TLDR.school

Instructional Design Document

COURSE OVERVIEW

01. In response to the oft-asked media question "Is College Worth It" – this course examines that question with both academic and decidedly non-academic research on the subject. This discussion of college benefits in the media has been mostly focused on ROI (return on investment), basically, highlighting the fact that degree holders from many disciplines tend to out-earn their non-graduate counterparts. But that is just a small part of the story of college persistence. This project instead focuses on the bureaucratic problems, cultural perceptions, and other intangible issues that remain top of mind for college dropouts, impacting their self-esteem and work/life balance.

KNOWLEDGE GAP

02. The project explores stigma, and knowledge gaps (real or imagined) in the graduate vs. non-graduate discourse. It will also highlight many micro-learning opportunities available, intending to bridge these perceived gaps in knowledge and boost confidence in those who did not or could not persist through years of higher education. It may also highlight public figures who despite graduating from elite colleges have become failures in the eyes of many. The goal is to help erase the line delineating those who have a piece of paper from those who don't.

LEARNER ANALYSIS & PROFILE

03. Research shows most former students still want to complete their degrees and many (if not all) feel the sting of lifelong stigma for not having finished what they started in higher education. The course will assure them their reasons for leaving school are valid, but also provide them with hope, and examples as to why it's never too late.

✓	**General Characteristics**
	Participants will probably have a high school degree or equivalent and be well versed in the topic areas covered in the micro-course from both high school and previous experience registering for college gen eds.

✓	**Specific Characteristics**
	These students will have a sense of humor about themselves and higher education. The course will poke fun at college while offering a humorous video-heavy coursework about what is typically taught in college and why.

✓	**Motivation and Attitude**
	These students will come from groups who are both intrinsically motivated to understand their experience but who are also seeking some solace about their position relative to current college attendees/graduates.

✓	**Expectations and Vocational Aspirations**
	The learners are already experiencing a conflict about what they want to study and how to accomplish a degree.

✓	**Decision-related Characteristics**
	The learners are already expecting to decide their next moves, this will help them decide to stay, go or go back.

TARGET AUDIENCE

04. There seems to be a very large community of frustrated current and former college students to tap into for a survey participation and offering insights – SubReddits r/collegedropouts & r/backtocollege and similar forums.

COURSE TYPE: Online

05. TLDR: School is a non-serious / non-academic and sometimes humorous look at higher education with highlights from a few common academic disciples as they notably relate to popular culture, from the perspective of intersectionality, it will feature books and a few short videos accompanied by interactive assessment content.

COURSE MODALITY

06. Asynchronous Online Delivery - self-paced with log in required for most quizzes add all discussion boards.

1	**Setting(s)** The setting of this course would be virtual. Equipment needed would be a computer and access to internet.
2	**Learner involvement** Learners would vary between low (passive recall), and medium (finding materials) and high involvement (essays).
3	**Learner affiliation** Learner affiliation would be high because the learners involved in this course are trying to understand the topic.
4	**Learner competition** There is no competition in this instruction. Learners will not be competing with each other at any point.
5	**Task orientation of learners** The learners will have a low level of task orientation because tasks at the end of each lesson will be fairly easy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

07. The outcome is educational fun, a combination of learning materials, genuine academic insights, sour grapes and social justice outrage, delivered online with simple assessments which are meant to be enjoyable not challenging.

1	Appreciate all the reasons persistence through a 2 or 4-year college is so difficult.
2	Become confident that their non-graduate status is no reflection on their intelligence.
3	Discover that knowledge is not fixed but is instead quite flexible and intelligence needs to be used like a muscle.
4	Develop the tools to rediscover education informally or formally (and cost effectively) should they so wish.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

08.
1. Understand the history, structure, and enduring expectations of the college system.
2. Recognize the historical and ongoing impact of structural racism and ableism in academia.
3. Develop critical thinking and analytical skills through the examination of college curriculum.
4. Explore the changing and evolving role of credentialism in shaping culture and society.
5. Engage with contemporary social issues and debates regarding mindset and intelligence.

✓ **Initial Presentation**

Introduce learners to the course content, engage them with real world scenarios related to challenges faced by current and former students.

✓ **Instructional Strategies**

Video lectures, book summaries, demonstrations, simulations, and quizzes.

✓ **Technological Requirements**

No special equipment is needed, the entire lesson can be completed using a web browser and very basic office software, learners can install assistive technologies to test outcomes if they're so inclined.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

09.
1. Videos (with demonstrations and/or quiz content)
2. Books with Subject Summaries (reading)
3. Interactive Quizzes (unlimited attempts)
4. Discussion Boards for self-reflection and commentary (graded only for badge seekers)
5. Resources materials for alternative learning opportunities / affordable certificates, etc.

SUBJECT MATTER / EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

10.

MEDIA AND INTERACTIVE RESOURCES – Video animations and scripts will be written and created by PI (me).

GENERAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES – General education subject overviews and content from open sources

CRITICAL CONTENT RESOURCES – Surveys, media articles, and academic writing critical of higher ed such as:

- Rahman, S., Sunder, P., & Jackson, D. (2022). A People's History of Structural Racism in Academia: From A(dministration of Justice) to Z(oology). Open Textbook Library.
  https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/1282

- Dolmage, J. T. (2017). Academic Ableism. In University of Michigan Press eBooks. University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.9708722

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN MODEL: Rapid Instructional Design Model

11.   The minicourse TLDR; school with be developed using the most cost-effective and time-reductive management style because of the time and money limitations imposed on the project by its very nature (i.e. a few weeks to

complete and the need to use free/open resources). One of the weaknesses of this model, in this case, is one person is the SME, developer, and graphic designer on the entire project. No outside perspectives, proofreading, or fact checking, is fraught, another area of concern is the development steps that will undoubtedly suffer because of a one-person show, specifically inability to address diverse learner needs, or respond to feedback.

LEARNING THEORY: Understanding by Design

12.

UBD, created by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, this framework is results-focused, as they say, "Begin with the End in Mind".

Stage 1 – UBD is ideally suited to be a guide to any curriculum planning that is working backward from a pre-determined outcome or big idea; because this project began with a goal – to increase the confidence and lifelong learning efforts of those who didn't complete college.

Stage 2 – UBD asks essential questions, and then determines how assessments can reveal understanding. The essential idea here, is college worth it, remains an open question.

Stage 3 – The academic subject-specific content is not as important as the desired outcome, transferring a sense of motivation and confidence to self-educating and understanding how to find information over the long term if the participant is interested.

STORYBOARD: Course Modules

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MODULE ONE
1. Introduction
   a. Syllabus
   b. Instructions and Learning Outcomes
   c. Link to what type of learner are you? ATTLS survey.
2. Critical Writings Lesson
   a. Reading materials
   b. Essay Assignment
   c. Podcasts (select one)
   d. Discussion Board assignment– what critical media says and how do you react?

MODULE TWO
3. Book – A People's History of Structural Racism in Academia
   a. Read the book
   b. Quiz on Interactive Book Summary
4. Book – Academic Ableism
   a. Read the book
   b. Quiz on Interactive Book Summary

MODULE THREE
5. Survey of General Education
   a. Discover Free materials by Subject Matter
   b. Report on your subject for future study
   c. Quiz on the Constitution
   d. Quiz on Jim Crowe
6. Course Wrap Up
   a. Summary Information
   b. Post-course survey

Summary: "TL;DR.school" is site designed to equip learners with a critical understanding of the sometimes-insurmountable barriers present in the completion of a college education. It includes well researched and critical publications detailing the drawbacks to the college experience. It also aims to help would be learners discover free and low-cost options available for either traditional or non-traditional continuing education, if so motivated.