whats-the-difference-electrician-apprenticeship-programs>.

“What Are the Pros and Cons of a Union Contractor and a Member?!” YouTube, 12 Jan. 2022.

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/MQOJ9Drv\\_ml](https://www.youtube.com/embed/MQOJ9Drv_ml)

### **Step 2: Discussion Forum Post**

Respond to the following question prompts and post your answer in the assignment discussion forum.

- Think over the pros and cons of unions that were presented. What stood out to you? Pick your top pro and top con of union membership and explain why that one resonated with you.
- What is the role of educators and school in teaching about unions to students pursuing skilled trades?

## **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

### **B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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### **Assignment #11: Interview a Skilled Tradesperson**

#### **Step 1: Prep Interview Questions**

You will interview a skilled tradesperson and complete an assignment about the experience. The assignment will be to write a paper, create a presentation, or do an alternative format, such as a video presentation or audio recording. Please check with the instructor prior to doing an alternative format. To find a tradesperson to interview, I would recommend reaching out to local plumbers, electricians, welders, unions, trade businesses, etc. Another great place to start is contacting former tradespeople who have worked on your home in the past.

If you are unable to interview a skilled tradesperson, please search the internet (e.g., YouTube) for an interview recording of a skilled tradesperson explaining their path to becoming a professional and advice for young people interested in the trade.

I can not iterate strongly enough that, if possible, please reach out to a tradesperson and interview them. Most teachers say this is their favorite part of this course!

#### **Step 2: Interview**

Conduct your interview.

#### **Step 3: Assignment Response—Document Interview**

Chose one of the options below to document your interview:

**Option 1: Write a 2-3 page summary**

After your interview, write a 2-3 page summary presenting the questions you asked and the answers the tradesperson gave you.

OR

**Option 2: Upload a video or audio recording of the interview**

If the tradesperson is comfortable, you may record your interview and upload it either to YouTube, Google Drive, DropBox, or some other format that allows it to be shared with a link. Due to file size limitations, please do not upload the recording to the Heritage website.

OR

**Option 3: Self-Designed Alternative**

Choose to design your own assignment. Please obtain prior approval from the instructor before starting.

**Assignment #12: Removing the Stigma about trades?**

You will write a paper or create a presentation discussing the issue of how our society and education system have stigmatized blue-collar trade careers and the ways we can remove this stigma in our role as educators.

Write a paper or make a presentation to your local community leaders or school board advocating for reintroducing vocational arts education and training back into K-12 education. If efforts are already underway in your schools, how could you advocate for expanding these programs and making them more visible and have better PR.

**Assignment Options:**

**Option 1:** Prepare a presentation (Google Slides, PowerPoint, Prezi, Adobe, etc.) aimed at your educator colleagues focused on removing the stigma associated with skilled trades careers. Make sure that your presentation covers the background behind why trades have a PR problem, how schools and educators have historically helped to foster this stigma, and why these negative perceptions are misguided. Additionally, highlight the benefits trades can offer young adults and how educators are in an ideal role to encourage student's pursuit of the skilled trades. You are welcome to add any related information or topics to your presentation as you see appropriate.

**Guidelines for presentation:**

- Minimum of 25 slides
- The presentation needs to be visually pleasing. Include images, graphics, and text to persuade colleagues.
- Cite at least 5 pieces of evidence. You can use sources cited in this course or choose to use sources you have found on your own.
- Conclude the presentation with an activity or discussion for your colleagues.
- (Do either the discussion or activity. You don't need to do both!)

**Discussion:** You will come up with a list of thoughtful questions to stimulate a conversation. You are free to design the questions and discussion as you wish. This could be in a large group format, with partners, individually, or a mixture of the formats. Examples of discussion questions would be "When did you last rely on a skilled tradesperson?" "What is our school doing to promote skilled trades careers?" etc.

**Activity:** You will design an activity for your colleagues that teaches them more about the skilled trades and their benefits. Some examples are having colleagues look up apprenticeships or community college programs, having a skilled tradesperson come in at the end of your presentation as a guest speaker, etc.

OR

**Option 2:** Write a paper directed at your school administrator or school board highlighting the need to remove the stigma around trades. You will need to describe the background and extent of stigma around skilled trades careers, how schools and educators have historically helped foster this stigma, and why these negative perceptions are misguided. Then you will highlight the benefits trades can offer young adults and discuss the ways that your school or district could encourage and support students in pursuing the trades while still K-12 students.

**Guidelines for paper:**

- 500-word minimum
- Cite at least 5 pieces of evidence. You can use sources cited in this course or choose to use sources you have found on your own.
- Needs to be grammatically and semantically correct.

**Assignment #13: Interactive Lesson Development to introduce your students to skilled trades**

Please choose **one (1)** of the following options:

**Option A)** Guest Speaker

Interviewing a skilled tradesperson is an ideal way to learn more about the trade and is also highly engaging. For this option, you will design an interactive lesson where a real-world tradesperson or even several tradespeople visit your classroom and share information with your students. I welcome you to design this lesson however works best for your role. In the past many teachers have created several lessons or multi-step lessons where students prepare questions and learn about the trade prior to the guest speaker(s) visiting the classroom. Then on the day of the guest speaker visit, more questions can be answered, and more time can be spent with the tradesperson and the students. Write up your guest speaker lesson plan in a clear easy-to-follow format.

**AND/OR**

#### **Option B) Field Trip**

Getting outside of the classroom and into the real-world can be an amazing learning opportunity! You will design a field trip lesson where students visit a tradesperson or several tradespeople at work. You can write this up as a field trip proposal and plan. If you wish to introduce students to multiple trades, visiting a construction site or house under construction could create an opportunity where electricians, plumbers, painters, laborers, etc., are all working. It is also possible that you will stop at several locations or just visit one place, such as a welding fabrication shop. Write up your field trip proposal in a clear, easy-to-follow format.

**AND/OR**

#### **Option C) Self-Designed Alternative**

Choose to design your own assignment. Please obtain prior approval from the instructor before starting.

#### **Assignment #14: (500 Level ONLY)**

In addition to the 400-level assignments, complete **two (2)** of the following options:

##### **Option A) Lesson Plan**

Create a lesson plan to introduce skilled trades. Tailor the lesson to your teaching role and students. The lesson topic is up to you, but it could be on what the skilled trades are, the different types of trades, how students would be trained through an apprenticeship or trade school, the benefits of community college programs, etc. An example lesson plan was developed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/educator-tools/youth-financial-education/teach/activities/exploring-life-after-high-school-trades/>.

Write up your lesson plan in a clear, easy-to-follow format. Here is a link to a template if you wish to use one.

**AND/OR**

##### **Option B) Presentation for Students**

Create a presentation aimed at your students based on what you have learned from this course. Focus on perspectives or strategies you feel would be beneficial for your school/classroom. You must have at least 20 slides, graphics, pictures, creative design, and appropriate font size.

**AND/OR**

##### **Option C) Self-Designed Assignment**

Choose an assignment of your own design, with prior approval from the instructor.

#### **C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #15: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

##### **SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

#### **INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:

Jake Gordon, M.S. Ed., received his AA from Chemeketa and BS and MS degrees from Western Oregon University. Jake is an experienced middle school teacher who taught social studies, geography, and language arts courses for more than seven years. In 2022 Jake followed his interest in the trades and electricity by attending VOLTA line school, completing Chemeketa Community College's CDL program, and worked as an electric line groundman before being hired by Portland General Electric as a Design Project Manager responsible for power line replacement projects. He has a desire to share the world with his students, providing them with the skills needed to explore and understand the world around them.

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