

<i>Course:</i>	GT Interdisciplinary Studies/Mentor Seminar I - IV
<i>PEIMS Code:</i>	N1290309, N1290313, N1290317, N1290318
<i>Abbreviation:</i>	GTISM, GTISM2, GTISM3, GTISM4
<i>Grade Level(s):</i>	9-12
<i>Number of Credits:</i>	½ - 1 credit per course

Course description:

This course, based on the exit-level Texas Performance Standards Project for gifted and talented students, offers a non-traditional learning experience to those students who have the ability to create innovative products or performances. Students will develop a product proposal, compile a portfolio, conduct in-depth research, be matched with a mentor from the business or professional community, and prepare for a public presentation of their product or performance at the end of the school year to be evaluated by an audience that includes expert(s) in the field. Students work with their mentor to create a related product with real-world application and tangible documentation. The final product is to be shared with an authentic audience outside the school setting.

Essential knowledge and skills:

- (a) These courses are recommended for gifted students in grades 9-12.
- (b) Students focus their study on a topic of their choice. They develop a research portfolio that has a collection of resources including interviews and observations with people who work in their chosen topic field. Students work on time management, communication, goal setting, and presentation skills. Students work with mentors on a regular basis to gain real-world experience. They will work with their mentor to create a product related to their topic. Students give progressively longer speech presentations and will give a formal presentation of their product and year-long experiences at the end of the year presentation.
- (c) Knowledge and Skills
 - (1) **Research.** The student uses reading and research skills to investigate self-selected topics and compile a research portfolio. The student is expected to:
 - (A) locate and gather information from a variety of primary, secondary, and electronic sources, including interviews, observations, data-based research, surveys, original recordings, and experimentation as well as letters and emails of inquiry; and

- (B) process and compile sources in a professional research portfolio.
- (2) **Presentation.** The student prepares, organizes, and presents independent research, mentor experiences, and processes used in development of a product. The student is expected to:
- (A) use language clearly and appropriately;
 - (B) use nonverbal strategies appropriately;
 - (C) use notes, manuscripts, presentation skills; and
 - (D) incorporate media such as audio and/or visual materials to enhance presentation.
- (3) **Product Design.** The student designs and develops a professional-level product that reflects independent research and utilizes mentorship. The student is expected to:
- (A) work with mentor to narrow and focus plans for product development and implementation;
 - (B) document the research and development of project through a process record ;
 - (C) create tangible representations such as drawings, illustrations, models and written descriptions; and
 - (D) establish real-world application and usefulness of a product.
- (4) **Professional Behavior.** The student will demonstrate an understanding of the expectations in a professional setting. The student is expected to:
- (A) develop written documents that showcase skills, accomplishments, and interests;
 - (B) role play appropriate interviewing techniques;
 - (C) differentiate between appropriate attire for a variety of professional settings;
 - (D) communicate professionally in situations such as cold phone calls, setting appointments, and interviews;
 - (E) demonstrate an understanding of workplace ethics such as confidentiality and privacy issues; and
 - (F) build and maintain a professional relationship with a mentor.
- (5) **Evaluation.** The student will evaluate his or her performance as well as the performance of peers. The student is expected to:
- (A) create weekly progress reports that address time management and goal setting;
 - (B) meet periodically with the teacher for conferences about progress, concerns,

successes, and needs;

(C) self evaluate speech presentations;

(D) evaluate classmates' speech presentations;

(E) provide feedback of mentor performance; and

(F) compose written reflection regarding strengths and weaknesses as well as areas of growth.

Description of specific student needs this course is designed to meet:

- Opportunity to be grouped with other high-achieving students
- Opportunity to focus interests and develop career direction
- Opportunities in independent research (data-based research, experimentation, observation, original creations)
- Opportunity to compile a professional portfolio to document research, product development, and year-long experiences
- Opportunities to polish presentation skills while sharing research and work
- Opportunity to develop professional-level product
- Opportunity to interact in a professional setting
- Opportunity to glean knowledge and experience from a mentor
- Opportunities for self discovery and self evaluation
- Opportunities for students to develop innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity
- Opportunity for students to participate in an original research project which fulfills the Distinguished Achievement Program requirements

Major resources and materials:

- Access to library sources such as books and periodicals
- Access to the electronic research tools and data-based periodicals
- Access to willing professionals in desired topic fields
- Access to transportation for interviews, observations, and mentor visits
- Access to media and/or technology that enhances presentations including means to record for self evaluations
- Access to guidance and location of materials for independent products
- Access to course facilitator for regular conferences, guidance, and evaluation

Required activities and sample optional activities to be used:

- Conduct secondary research utilizing school library, local college libraries, electronic research tools.
- Conduct primary research utilizing observation and interviews of professionals.

- Conduct primary research utilizing self-generated work such as surveys, original art, original music, models, and experimentation.
- Compile portfolio and submit for regular reviews.
- Perform increasingly longer formal speech presentations culminating in year-end formal presentation to audience and mentor.
- Provide self evaluation using regularly scheduled student/teacher conferences, weekly progress reports, and evaluation forms.
- Arrange and attend regularly scheduled meetings with mentor.
- Share final product with an authentic audience.
- Design product with real-world application under advisement of mentor.
- Provide tangible representation of product and processes.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior in a professional setting.

Methods for evaluating student outcomes:

- Grading of assignments by instructor such as résumés, research summaries, and topic proposals
- Periodic evaluations of portfolio by both instructor and mentor
- Critique of speech presentations by instructor and classmates
- Monitoring by instructor of regular progress reports
- Individual conferences between instructor and student
- Scheduled evaluations from mentor regarding professional performance, portfolios, and product
- Critique by instructor of tangible representation of product, including product proposal, product description, log of product development, and presentation to an audience
- Use Texas Performance Standards Project Scoring Scale or the Exit/High School Level Rubric as the evaluation instrument or as a guideline for a self-developed rubric.

Required qualifications of teachers:

- Basic Teacher Certification
- Recommended 30-hour foundational G/T training
- Preferred teaching experience of G/T students
- Preferred G/T Supplemental Certification

Additional information:

This course will be made available to high school students for up to 4 credits. Candidates desiring enrollment in GTISM for the second year will be required to either extend their previous self-selected study or research a new field of interest.