



Course Syllabus

ITSC 2439 – Personal Computer Help Desk Support

Revision Date: 01/10/2017

Catalog Description: Diagnosis and solution of user hardware and software related problems with on-the-job and/or simulated projects.

Lecture hours = 3 Lab hours = 3

Prerequisites: none

Semester Credit Hours: 4

Lecture Hours per Week: 3

Lab Hours per Week: 3

Contact Hours per Semester: 96

State Approval Code: 11.0101

Instructional Goals and Purposes:

Panola College's instructional goals include 1) creating an academic atmosphere in which students may develop their intellects and skills and 2) providing courses so students may receive a certificate/an associate degree or transfer to a senior institution that offers baccalaureate degrees.

The purpose of this course is to: 1) fulfill academic requirements of an Associate of Applied Science degree or a technical certificate at Panola College, 2) provide learners with a foundation of people skills and technical skills required for user support professionals. This includes troubleshooting and problem solving, successful communication with users, determining a client's specific needs, and training end users.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate rapport with users in problem-solving situations.
2. Analyze user problems and lead them through solutions.
3. Maintain problem logs.
4. Formulate problem-solving methodologies.

Specific Course Objectives (includes SCANS):

After studying all materials and resources presented in the course, the student should be able to complete all objectives listed below with a minimum competency of 70% on assignments and exams.

1. **Introduction to Computer User Support** (1ai, 1aai, 1aiv, 1bi-vi, 1ci, 1ciii-v, 2a-2e)
 - a. Identify how changes in computer technology over time have affected computer use.
 - b. Classify end users.
 - c. Identify resources computer users need and major categories of end-user software.
 - d. Identify common problems encountered by users.
 - e. Identify job market demand for user support workers.
 - f. List common ways to organize and provide support services.
 - g. Identify typical position descriptions for user support staff.
 - h. Identify knowledge, skills, and abilities required for an entry-level support position.
 - i. Identify career paths for user support workers.
2. **Customer Service Skills for User Support Agents** (1ai, 1aai, 1aiv, 1bi-vi, 1ci, 1ciii-v, 2a-2e)
 - a. Name important communication and interpersonal skills and customer service relationships for

- support agents.
 - b. Specify reasons support agents must listen and read carefully.
 - c. Demonstrate how agents build and communicate understanding.
 - d. Identify important aspects of effective speaking and nonverbal communication.
 - e. List how support agents develop a personal communication style.
 - f. Identify strategies support agents use for telephone communications.
 - g. Identify how support agents develop an incident management strategy.
 - h. Identify how developing an understanding of different personality types and work styles can help an agent.
 - i. Formulate strategies support agents use to handle difficult clients.
 - j. Identify guidelines for client-friendly communications on user support Web sites.
 - k. Identify how to build excellent customer service.
3. **Skills for Troubleshooting Computer Problems (1ai,1aai,1aiv,1bi-vi,1ci,1ciii-v,2a-2e)**
 - a. Identify the troubleshooting process and the thinking skills required for successful troubleshooting.
 - b. Identify communication skills for troubleshooting.
 - c. Identify information resources to help solve computer problems.
 - d. Identify diagnostic and repair tools used to troubleshoot computer problems.
 - e. Formulate strategies for troubleshooting.
 - f. Identify how to develop your own approach to problem solving.
 4. **Common Support Problems (1ai,1aai,1aiv,1bi-vi,1ci,1ciii-v,2a-2e)**
 - a. Indicate categories of common end-user computer problems.
 - b. Identify problem-solving processes that can be applied to typical support problems.
 5. **Help Desk Operation (1ai,1aai,1aiv,1bi-vi,1ci,1ciii-v,2a-2e)**
 - a. Identify Help desk operational procedures.
 - b. Analyze a multilevel support model.
 - c. Describe the incident management process.
 - d. Describe best practices in help desk operation.
 - e. Describe the physical layout of help desk work areas.
 - f. List types of job stress in help desk work.
 - g. Identify hardware and software tools used by support agents, managers, and end users
 - h. Describe help desk industry trends.
 6. **Product Evaluation Strategies and Support Standards (1ai,1aai,1aiv,1bi-vi,1ci,1ciii-v,2a-2e)**
 - a. Describe how product and support standards emerged.
 - b. Identify common tools and methods for evaluating and selecting computer products
 - c. Identify information resources and decision-making tools for evaluating and selecting computer products.
 - d. Describe typical product support standards.
 - e. How organizations develop and implement support standards.
 7. **End-User Needs Assessment Projects (1ai,1aai,1aiv,1bi-vi,1ci,1ciii-v,2a-2e)**
 - a. List basic strategies for performing end-user needs analysis and assessment.
 - b. Describe steps analysts undertake to analyze and assess a user's needs.
 - c. Identify common tools that help support specialists to conduct a user needs assessment project.
 - d. Name tasks in managing a user needs assessment project.
 - e. Identify project management software tools.

Other Topics that may be included in the learning experience:

- Writing for End Users
- User Support Management
- Installing and Managing End-User Computers
- Training Computer Users
- A User Support Utility Tool Kit

Course Content:

Students in all sections of this course will be required to do the following:

Students in all sections of this course will be required to do the following:

1. Complete reading activities.
2. Complete terms and concepts quizzes.
3. Complete discussion activities.
4. Complete hands-on projects as assigned.
5. Complete case projects as assigned.
6. Complete a MINIMUM of two proctored exams.
7. Complete a Final exam.

Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery:

Learners in the traditional class, hybrid class, and online class will have access to this course via the current Learning Management System. Learners in the traditional class and hybrid class will meet regularly for discussion on the new material. Learners in the online class will only be required to meet with the instructor or the proctor in a verified testing center for exams. Details will be posted in the Learning Management System.

All assignments will be completed and submitted via the current Learning Management System or as indicated by the instructor.

Learners in both the traditional and Internet classes should use the messaging (email) component of the current Learning Management System to communicate with the instructor and others in the learning community. If you are unable to contact the instructor using this method, you may use the instructor's Panola College email address. Panola College instructors attempt to respond to all email within 24 hours when on campus or during virtual office hours. Always include a subject line and your name in your email.

Major Assignments / Assessments:

The following items will be assigned during the semester and used to calculate the student's final grade:

Assignments

1. Concepts Quizzes
For each chapter (or group of chapters) assigned, the learner may complete a quiz on the terms and concepts introduced.
2. Discussion Topics
The learner may complete discussions on the topics introduced.
3. Hands-On and/or Case Projects
The learner may complete textbook activities one topics introduced.

Assessment(s)**Major Exams**

1. A minimum of two proctored exams will be assigned per semester.
2. A final exam will be assigned.

Course Grade:

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

Major Exams	60%
Other Activities	40%
90 and above	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
Under 60	F

Texts, Materials, and Supplies:

- Textbook: ***Computer User Support for Help Desk and Support Specialists, 6th Edition.***
ISBN-10: 1-285-85268-0
ISBN-13: 978-1-285-85268-3
Author: Fred Beisse
Publisher: Cengage Learning
Copyright: 2015, 2013, 2010
- Access to a reliable computer and high-speed Internet.

Required Readings:

As assigned from the required textbook.

Recommend Readings:

None

Other:

- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <http://www.panolacollegestore.com>
- For testing services, use the following link: <http://www.panola.edu/elearning/testing.html>
- If any student in this class has special classroom or testing needs because of a physical learning or emotional condition, please contact the ADA Student Coordinator in Support Services located in the Administration Building or go to <http://www.panola.edu/student-success/disability-support-services/> for more information.
- Withdrawing from a course is the student's responsibility. Students who do not attend class and who do not withdraw will receive the grade earned for the course.
- Student Handbook, *The Pathfinder*: <http://www.panola.edu/student-success/documents/pathfinder.pdf>

SCANS CRITERIA

1) Foundation skills are defined in three areas: basic skills, thinking skills, and personal qualities.

- a) **Basic Skills:** A worker must read, write, perform arithmetic and mathematical operations, listen, and speak effectively. These skills include:
 - i) Reading: locate, understand, and interpret written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules.
 - ii) Writing: communicate thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing, and create documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts.
 - iii) Arithmetic and Mathematical Operations: perform basic computations and approach practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques.
 - iv) Listening: receive, attend to, interpret, and respond to verbal messages and other cues.
 - v) Speaking: Organize ideas and communicate orally.
- b) **Thinking Skills:** A worker must think creatively, make decisions, solve problems, visualize, know how to learn, and reason effectively. These skills include:
 - i) Creative Thinking: generate new ideas.
 - ii) Decision Making: specify goals and constraints, generate alternatives, consider risks, and evaluate and choose the best alternative.
 - iii) Problem Solving: recognize problems and devise and implement plan of action.
 - iv) Visualize ("Seeing Things in the Mind's Eye"): organize and process symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information.
 - v) Knowing How to Learn: use efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills.
 - vi) Reasoning: discover a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and apply it when solving a problem.
- c) **Personal Qualities:** A worker must display responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty.
 - i) Responsibility: exert a high level of effort and persevere toward goal attainment.
 - ii) Self-Esteem: believe in one's own self-worth and maintain a positive view of oneself.
 - iii) Sociability: demonstrate understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in group settings.
 - iv) Self-Management: assess oneself accurately, set personal goals, monitor progress, and exhibit self-control.
 - v) Integrity and Honesty: choose ethical courses of action.

2) Workplace competencies are defined in five areas: resources, interpersonal skills, information, systems, and technology.

- a) **Resources:** A worker must identify, organize, plan, and allocate resources effectively.
 - i) Time: select goal-relevant activities, rank them, allocate time, and prepare and follow schedules.
 - ii) Money: Use or prepare budgets, make forecasts, keep records, and make adjustments to meet objectives.
 - iii) Material and Facilities: Acquire, store, allocate, and use materials or space efficiently. Examples: construct a decision time line chart; use computer software to plan a project; prepare a budget; conduct a cost/benefits analysis; design an RFP process; write a job description; develop a staffing plan.
- b) **Interpersonal Skills:** A worker must work with others effectively.
 - i) Participate as a Member of a Team: contribute to group effort.
 - ii) Teach Others New Skills.
 - iii) Serve Clients/Customers: work to satisfy customer's expectations.

- iv) **Exercise Leadership:** communicate ideas to justify position, persuade and convince others, responsibly challenge existing procedures and policies.
- v) **Negotiate:** work toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolve divergent interests.
- vi) **Work with Diversity:** work well with men and women from diverse backgrounds.

Examples: collaborate with a group member to solve a problem; work through a group conflict situation, train a colleague; deal with a dissatisfied customer in person; select and use appropriate leadership styles; use effective delegation techniques; conduct an individual or team negotiation; demonstrate an understanding of how people from different cultural backgrounds might behave in various situations.

c) **Information:** A worker must be able to acquire and use information.

- i) **Acquire and Evaluate Information.**
- ii) **Organize and Maintain Information.**
- iii) **Interpret and Communicate Information.**
- iv) **Use Computers to Process Information.**

Examples: research and collect data from various sources; develop a form to collect data; develop an inventory record-keeping system; produce a report using graphics; make an oral presentation using various media; use on-line computer data bases to research a report; use a computer spreadsheet to develop a budget.

d) **Systems:** A worker must understand complex interrelationships.

- i) **Understand Systems:** know how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operate effectively with them.
- ii) **Monitor and Correct Performance:** distinguish trends, predict impacts on system operations, diagnose deviations in systems' performance and correct malfunctions.
- iii) **Improve or Design Systems:** suggest modifications to existing systems and develop new or alternative systems to improve performance.

Examples: draw and interpret an organizational chart; develop a monitoring process; choose a situation needing improvement, break it down, examine it, propose an improvement, and implement it.

e) **Technology:** A worker must be able to work with a variety of technologies.

- i) **Select Technology:** choose procedures, tools or equipment including computers and related technologies.
- ii) **Apply Technologies to Task:** understand overall intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment.
- iii) **Maintain and Troubleshoot Equipment:** Prevent, identify, or solve problems with equipment, including computers and other technologies.

Examples: read equipment descriptions and technical specifications to select equipment to meet needs; set up and assemble appropriate equipment from instructions; read and follow directions for troubleshooting and repairing equipment.