"Understanding and Developing Rigor & Relevance in High School Classroom"

**Course Description:** The Iowa Department of Education has identified five characteristics of effective instruction that focus on helping students develop the deep conceptual and procedural knowledge identified in the essential concepts and skill sets of the Iowa Core Curriculum. In addition, the ongoing focus to meet the needs of the 21st century learner demand that instructional methods are examined and adjusted accordingly. One of the five effective characteristics is rigorous and relevant curriculum. Through this 1-credit, 15 hour class, Vinton-Shellsburg High School teachers will take part in activities that will assist in preparations for the demands of the Iowa Core Curriculum.

**Objectives**

- Each participant will be able to have the opportunity to understand and define rigor and relevance
- Each participant will be able to have the opportunity to apply their knowledge of rigor and relevance to their own lesson planning and instructional strategy design.
- Each participant will be able to individually implement a portion of their designed unit.
- Each participant will be able to have the opportunity to utilize ongoing strategies from ICLE (Reflective Scorecard) to raise the level of rigor and relevance.
- Each participant will be able to work to understand student learning styles.
- Each participant will be able to utilize tools from ICLE (Data-Drive Curriculum Checklist) to reflect and describe current unit(s) of instruction.

**Indicators of Quality** (Ch. 17 IA Admin. Code, Renewal of Licenses)

2. The course assists teachers in improving student learning performance.
   - Qualitative research on the tens of thousands of students who drop out of school annually in this country shows that their main reason for leaving is not that they lack the intellectual skills to do the work. The common theme of the research is that students who drop out of high school do not see a connection between what goes on in school and what their future holds. We must make those connections between education and the real world. (Schmidt, W., McKnight, C. and Raizen, S. *Characterizing Pedagogical Flow: An Investigation of Mathematics and Science Teaching in Six Countries*)
   - Carefully planned instruction that is aligned with academic standards and taught in a context that interests high school students will lead to a greater relevance of instruction. Research shows that students learn more when they realize that what they are learning has practical application to the world of work. (High Schools That Work)

**Rationale/Research:** This course proposal and accompanying teacher professional development is based upon a number of factors:

1. Data:
   - 2007-08 and 2008-09 V-S HS Resiliency Survey Data (specifically the category of Authentic Work)
   - Dropout rates: both students with IEP’s and regular education students.
c. Vinton-Shellsburg State Performance Plan Data  
d. Standardized Testing Scores – both ITED and NWEA

2. International Center for Leadership in Education:  
   1. A changing world  
   2. Need to motivate all students to high achievement  
   3. Emphasize essential skills/knowledge  
   4. Shift focus from teaching to learning  
   5. Reduce overloaded curriculum  
   6. Unified perspective and focus

3. High School Summit response from AEA10 districts

4. Demands of impending implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum – specifically teaching for understanding concepts and skills.

Course Requirements:  
- Attendance and participation at all sessions is mandatory.  
- Self reflection sheets that will be collected each session.

Attendance/Make-Up Policy:  
- Attendance at all sessions is required for both recertification and graduate credit.  
- If a person is taking the course for credit is absent, arrangements will be made to make up the learning experience. These arrangements must be initiated by the person taking the course.  
- All course requirements must be completed by May 1, 2010.
# Participant Evaluation/Grading Rubric:

## Recertification Credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Un satisfactory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Attendance at all sessions.</td>
<td>Failure to complete any one of the requirements listed for a satisfactory grade.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Satisfactory analyses of assigned work. Reflections completed for each session.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Write:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• An outlined unit plan with demonstration of teaching in all (4) quadrants.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Each teacher will write a quadrant D specific lesson plan.</td>
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## Graduate Credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
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</table>
| A     | Attendance at all sessions. Satisfactory analyses of assigned work. Reflections completed for each session. Write:  
       | • An outlined unit plan with demonstration of teaching in all (4) quadrants.  
       | • Each teacher will write a quadrant D specific lesson plan. (Deep Knowledge of these must be evident) |
| B     | Attendance at all sessions. Satisfactory analyses of assigned work. Reflections completed for each session. Write:  
       | • An outlined unit plan with demonstration of teaching in all (4) quadrants.  
       | • Each teacher will write a quadrant D specific lesson plan. (Substantial knowledge of these must be evident.) |
| C     | Attendance at all sessions. Satisfactory analyses of assigned work. Reflections completed for each session. Write:  
       | • An outlined unit plan with demonstration of teaching in all (4) quadrants.  
       | • Each teacher will write a quadrant D specific lesson plan. (Limited or Inconsistent knowledge of these must be evident.) |
| F     | Lack of attendance at all sessions. Incomplete analyses of assigned work. Reflections not completed for each session. Any of the following not done:  
       | • An outlined unit plan with demonstration of teaching in all (4) quadrants.  
       | • Each teacher will write a quadrant D specific lesson plan.                  |