

**COURSE TITLE:** THE DOG ATE MY HOMEWORK: Helping Disorganized Students  
**NO. OF CREDITS:** 3 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 2.00 credits]  
**INSTRUCTOR:** Lori Gibson  
loribgibson@hotmail.com  
**WA CLOCK HRS:** 30  
**OREGON PDUs:** 30  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 30

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

How delightful would it be if every student came to class on time, had their assignments done and did their best work? Unfortunately this is not the case. While many kids are organized, many kids are not. These disorganized kids can be disruptive; they are stuck in a downward spiral of failure and let's face it - they drag down your school's test scores. In this course you will learn eight ways kids can be disorganized and the practical plans for getting your students to take charge of their own destinies.

This independent study course is appropriate for teachers, administrators, support staff and parents. Required text, *That Crumpled Paper Was Due Last Week* is available from Amazon.com for approximately \$11.

In association with Amazon, you may purchase this text by using the link provided.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

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1. The conceptual framework for understanding chronically disorganized and discouraged students based on Ana Homayoun's work.
2. The 5 factors that typically play a role in why organization and time-management are significant issues for disorganized students
3. The beneficial vs. the detrimental attitudes/approaches that "supporting adults" contribute to student difficulties
4. The 8 different types of (dis)organizational styles from the text and be able to identify them in students.
5. The 6 target areas to potentially consider in an over-arching plan (i.e.: goal-setting, organizational tools) and the accompanying strategies for students and the supporting adults to implement.
6. The complexities involved for students with "specific considerations" (LD students, multiple homes, illness) and the accompanying strategies for these students and supporting adults to implement.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%

### **CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

### **ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

#### **REQUIRED TEXT**

*That Crumpled Paper Was Due Last Week* by Ana Homayoun. Perigree Trade, 2010. New York, NY. 304 pages. ISBN 978-0399535598.

None. All reading is online.

#### **MATERIALS FEE**

\$11 for the course text, *That Crumpled Paper Was Due Last Week* from Amazon.com. Also available from other booksellers and at local and some school libraries.

### **ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

#### **A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #1: Introduce Yourself**

Please read the **Introduction** in the course text and then introduce yourself in 250 - 500 word response to the following questions:

- Why did you choose this course?
- What is your initial reaction to the author's discussion of the problem and the progression of students' failures diminishing their self-esteem and confidence?

#### **Assignment #2: 5 Causal Factors**

Please read **Chapter 1** from the course text and reflect on the following assignment in 250 -500 words:

- Describe the 5 causal factors that are presented as possible explanations for why the chronically disorganized and discouraged students struggle. Please include your reflections on this material, along with your descriptions.

#### **Assignment #3: Supporting Adults**

Please read **Chapter 2** from the course text. The author speaks mainly to parents in this chapter. However, all "supporting adults" (teachers, parents, coaches, mentors, tutors, etc) play a role, and our attitudes and approaches impact students, as well. In 500 - 750 words, including the following:

- In a brief overview, please describe some of the beneficial vs. the detrimental attitudes/approaches that "supporting adults" contribute to student difficulties.
- In your role as a "supporting adult," please describe and reflect on your attitudes/approaches towards chronically disorganized students.

#### **Assignment #4: Group of Traits**

Please read **Chapter 3** from the course text. Although nobody likes labels, they are useful to help name a "group of traits" so that

specific problems can be identified. In 500 – 1,000 words, identify and describe in detail the 8 (dis)organizational styles that are discussed.

#### **Assignment #5: Personal & Academic Goals**

Please read **Chapter 4** and then read at least 2 more chapters from **Chapters 5-9** based on your interests and needs. In 500 – 750 words, include the following:

- Explain the importance of having the disorganized student set personal and academic goals as their first target towards change. Be sure to include the “powerful change agent” (i.e., sense of responsibility) from Chapter 4 in your discussion.
- Identify the two other chapters that you read in the target section and summarize the elements that you believe are key to helping a disorganized student.

#### **Assignment #6: Special Consideration**

Please read two of **Chapters 10, 11, and 12** based on your interests and needs. In 500 – 1,000 words Identify and describe a “special consideration” that can bring increased complexity for a disorganized student. Include 2-3 of the presented strategies that you believe could be beneficial for this student (these can be implemented by supporting adults or the student themselves).

**Clock Hours, PDUs, CEUs, and Act 48 participants must complete Section C - The Integration Paper to be awarded hours for this course.**

### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

#### **B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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#### **Assignment #7: Chronically Disorganized.**

Identify a student with whom you have a positive relationship who is chronically disorganized. (750 – 1,000 words).

- Write a detailed summary of the student's unique (dis)organizational style.
- Discuss the impact (beneficial and/or detrimental) that the supporting adults seem to be having on the student.
- Discuss your impressions of the student's feelings about him or herself as a student.

#### **Assignment #8: Goal Setting**

Review the key elements from Chapter 4 on goal setting; you will be using this information/approach with the student you identified in Assignment 7. Please do the following:

- Meet with the identified student and discuss your desire to work with him/her on these issues.
- Have a discussion about the student's dreams/aspirations. (If appropriate please use the three (3) questions from the text to guide your discussion.)
- Encourage the student to set three (3) personal and three (3) academic goals. (If appropriate, please use the sample worksheet from pgs. 72-73 to guide your work.)
- In 250 – 500 words, summarize your experiences working with this student.
- If you have the ability to scan the documents you create with the student, please also send these with your assignment, being sure to not include the student's real name.

### Assignment #9: Past/Future Approaches

Using the knowledge you have gained from the course text and your experiences working with the student you identified for Assignments 7 and 8, please reflect on your past/future approaches as a supporting adult. Write a 500 – 750 word paper which includes the following reflections:

- A summary of your past impressions and feelings towards students who are chronically disorganized.
- Identification and discussion of the strategies you felt were most important for supporting adults to implement (include attitudes and approaches along with the specific strategies).
- A reflection on any changes you will be making in your future work with disorganized students that may both encourage and meaningfully assist them in their struggles.

### Assignment #10: (500 Level ONLY)

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one** of the following:

#### Option A)

Interview another educator about the class you are taking. Talk to them regarding their perspective and thoughts on the topic you are studying. To document completion of this assignment, include the following:

- The date of the conversation
- The name and position of the person with whom you spoke
- Why you chose this person
- A 500 – 750 word summary highlighting key insights

Send to instructor: [loribgibson@hotmail.com](mailto:loribgibson@hotmail.com). Subject line to read 'Disorganized #10A'.

OR

#### Option B)

You may create a power point presentation to give to your staff or a parent group regarding your learning from the course. Please include the framework for understanding chronically disorganized students, the causal factors, the role of supporting adults, the (dis)organizational styles, an overview of the six (6) target areas with a focus on what practical strategies they can implement to support these students more effectively.

Send to instructor: [loribgibson@hotmail.com](mailto:loribgibson@hotmail.com). Subject line to read 'Disorganized #10B'.

OR

#### Option C)

Another assignment of your own design with the instructor's prior approval.

Send to instructor: [loribgibson@hotmail.com](mailto:loribgibson@hotmail.com). Subject line to read 'Disorganized #10C'.

### C. INTEGRATION PAPER

Assignment #11: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

#### SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER

(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

#### INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:

**Lori Gibson, M.A., E.S.A.**, is a dedicated school counselor with a wealth of experience in the field of education. She holds a Master's degree in counseling psychology from Gonzaga University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in both education and psychology from Whitworth University. With a career spanning 31 years, Lori has contributed her expertise to various educational institutions, including

North Chicago High School in Illinois, Lake Washington School District and Spokane Public Schools, both in Washington state. For the past 21 years, Lori has been an instructor at The Heritage Institute, where she is deeply passionate about empowering fellow educators to excel in their noble work within schools. In today's evolving educational landscape Lori understands the shift on many fronts - including the mandates to integrate technology, embrace neurodiversity, foster social and emotional growth and dig deep to understand the neurological basis for challenging behaviors. Lori recognizes that our students, pre-K to 12th grade face an array of challenges, from learning, social and emotional gaps due to the ripples of the pandemic, family stressors, poverty, the impact of social media and entitlement issues, among others. She firmly believes that educators must be equipped with the latest research and practical strategies to address these multifaceted needs effectively. In her courses, Lori's primary aim is to provide educators with respectful and encouraging guidance to navigate these challenges. Her courses and workshops are designed to empower teachers and administrators with the knowledge and tools necessary to create a supportive and inclusive environment that prioritizes the well-being and development of every student so they can be about the business of learning!

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### THE DOG ATE MY HOMEWORK: Helping Disorganized Students

#### "THE DOG ATE MY HOMEWORK!" BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Dawson, Peg and Richard Guare.** *Smart but Scattered: The Revolutionary "Executive Skills" Approach to Helping Kids Reach Their Potential.* Guilford Press. New York, NY, 2009. 314 pages. This book clearly explains the basics of "executive functioning" and how deficits in that ability to control and regulate behaviors can cause difficulties with organization, staying focused, controlling impulses and emotions. This book is geared for 4 to 13 year olds, however the authors also have one geared toward teens.

**Dawson, Peg and Richard Guare.** *Smart but Scattered Teens: The "Executive Skills" Program for Helping Teens Reach Their Potential* . Guilford Press. New York, NY. 2013. 293 pages. This book is the companion for teens. It also describes "executive functioning" and offers step-by-step strategies for developing executive skills. The emphasis that is placed on the supporting adult building a supportive relationship with the adolescent through the process is an added bonus.

**Goldberg, Donna.** *The Organized Student.* Touchstone. New York, NY, 2005. 288 pages. This book complements the course text. The author has filled this book with hands-on strategies for organization and includes a four-step plan (PACK) for purging and reassembling a backpack or locker that educators and parents could teach to their students. This book would be a great resource and encouragement to give a frustrated and overwhelmed parent of a disorganized student!

**Gurian, Michael and Kathy Stevens.** *Boys and Girls Learn Differently! A Guide for Teachers and Parents: Revised 10th Anniversary Edition.* Jossey-Bass. San Francisco, C.A., 2010. 400 pages. This book is a fascinating read because it outlines the brain differences between boys and girls and with that point of view challenges the notion that both genders learn best in the typical classroom setting. The authors cite studies as well as anecdotal evidence to support their viewpoint. The overarching idea is that teachers need to be aware of the differences, and vary their classroom methodologies and management so that their classrooms can be a better fit for both genders.

**Moss, Samantha and Lesley Schwartz.** *Where's My Stuff?" The Ultimate Teen Organizing Guide.* Zest Books. San Francisco, CA, 2012. 104 pages. This is a short, fun book for intermediate through high school students that focuses on organizational skills and strategies. The authors use plenty of humor and illustrations to keep the pre-teen and teenager engaged in the material. I think the charts are very useful for students who can become overwhelmed by daily tasks. Definitely a useful resource to have in your classroom, counseling center or home for disorganized kids to access.

**Woodcock, Susan Kruger.** *SOAR Study Skills.* Grand Lighthouse. Grand Blanc, MI, 2006. 160 pages. This book is a comprehensive program that is based on four (4) steps. It does not just deal with organizational issues but also includes study strategies. This book can be used by a pre-teen or teen student or can be used by teachers as a curriculum for teaching study skills in their classes. The author has many other products and services for students, teachers and parents that can be found at her website [www.studyskills.com](http://www.studyskills.com)