Career and Technical Education: The U.S. and Abroad
Spring, 2014

Prior to writing your application, please be sure to thoroughly read the Independent Study Information Packet available on the IS page of the CRC website

*This is a protected Word form. Please type in the gray boxes. The boxes only display on computer.*

| Is this a GISP, ISP, Language (G)ISP, or Academic Internship (AI)? | ISP |
| (G)ISP or AI *Title Entry* for Permanent Record: | Career and Technical Education: The U.S. and Abroad |
| Is the course mandatory S/NC? | No |
| # Meeting Hours / Week: | 1 |

| Name of *Student Coordinator*: | [Redacted] |
| Email: | [Redacted] |
| Name of *Faculty Sponsor*: | John Papay |
| Department: | Education Studies |
| Email: | john_papay@brown.edu |
| Campus Box: | 1938 |

In alphabetical order by last name, list those students intending to enroll in the (G)ISP or AI. No additional students will be admitted to the course after the proposal is submitted.

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### Wait List

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Independent Study | Proposal Outline

Before filling out this proposal, please consult the Independent Study Information Packet, schedule an appointment with the Independent Study Coordinators at the Curricular Resource Center (email independent_study@brown.edu), and look through the past (G)ISP and AI proposals on file at the CRC.

Writing competency statement. Every (G)ISP proposal is expected to meet College guidelines for writing competency (see http://brown.edu/Administration/Dean_of_the_College/curriculum/writing.php). (G)ISPs that fall below baseline standards for written communication will not be considered by the CCC subcommittee that reviews student proposals for independent study.

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1. **What** – Provide an explanation and rationale for the proposed (G)ISP or AI
   - Describe the goals of the study and the questions, topics, or issues the project will address (at least 1 page).
   - (G)ISPs and AIs are academic courses; be sure to highlight the broader scholarly context of the study.
   - Note: Especially if the course does not follow a traditional format, students should submit a separate cover letter including any additional information that will help the committee evaluate the proposal.

Career and Technical Education (CTE), previously known as vocational education, has long been stigmatized in the United States as a path for students who struggle academically, and who will likely work the least-desired, lowest-paying jobs available. The CTE path is not one seen as leading to college, but as a last stop for students who would otherwise drop out of more academically-oriented schools. Students are usually tracked into CTE programs during high school (or effectively pushed into them when they are not tracked into academic programs). The system, stigmatized as it is, is not built to attract high-achieving, college-bound students. With getting more students on a college path the main focus in today’s efforts to reform the education system, CTE is largely ignored in the realm of public policy. Because CTE is marginalized, politicians have no incentive to push to create reforms or change the policies in place to improve CTE in the U.S. By and large, this branch of education is thought of as something for those students who are already lost, rather than a potentially valuable resource for all kinds of students interested in specific careers that may not need the skills acquired from most postsecondary education.

This course will provide an in-depth look at CTE in the United States and an introduction to CTE abroad. The main goals are to gain a strong understanding of U.S. CTE systems and policies, to develop a rudimentary understanding of international programs, and to compare and contrast these programs, analyzing what the U.S. could learn from other nations. Domestically, the course will examine CTE history, structure, and policy; public perception; tracking practices; CTE students; CTE student achievement; and potential future directions of U.S. CTE policy. Internationally, the course will examine CTE structures abroad and consider how they can be applied in the U.S., taking into account international differences in the above domestic features. This is a survey course designed to provide a broad introduction to a range of important aspects of CTE.

On a personal note, I spent two weeks last January, plus several additional visits, at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School in Boston. One of the lowest-performing high schools in Massachusetts, the academic side of the school (where I was assigned as part of the Boston Urban Teaching Fellowship) was plagued by chronic absenteeism, violent and disrespectful student behavior, high teacher turnover, and general chaos. The vocational side, which I had the pleasure of visiting, seemed like a haven. The students were interested and well-behaved, and the
teachers had been there for a while and were planning on staying long-term. One lesson I drew from this experience was that CTE offers an incredible opportunity that is overlooked by too many in policymaking and school administration. Integrating CTE and academics could serve not only students who struggle academically, but those who excel in academics as well. A broader base of research would greatly improve public understanding of CTE, which would incite reform efforts in these programs, allowing CTE to reach its potential to reinvigorate student engagement and nurture innovation. In this study, I will gain a deeper understanding of CTE, and, therefore, the specifics needed for change.

2. When – Provide a detailed course syllabus

- For each week include the topics to be covered, the analytical question(s) that will frame the discussion, and the required assignments and materials. A potential syllabus template is provided below.
- Social science and humanities (G)ISPs are expected to read 150-200 pages per week; other (G)ISPs should involve comparable workloads; AIs should include internship hours and 30-100 pages of reading per week. Please provide the total the number of pages assigned each week in your syllabus.
- See IS Information Packet for details on meeting times and room reservation.
- Work outside the box. Adapt this and experiment with pedagogy. IS provides lots of room for creativity!

Expected Weekly Meeting Day(s) and Time(s): Friday 12-1pm

Week 1 (1/22-1/31): An Overview of Career and Technical Education (CTE) in the U.S.

Gain a basic understanding of career and technical education in the United States. What are the government policies on CTE? What are the structures of established programs of CTE? How does the public perceive CTE?

Readings:


Total Page Count: 297

Week 2 (2/3-2/7): Models of CTE and Public Perception

Can CTE and academics be integrated? How do programs reconcile the need for academic study with CTE instruction? What is the public perception of CTE?

Readings:

- Bozick, R., & Dalton, B. (2013). Balancing career and technical education with academic coursework: The consequences for mathematics achievement in high school. Education
**Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 35(2), 123–138.**

- Pilloton, Emily (2012). Tell Them I Built This. *TED Conferences*.

Total Page Count: 160

**Week 3 (2/10-2/14): Case Studies of Vocational Education in the U.S.**

Study CTE in California and Massachusetts. How has vocational education changed over time in the United States in its structure, perception, and purpose? What has caused and/or influenced these changes?

**Readings:**


Total Page Count: 219

**Week 4 (Long Weekend - 2/19-2/21): Tracking and CTE**

CTE programs are often perceived as a last-choice educational path for students who have been tracked out of more academically-oriented programs. Why are students tracked into CTE? What is the effect of tracking on CTE students’ achievement?

**Readings:**


Total Page Count: 288

**Week 5 (2/24-2/28): The Students in CTE**
Who are CTE programs currently serving? For whom are the structures of CTE programs designed? What types of students are attracted to CTE programs? Why do students enroll in CTE programs? How do CTE programs serve different groups of students?

Readings:


Total Page Count: 125

**Week 6 (3/3-3/7): CTE Students’ Futures**

What are the benefits of CTE to students? How do students fare in their careers after participating in CTE programs?

Readings:


Total Page Count: 162

**Week 7 (3/10-3/14): Current Directions in CTE Policy**

What is the current state of CTE policy? What could CTE accomplish that it currently is not? What is restraining CTE from reaching its full potential? What needs to be changed in order to allow it to reach its full potential? What are the limitations of CTE programs?
Readings:


Total Page Count: 95

March 14th – Midterm Essay Due

**Week 8 (3/17-3/21): An Overview of International Vocational Education**

What are the policies, systems, and structures of CTE internationally?

Readings:


Total Page Count: 214

(Spring Break)

**Week 9 (3/31-4/4): An Overview of International Vocational Education, Continued**

Compare CTE program structures and policies internationally.

Readings:


Total Page Count: 207

**Week 10 (4/7-4/11): A Case Study - England**

A look at England, a country historically known for tracking practices that stream students into CTE or academic programs based on testing.

Readings:


Total Page Count: 193

**Week 11 (4/14-4/18): International Comparisons and the Case of Finland**

How does CTE enrollment work in countries with tracking versus countries without tracking? Compare the CTE systems in multiple nations. What is different? What is consistent across countries? Then, a consideration of Finland, infamous for its complete lack of tracking. How does CTE work in a system free of tracking?

**Readings:**


• Powell, Justin J.W.; Coutrot, Laurence; Graf, Lukas; Bernhard, Nadine; Kieffer, Annick; & Solga, Heike (2009). Comparing the Relationship between Vocational and Higher Education in Germany and France. *Social Science Research Center Berlin, Discussion Papers, Research Unit: Skill Formation and Labor Markets*.

Total Page Count: 207


How could the U.S. system of CTE be changed to reflect international successes?

**Readings:**


Total Page Count: 224

**May 18th – Final Essay Due**

**Course Syllabus**

**Week #: Theme** – Description + Framing Questions
- Identify the GISP member(s) who are primarily responsible for planning and leading each week of meetings.
- List each week’s readings, including page numbers for each assignment and total page count for each week.
- Provide brief explanations for any materials whose titles do not obviously relate to the weekly theme.
- Include information about relevant materials, speakers, activities, deadlines, etc. for each week.
- Indicate which weeks the faculty sponsor will be in attendance (GISP sponsors must participate in at least five weeks’ meetings for a GISP).

3. **How** – *Provide a well-researched bibliography including all of the materials from the syllabus*

- Use standard bibliographic formatting (APA, MLA, etc.)
- Annotate each item in bibliography, explaining its relevance to the course


Week 5. This study examined the effects of demographics, behaviors, and expectations of students, parents, and high schools on CTE participation.


Week 1. This book provides an overview of Career and Technical Education (CTE), including policies, structures, and goals.


Week 6. Bishop and Mane describe the effects of vocational training in secondary school on graduation rates and later earnings.


Week 6. This study examines how more stringent graduation requirements affect vocational and non-vocational students in terms of “course taking patterns, learning, college attendance and post high school labor market outcomes.”


Week 2. This article describes a study on mathematics achievement by students enrolled in CTE programs. Based on this study, the authors argue that participation in CTE can inhibit academic achievement.

Week 1. The Perkins Act (in various forms) has governed CTE in the United States since 1963. This report discusses how the federal Act is implemented in the states, and the lack of rigid structure to enforce implementation.


Week 8. This book examines international CTE policy and structures as potential areas for learning in shaping the U.S. system, and discusses the potential for CTE to promote social equality.


Week 7. Cohen and Besharov discuss the potential of CTE to reduce dropout rates, provide a smooth transition from high school to career or college, and to prepare students who do not wish to go to college for important careers that do not require a degree. In light of this potential and the history and public perceptions of CTE, the authors discuss how federal policy around CTE should change.


Week 7. Dobbins describes the reauthorization of Perkins III under President George W. Bush, and how and why the act was redesigned to reflect the goals of No Child Left Behind.


Week 7. The authors discuss the changing role of CTE in today’s economy, suggesting that CTE should be preparing students for college and for high-skill, high-innovation careers, rather than non-college work.


Week 3. Fraser describes the Massachusetts CTE system and its ability to produce better results than traditional academic programs. These superior results include MCAS achievement, dropout rates, and career paths. The paper is meant to demonstrate the value of CTE to policymakers in an atmosphere of school reform.


Week 6. Glocker and Storck examine the future financial payoffs of different educational
paths, categorized into either vocational and academic groups, and find that academic paths do not always yield the best results.


Week 1. This article discusses the growing role of CTE in American education as a means to prepare students for jobs, thus providing an effective contribution to the economy. The authors analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the structure of CTE as it stands.


Week 2. This brief addresses the possible integration of mathematics into CTE-based curricula, thereby infusing CTE with academics.


Week 5. In this excerpt, the authors discuss how to integrate English Language Learners, a growing population of students, into CTE programs.


Week 12. Hoffman provides an international and comparative perspective on CTE, and frames discussions of six international CTE systems in terms of what the United States could learn in shaping its own system.


Week 10. Hyland and Winch provide an overview of the history, policy, and structure of CTE in England and offer suggestions for improvement.


Week 10. The authors discuss the level of social segregation between CTE and traditional academic secondary institutions in England as compared with other countries, and find that nations with high tracking practices tend to have more social segregation.


Week 5. Kelly and Price examine the possibility that CTE can provide students with a “clean slate,” allowing them to renew their engagement in school.

Week 6. This study details the effects of “career academies” on students’ long-term success, including graduation rates, earnings, postsecondary education, and family life.


Week 2. Kidwai discusses the need for CTE to change with the times; CTE needs to prepare students for high-skill positions in a technology-based economy to drive innovation.


Week 11. This report provides an overview of CTE in Finland.


Week 11. The authors examine three types of CTE (school-based, apprenticeship, and employee training), and compare the processes, strengths, and weaknesses of each type in Sweden, Germany, and Japan.


Week 9. This report is the most recent comprehensive international consideration of the role of CTE and the alignment of labor market needs with educational pathways.


Week 4. Lewis and Cheng examine the role of race and socio-economic status in tracking students into vocational programs. Though CTE has become more integrated with academics, they find that principals are still influenced by expectations based on race and socio-economic status in their tracking decisions.


Week 4. Loveless provides an overview of the controversy over tracking, discussing the history of de-tracking reforms and the role of schools in implementing (or not) federal tracking policies.


Week 7. The author examines CTE and its current structures and politics, and develops a
set of values and guiding principles for CTE.


Week 4. This paper examines the effects of vocational tracking on academic achievement.


Week 6. This paper discusses the effects of CTE opportunities for students in secondary school on their “transitions to employment and higher education.”


Week 3. This report discusses the potential of a program in California offering career-based instruction alongside academics, and the opportunity to apply academic instruction in various career fields (“work-based learning”).


Week 3. This book excerpt provides a historical overview of CTE in California and discusses the potential evolution of CTE in recent times.


Week 5. This study examined the differences between CTE and non-CTE students in terms of academic standing and socio-economic status.

Pilloton, Emily (2012). Tell Them I Built This. *TED Conferences*.

Week 2. This book discusses a form of hands-on CTE that focuses on real-world problems and community involvement.


Week 6. This paper examines the effects of different combinations of academic instruction and CTE on student high school dropout rates.

Powell, Justin J.W.; Coutrot, Laurence; Graf, Lukas; Bernhard, Nadine; Kieffer, Annick; & Solga, Heike (2009). Comparing the Relationship between Vocational and Higher Education in Germany and France. *Social Science Research Center Berlin, Discussion Papers, Research Unit: Skill Formation and Labor Markets*. 
Week 11. The authors compare the processes of the CTE and higher education pathways of France and Germany.


Week 2. Rose at al. discuss the potential of integrating career-relevant material into traditional academic instruction to promote student engagement.


Week 4. This study examined the differences in Flemish CTE students’ attitudes toward school when placed in schools with many possible tracks, including academic, and schools with few possible tracks. Van Houtte and Stevens found that while CTE students overall have less pro-school attitudes than academic students, CTE students that could compare themselves with academic-track students within the same school had even more negative attitudes.


Week 10. The authors discuss the weaknesses of CTE in England and offer potential solutions.

4. **Evaluation** – Describe the plan for student assessment and grading
   - Each student enrolled in a (G)ISP or AI must submit an individual mid-term AND final paper/project/exam to the Faculty Sponsor for evaluation, even if the GISP includes a joint project in which all members participate.
   - In 1-2 paragraphs, describe the work to be submitted by each student for evaluation. Indicate the proposed nature, length, and the evaluation questions and criteria for the work.
   - At the end of each (G)ISP or AI, a joint student-faculty evaluation report of the accomplishments of the project must be submitted to the academic dean who oversees the (G)ISP program.

The assessments in this course will consist of weekly reading responses, one midterm essay, and one final essay.

The weekly reading responses will be 1-2 pages long and provide a summary and short analysis of each week’s readings.

The midterm essay, due on March 14th (week seven), will focus on the current state of career and technical education in the United States. This paper will essentially serve as a literature review about CTE in the U.S. The paper will be 8-10 pages in length.

The final essay, due on May 18th (Reading Week), will focus on comparative education. The paper will provide a short overview of CTE in several countries, compare and contrast U.S. CTE with the CTE of these countries, and analyze the possible implications of international CTE practices for
U.S. CTE policies and structures. It will also identify holes in my knowledge about CTE, domestic or international, that continue to exist at the end of the course to spur further individual research in the future. This essay will be 8-10 pages in length.

5. **Planning Process** – *Describe the (G)ISP or AI planning process*
   - Describe what *each participant* contributed to the course planning (i.e. syllabus, structure, bibliography).
   - Explain why the Faculty Sponsor was chosen and what they contributed in the planning of the (G)ISP or AI.
   - Name additional Brown faculty and other people consulted.

I started working as Professor Papay’s research assistant in the spring of my freshman year, and I completed an UTRA with him this past summer. He also recommended the Boston Urban Teaching Fellowship to me, participation in which spurred my interest in CTE. Professor Papay made comments on the rough draft of my syllabus, and contacted his colleague, Dr. Shaun Dougherty, an assistant professor at the University of Connecticut, for suggestions on readings to include. Professor Papay also looked over the entirety of my application before submission and made final suggestions that were incorporated.

Dr. Dougherty was the only additional person consulted. Knowledgeable in the area of CTE, he provided several sources that were incorporated into the syllabus.

6. **Technical Details** – *Statements regarding finances and (G)ISPs duplicating regular courses*
   - (G)ISPs must not duplicate previous (G)ISPs or regular course offerings. If your project appears similar to another (G)ISP or a regular Brown course, please explain how it differs substantively from the course.
   - No (G)ISPS or AIs will be approved that require the payment of funds for instruction. Have you or anyone else made financial commitments to the sponsor or assisting instructor?
   - Please see IS Information Packet for details on potential funding opportunities for course enhancement, such as non-essential lab materials or field trips. Please do not presume that funding will be provided for core course elements.

Career and technical education is not the focus of any existing Brown course. Because the topic is often neglected in professional research, CTE is rarely integrated into university study, and the Brown course offerings are no exception. This Independent Study Project will provide an understanding of CTE that would not even be touched upon in a regular course.

No financial commitments have been made.

7. **Faculty Sponsor Statement(s) + Optional Instructor Co-Sponsor Statement**
   - The Faculty Sponsor and optional Instructor Co-Sponsor statement forms can be found on the CRC website.
   - The Faculty Sponsor statement must be included with any (G)ISP or AI proposal.
8. **Supplements** — *Additional supplements are required for Language GISPs and AIs*

- The **Language GISP Supplement** form can be found on the CRC website.
- The **AI Supplement** form can be found on the CRC website. Note that the Agency Sponsor Form (included in the AI Supplement) is mandatory for AIs.
- Please submit a **Field Trip Waiver** if required.
- These supplements should be submitted along with this application.