



West College of Education & Professional Studies
ADED 4113 Capstone Project
Spring 2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Mr. Dirk Welch
Office hours: By Appointment
E-mail: dirk.welch@msutexas.edu

Office: Clark Student Center Room 173
Office phone: (940) 397-4972

Course Communication

Email is my preferred method of communication at dirk.welch@msutexas.edu. I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the weekday. Please expect a 48-hour response on weekends and holidays.

If you need to contact me via phone or Zoom, please email me your phone number and I will schedule a time to connect with you.

Required Materials

CliftonStrengths Assessment (AKA Clifton Strengthsfinder 2.0)

- Can be found on Amazon.com and at Gallup.com
 - Look for one that contains the access code to complete the assessment

Course Description

ADED 4113, Capstone Project, is the culminating course to the degree completion program. It is designed to prepare students to effectively join the workforce by: reflecting on their knowledge, skills, and abilities; strengthening job search competence, and polishing professional writing technique.

Course Objective

As graduating seniors, you are demonstrating your knowledge and readiness for acceptance of a bachelor's degree. In this course, you will be integrating and applying the knowledge you have gained throughout your academic career. You should now have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to research, locate, and utilize resources needed to assist you in completing your assignments. A collegial, scholarly, and mature approach to topics, assignments, and class discussions is expected. Assignments are submitted timely and at the quality and quantity expected of a graduating senior. Your work should always be proofed, critically reflective, insightful, and thoughtful when you post to class discussions and submit your assignments to the D2L dropbox. In this course, you will be expected to

critically think, effectively communicate, integrate, and apply previous learning experiences to your professional, academic, and personal goals.

The objective of the course should permeate throughout the semester and be consistently demonstrated in all work submitted.

Learning Outcomes

- Apply conventions of professional norms in your academic and professional lives (cover letter, resume, mock interview)
- Construct and communicate ideas using clear, succinct, and correct written language (essay)
- Complete assignments which encourage critical and in-depth reflection of your educational and professional experiences (discussion posts)
- Relate an awareness of diversity in yourself, others, and in the context of the professional and social environment (diverse/career interview)
- Build real-life skills for real-life roles (project-based learning)
- Illustrate collaborative learning, diversity of ideas, and communication through critical thinking and creative problem-solving (discussion posts)

Library Resources and Helpful Videos

[How to log into MSU Library](#)

[How to find and use research guides](#)

[How to recognize peer-reviewed articles](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Student Handbook](#).

Syllabus Disclaimer

Changes in the course syllabus, assignments, and due dates may be made periodically. What is posted in the syllabus is for your immediate information. Changes, corrections, updates to the assignments, due dates, and grading points will be posted in D2L in the respective assignment area, posted in the "NEWS" area of your D2L course homepage, and emailed to you through D2L. Please check often! I will make every effort to inform you of changes or inconsistencies between what is in the syllabus and what may be posted at D2L. Assignment instructions in D2L take precedence over the syllabus. Use D2L instructions as your guide to completing your assignments. You MUST remain connected to your D2L course! This is where I will make immediate and primary changes.

Please make sure that you capture the dates for the assignments. I have provided ample time to complete assignments and in between assignment due dates. Please keep up with your assignment dates and submit your work on time! I

rarely accept excuses for late and non-submitted assignments.

Grading

Read this syllabus in its entirety. It is comprehensive and outlines assignments and activities for the course. Close to 95% of your questions or concerns are addressed in the syllabus. I will regularly refer you back to the syllabus.

Listed below are the point values for all graded assignments (Table 1). Points earned throughout the semester will be added together to determine earned grade in the course (Table 2).

Table 1. Points allocated to each assignment:

Assignments	Points
Introduction (Discussion Board)	25
Diverse/Career Interview (Discussion Board)	25
Clifton Strengths (Discussion Board)	25
Professional Articles Related to Career Field (Discussion Board)	25
Forage Job Simulation (Drop Box)	50
Graduate School (Drop Box) Or Cover Letter (Drop Box)	25
Resume & LinkedIn (Quinnia)	50
Mock Interview (Quinnia)	25
Total	250

Table 2: Total Points Needed for Each of the Following Final Grades

Grade	Points
A	225+
B	224-200
C	199-175
D	174-150
F	Less than 150

Late Work

As a senior graduating from this university, I have an expectation you have organized your schedules to accommodate the work that needs to be accomplished in your classes. Assignments must be submitted or posted by the established due dates. Discussions cannot be posted to the discussion board after the Friday, 11:59 pm deadline. The discussion board will be locked and the class has moved on.

Assignments submitted one minute after the assignment deadline are considered late and not accepted. In rare instances late work will be accepted. I understand emergencies arise. Communicating with me is key! In those rare instances where late work is accepted, an automatic 20% deduction on the assignment will occur.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L student learning management system is required for this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program. It is the primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program. Let me know the problems you are encountering.

Attendance

Successful completion of this class is a graduation requirement. My expectation is that you will be present for class on the first day. Attendance is verified when you check into D2L assignments at least twice a week. Excessive absences (not signing into D2L, noncompliance with assignments, and lack of participation on the discussion board) are indicators of non-compliance with the course and may lead to an administrative drop from the course.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires a computer with internet access to complete and upload assignments. It is your responsibility to have access to a working computer for this class. *Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for me to allow extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.* **Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world connected to the internet. Contact me immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. For help, log into D2L and be sure to submit a problems report.

Drop box Submission for Assignments

Your individual drop box is connected to your individual gradebook. Your gradebook is activated when there is an assignment in the drop box for me to grade or view. Your work must be submitted to the drop box and NOT in an email to me. If there is nothing in the drop box there is nothing for me to grade. Although this is your individual drop box your name should be on all work that you author and submit to your drop box.

Assignments submitted one minute after the assignment deadline are considered late and not accepted. In rare instances late work will be accepted. I understand emergencies arise. Communicating with me is key!

Class Discussion

The purpose of our class discussions is to establish a sense of community, view diverse perspectives relevant to the discussion topic, and remain organized and focused with the weekly course material. Although discussion topics will be available for viewing throughout the semester you are only able to post to the discussion thread during the week the thread is open. Your **main post** and two **response posts** should be completed ***by the due date posted***.

Your **main post** is **encouraged** to be posted to the discussion board *before 11:59pm on the Thursday it is assigned*. This facilitates quality interaction on the discussion board; allows time for us to read, review, and respond to posts.

Grading is based upon assignments being completed on time, meeting the minimum word count, degree to which they meet the requirements of the assignment, and the quality of the content. Review the Discussion Rubric for more details. Posts that are late and have not received late acceptance, will receive an automatic 100% deduction.

A minimum posting level of no less than **300 words** for the main discussion/post is required. Both response posts must be no less than **100 words**, each. Posts should be of meaningful substance which reflects contemplation for, and implication of, the material in a mature, collegiate, and insightful manner. If there is supportive information to your post you may provide us an attachment for review, but do not post your original post or response as an attachment.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the [MSU Catalog](#).

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: "[Run. Hide. Fight.](#)"

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick
Title IX Coordinator
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
940-397-4213
laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#).

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#)

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct.](#)

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168 (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services.](#)

Course Schedule Fall 2024

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments	Due Date
Week 1 March 22 – March 28	Introduction	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, March 28, 2025
Week 2 March 29 – April 4	Career Interview with a Diverse Person	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 4, 2025
Week 3 April 5 – April 11	Clifton Strengths	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 11, 2025
Week 4 April 12 – April 18	Professional Articles Related to Career Field	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 18, 2025
Week 5 April 19 – April 25	The Forage Capstone Project (Drop Box)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 25, 2025
Week 6 April 26 – May 2	Graduate School or Cover Letter (Drop Box)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, May 2, 2025
Week 7 May 3 – May 9	Resume (Quinnicia) & LinkedIn (Quinnicia)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, May 9, 2025
Week 8 May 10 – May 15	Mock Interview (Quinnicia)	Before 11:59 p.m. <u>Thursday</u> , May 15, 2025

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Table 3: Assignments, Due Dates, Mode of Submission, and Points Awarded

Assignment 1	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Introduction (Discussion Board)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, March 28, 2025	25
<p>Begin your own thread for your main post, with your name as the title. Please do not post as an attachment.</p> <p><u>Answer the following</u> - Introduce yourself by providing your name and city in which you live, no addresses. 1) Where are you with your education? 2) What made you pursue your bachelor’s degree, when do you plan to graduate, and what plans do you have to continue your education? 3) What do you do (or plan to do) professionally, and what are your future career plans? 4) How many courses are you completing this semester? 5) What helps you to manage or organize your time? 6) What are your expectations of this course and what will you do to ensure you have a meaningful learning experience in this course?</p> <p>Second part of introduction: How do you perceive the world? In the “Resources for Assignment” Module under the Course Content area for this course you will gain access to complete the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).</p> <p>The MBTI is an introspective self-report questionnaire designed to indicate psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions. Please complete the posted self-assessment questionnaire and be prepared to share your personality type.</p> <p>From what you read about the MBTI answer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your personality type? • How do you believe this helps (or not) influence your learning, decisions, and your career interest and choice? • What did you learn new about you? <p>Do not over-analyze yourself or the information. This questionnaire is only to help you to connect a little better with yourself.</p> <p>Complete the main post following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p> <p>Complete the two response posts following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p>		

Assignment 2	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Diverse/Career Interview (Discussion Board)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 4, 2025	25
<p>Identify and interview a person of a culture, ethnicity, gender, or such, diverse from yourself. This person should be in the job, career, field, or profession that holds interest for you, that you are currently working, or the field you plan to pursue.</p> <p>You will interview this person regarding their: 1) Perspective of the field/career/profession. 2) Challenges and relevant or pertinent issues facing this career field or the job. 3) What solutions, changes, innovations, or implementations are needed? 4) What experienced advice or suggestions would they leave for you?</p> <p>Do not provide us a transcript of what was said. Summarize the highlights. Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your own ethnicity, and your interviewee's, cultural background; age (range is ok); gender; position in the organization, and your length of time with the organization. <p>Sample interview questions which can be asked: How did you develop your interest in this area? Who did you view as role models in this area? What are challenging aspects of a diverse working environment? What steps have you taken to meet this challenge? What are the enhancements? What experiences have you had working with others of different backgrounds than your own? What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges and issues? Can you recall a time when you provided feedback to a co- worker/subordinate who was unaccepting of others? Can you recall a time when a person's cultural background affected your approach to a work situation? Tell me about a time that you adapted your style in order to work effectively with those who were different from you.</p> <p>Please be sensitive to how the interviewee might react/respond to this line of interviewing/questioning so be sure to have a willing participant.</p> <p>Complete the main post following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p> <p>Complete the two response posts following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p>		

Assignment 3	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Clifton Strengths (Discussion Board)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 11, 2025	25
<p>In the "Resources for Assignment" Module under the Course Content area for this course I posted a Clifton Strengths reference card to assist in understanding your results. Refer to the "Required Materials" section of the syllabus for recommended places to purchase the CliftonStrengths Assessment (AKA StrengthsFinder 2.0).</p> <p>Please complete the self-assessment questionnaire and be prepared to share your 5 Strengths.</p> <p>From what you read about the assessment/results, please provide/answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of your Top 5 strengths. • What did you learn new about yourself? • An example of how utilizing one of your Top 5 strengths has been beneficial for you. • How do you believe this impacts the choices you make and how you accomplish things? • How you will utilize the knowledge of your Top 5 strengths in your work and personal life. <p>Do not over-analyze yourself or the information. This questionnaire is to help you connect a little better with yourself.</p> <p>Complete the main post following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p> <p>Complete the two response posts following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p>		

Assignment 4	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Professional Articles Related to Career Field (Discussion Board)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 18, 2025	25
<p>Select an area or topic of interest related to your employment, professional experience, career field, or interest. Locate two related professional journal, peer-reviewed articles current within the last 10 years. These articles will discuss research, studies, trends, changes, challenges or current issues in the field. Your articles need to be relevant and have implications for you, your employment, profession, or career field.</p> <p>Information to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the articles about? • What are your thoughts and opinions regarding what the authors are presenting? (You must support opinions with credible information). • Is the information presented by the authors balanced with the pros and cons? Are they in agreement/disagreement about aspects? • How does this impact you or others in the field? • What are the implications and career outlook? How will you prepare or present yourself for this challenge? • What have been your personal experiences or observations in this area? <p>You must read the articles to be able to adequately understand and discuss what is being addressed.</p> <p>DO NOT submit articles from sources such as nytimes.com, huffingtonpost.com, msnbc.com, foxnews.com, cnn.com, Policeone, etc., for they may be biased and are not peer-reviewed sources. These sources may be highly credible, reliable, and reputable; however, for our <i>academic and scholarly purposes</i> we are reviewing only peer-reviewed articles, research, studies, and professional journals for this assignment. Please cite the article and include a link so classmates can easily access.</p> <p>For the discussion assignment you will need to read and understand your articles. Please do not use the first articles that you discover. Use of articles not relevant to your area of interest will indicate to me a lack of attention and research on this assignment.</p> <p>Synthesize and integrate both articles into your main post. Complete the main post following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p> <p>Complete the two response posts following the guidelines outlined in the Class Discussion section of the syllabus (page 5).</p>		

Assignment 5	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Forge Capstone Project (Submit to Drop Box)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, April 25, 2025	50
<p>Forge is an online platform which hosts free virtual experiences designed and delivered by leading companies. By complete self-paced modules that simulate work undertaken during a traditional internship or graduate program, you are able to develop your skills and gain a real understanding of work in practice.</p> <p>In the "Resources for Assignment" Module under the Course Content area for this course you will find access to the Forge Platform and the list of job simulations to choose from. Ideally, you will want to pick one of the job simulations that closely aligns with your professional goals and career field of interest. Go to this website to access the class page:</p> <p>Forge Link</p> <p>Complete all requirements outlined in your job simulation. Upon completion, you will need to screen shot the completion certificate from your Forge virtual experience and upload it to your Dropbox.</p> <p>Next, create a PowerPoint or slide presentation that outlines the following required questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you were asked to complete • What you learned from the experience • How you will integrate what you learned/experienced as you move forward in your career • What happened during your virtual experience program that most surprised you? • What was the most fulfilling part of your virtual experience program? Least fulfilling? • What does that suggest to you about your interests? • What did you learn from the virtual experience program about your preferred work style? • What might you do differently as a result of the virtual experience program and your reflection of it? <p>You will need to record the PowerPoint/slide presentation and verbally present the information above. The presentation should be 3-5 minutes in length and answer the questions. Upload your completed recording to the appropriate drop box in D2L.</p>		

Assignment 6	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Graduate School (Submit to Drop Box) OR Cover Letter (Submit to Drop Box)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, May 2, 2025	25
<p>Complete one of the following:</p> <p>Identify five graduate schools that are of interest to you. NOTE: Graduate school admittance does not include the ACT or SAT. That is used for undergraduate admissions. Typical graduate school admittance examinations would be the GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT, etc.</p> <p>In the "Resources for Assignment" Module under the Course Content area for this course you will find a worksheet to help you compare the schools.</p> <p>Complete the worksheet and submit to the appropriate drop box in D2L.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Cover letter: states the individual's interests, goals and experiences. The letter will augment and accentuate the resume. The letter should be written as if you are actually applying for a job in your present or intended career field or profession.</p> <p>Please proofread carefully. Your grade will be significantly lowered if your paper has numerous spelling/grammatical errors.</p> <p>Submit the cover letter to the appropriate drop box in D2L.</p>		

Assignment 7	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Resume (Quinncia) & LinkedIn (Quinncia)	Before 11:59 p.m. Friday, May 9, 2025	50

The resume is used during job searches to provide a summary of your qualifications. In the Capstone course, the university senior is preparing for a career after college or hoping to expand current career/professional opportunities. The resume must be professional, neat, and well-organized. It describes your education and experience in professional language.

Resume: Unless you have a lot of employment and university involvement, you should probably not exceed one page (two pages maximum). If you have a resume this is an opportune time to polish and perfect it, to receive feedback, and a grade. If you do not have a current resume you will begin constructing one in this class. DO NOT double space on your resume.

Submit the resume to Quinncia. Instructions on how to submit to Quinncia are provided in the "Resources for Assignment" Module, under the Course Content area. The grading system used to award points is outlined within.

You can upload and adjust your resume as many times as you like to improve upon your grade. NOTE: Only the last three resumes scored are stored in the system.

AND

LinkedIn: Networking and good use of social media are cornerstones to a successful job search.

Submit your LinkedIn profile to Quinncia. Instructions on how to submit to Quinncia are provided in the "Resources for Assignment" Module, under the Course Content area. The grading system used to award points is outlined within.

VERY IMPORTANT: Visit the "Mustangs Survival Guide" area at the [MSU Career Management Center website](#) for samples of resumes & cover letters.

Assignment 8	Due Dates/Time (Central Time)	Points
Mock Interview (Complete in Quinncia)	Before 11:59 p.m. Thursday , May 15, 2025	25
<p>The Interview is a very important component during a job search. Interviews take many different forms (in-person, phone, web based, and video). You will complete a mock interview in Quinncia.</p> <p><u>Recommend against</u> using Safari as your browser to complete the video interview.</p> <p>I have provided in the "Resources for Assignment" Module, under the Course Content area in this course, how to use the Quinncia Interview feature. The grading system used to award points is outlined within.</p> <p>You can complete as many mock interviews as you like to improve upon your grade. NOTE: Only the last three mock interviews scored are storied in the system.</p> <p>VERY IMPORTANT: Visit the "Mustangs Survival Guide" area at the MSU Career Management Center website for examples of interview questions.</p>		