

Creating Leaders for a Changing World.



AUGUSTANA COLLEGE
SIoux FALLS

Course Syllabus

Circle of Courage®

1 semester hour of undergraduate **or** graduate credit
Psychology or Special Education

Background information

The Circle of Courage®, is a model of youth empowerment supported by contemporary research, the heritage of early youth work pioneers and Native philosophies of child care. The model is encompassed in four core values: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. The central theme of this model is that a set of shared values must exist in any community to create environments that ultimately benefit all.

In 1990, Dr. Larry Brendtro, Dr. Martin Brokenleg, and Dr. Steve Van Bockern, Augustana College faculty, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, published *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. The authors suggested that children who are often referred to as "alienated", "troubled" or "difficult" are at risk because they live in an environment that is hazardous - one that breeds discouragement. By contrast, an environment that promotes courage is one that fosters changes to meet the needs of the young person and society and subsequently reclaims youth at risk.

The model is represented by a circle - the medicine wheel - that is divided into quadrants. The circle is sacred and suggests the interconnectedness of life. Likewise, it expresses the sacredness of the number four - the four directions, the four elements of the universe, and the four races. Each quadrant of the Circle of Courage® stands for a central value - belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity - of an environment that can claim and reclaim all youth. It represents the "cultural birthright for all the world's children."

Learning Goals

Students will understand:

- The Circle of Courage® is a philosophy that integrates the best of Western educational thought with the wisdom of indigenous cultures and emerging research on positive youth development.
- The circle suggests the importance of the shared values of belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery. While the four dimensions of the Circle of Courage® can be described individually, they must be viewed as one.

- Belonging is one of the key values. In Native American and First Nations cultures, significance was nurtured in communities of belonging.
- Mastery is one of the key values. Humans have an innate drive to become competent and solve problems. With success in surmounting challenges, the desire to achieve is strengthened.
- Independence is one of the key values. In contrast to obedience models of discipline, independence is designed to build respect and teach inner discipline.
- Generosity is one of the key values. Learning to give and make a positive contribution to human life and this world is the essence of generosity.
- Youths' Circles of Courage® are broken or distorted when they don't experience belonging, mastery, independence and generosity.
- A youth's broken Circle of Courage® can be mended. Participants will learn ways to mend a youth's broken Circle of Courage®.

Topical Outline

- I. The Seeds of Discouragement
 - a. Destructive relationships
 - b. Climates of futility
 - c. Learned irresponsibility
 - d. The loss of purpose
- II. The Circle of Courage®
 - a. The spirit of belonging
 - b. The spirit of mastery
 - c. The spirit of independence
 - d. The spirit of generosity
- III. Mending the broken Circle of Courage®: The reclaiming environment
 - a. Relating to the reluctant
 - b. Brain-friendly learning
 - c. Discipline for responsibility
 - d. The courage to care

Course Requirements

Participants who successfully complete these requirements will earn one (1) semester hour of graduate or undergraduate workshop credit, graded with an A-F letter grade. Students may choose to be graded satisfactory or unsatisfactory but must request this in writing. Graduate students must earn a grade of B- or better to receive an S (satisfactory) grade.

All requirements/assignments are to be submitted to the instructor of the training within 30 days of the last day of training. Permission from the instructor is necessary to extend this deadline. If permission is given, the student has until the middle of the next semester (a summer session counts as a semester) to submit the work. If the work is not submitted by the extended deadline, the grade automatically is recorded as an F grade. Paperwork should be mailed to the address given by the workshop instructor. E-mailed assignments may not be accepted. Please ask for the mailing address of the instructor.

Undergraduate 1 semester hour (\$150 in US dollars)

1. Fully participate and complete in-class projects. The book Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg and Steve Van Bockern, 2002, serves as the primary resource.

Graduate 1 semester hour (\$150 in US dollars)

1. **Participation:** fully participate in all sessions
2. **Exam:** read the book Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern. Complete a multiple choice check-out exam on key concepts and competencies. This exam can be found at www.reclaiming.com.
3. **Options:** (select one)
 - a. *Create a PowerPoint* that presents key principles from the training. The PowerPoint should have a minimum of 25 slides and contain speaker notes.
 - b. Write a *personal reflection* on the chapters of the book Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future. This should be a 3 to 6 page paper.
 - c. Write a 3-6 page *library paper*, with a minimum of three references that further explores a concept presented in the training.

Registration

Registration occurs during the workshop. Students will complete a registration form indicating a desire for either psychology or special education credit. Payment is due at the time of registration.

Cost

The cost for 1 semester hour of undergraduate or graduate credit is \$150.00 (US dollars). Cash is not accepted. Checks, money orders and credit cards are accepted (except American Express) payable to **Reclaiming Youth International**.

Grading and Transcripts

After final grades are submitted, students will receive a grade report from Augustana College. Official transcripts must be requested in writing by the student to Augustana College Office of the Registrar, 2001 S. Summit Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57197, or Fax to 605-274-4450.

For questions or concerns, please contact Reclaiming Youth International at bookstore@reclaiming.com or call 605-647-2532.