VIPP Course Descriptions

A. LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION SKILL

- **VIP 410 Pronunciation (Instructor: Jessica Farrar)**
  This course is designed for non-native speakers of English who wish to improve pronunciation. Students will create an individual speech profile and will have opportunities for one-on-one sessions with the instructor to get feedback on their individual pronunciation progress. The course will emphasize the American English sounds participants find most difficult. In addition, the class will focus on American English stress, intonation, and rhythm patterns. We will utilize real life situations and technology in a communicative learning environment that emphasizes the relationship between listening comprehension and speaking.

- **VIP 414 Idioms (Instructor: Jessica Farrar)**
  Native speakers commonly use idioms in both speaking and writing to add color and interest to their communications. Idioms can be confusing to the non-native speaker because their idiomatic meanings can be totally unrelated to their literal meanings. In this course we will explore the connections between the literal and figurative meanings of many common American idioms in order to help students better remember idioms and be able to figure out meanings of new idioms. We will practice idioms through listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities within many common American cultural contexts.

- **VIP 415A Conversation I (Instructor: Ingrid Gharai)**
  The main focus of this class is improving oral and aural proficiency and increasing overall speaking confidence. Outside of class, participants are encouraged to keep up on current issues through news reports on TV, radio, newspapers, or magazines (depending on which skills need the most practice) and reporting back to the class. This also serves as background for discussing editorial cartoons, which is a regular part of the class. Participants are required to give a short (5-10 minute) oral presentation in front of the class to further boost their confidence. A part of most classes is partner work and/or small group discussion of topics of interest including personal experiences and values, American culture, socializing, travel, etc. Each pair and small group is organized to be as culturally diverse as possible within the class demographics to create opportunities for cross-cultural sharing and an atmosphere that stimulates real communication.

- **VIP 415B Conversation II (Instructor: Ingrid Gharai)**
  Conversation II is designed as a continuation of the fall semester Conversation I class, though it is not a prerequisite. In Conversation II, we will continue to discuss current events and expand on some of the same themes as well as explore other themes such as love and marriage in today’s world, health care, religious diversity in American life, aging societies, travel, technology in modern life, the workplace, and more.

- **VIP 417 Academic and Professional Writing (Instructor: Ruth Mendel)**
  This course focuses on areas of writing that are important in academic and professional work that may pose difficulties for second language speakers. Topics include email writing, data commentary (how we discuss data), cross-cultural issues in second language writing, process descriptions, business memo writing, problem-solution texts, use of the conditional tense in writing, and common patterns of errors in second language writing. The class offers a low-stress environment in which to practice writing skills. There will be in-class short writing exercises and take-home short writing assignments, with no long paper or presentation required. Students will
receive extensive individualized feedback on both in-class writing exercises and written homework to help them improve writing.

- **VIP 418A Content-based Reading Comprehension: Topics in US Food Policy – Food Safety**  
  *(Instructor: Jessica DeForest)*  
  This course will develop reading comprehension, conversation and topical vocabulary while focusing on topics in U.S. food safety policy. Topics include government regulation of food safety; the safety of GMOs (genetically modified organisms in food), and the safety of the American food supply. Readings and videos will be supplied by instructor. This course generally offers one or two field trips including an organic farm and the Pow Wow of Love, organized by the MSU North American Indigenous Student Organization (NAISO) where we will see traditional dance, clothing, foods, and crafts of America's indigenous peoples.

- **VIP 418B Content-based Reading Comprehension: Topics in US Food Policy – What do Eat**  
  *(Instructor: Jessica DeForest)*  
  This course will focus on developing students' independent reading skills through readings, films, and, when possible, field trips related to how to make informed choices about the foods available in the American market. In this course, we focus on how to get the best value in foods by knowing which foods are likely to be the most nutritious and best-tasting available. Topics include nutrients, how to read labels, and U.S. government (federal and state) policies regarding food quality and consumer education. Course materials will help students develop everyday and technical vocabularies, reading comprehension, and conversation skills and lay the foundation for continued reading and vocabulary development beyond this course.

- **VIP 421A Content-based Reading Comprehension: Topics in Environmental Policy – The Great Dust Bowl of the 1930s**  
  *(Instructor: Jessica DeForest)*  
  This course will focus on United States and international environmental issues through readings, films, and when appropriate, field trips. We will focus on the depression era "Dust Bowl" which forced many American family farmers to leave the farms that had been home to their families for several generations. We will also compare the American Dust Bowl to similar ecological problems facing China and other parts of the world. Readings will include articles as well as short selections from John Steinbeck's great novel, *The Grapes of Wrath* and movies will include a documentary about the Dust Bowl, and the great John Ford movie *The Grapes of Wrath*.

- **VIP 421B Content-based Reading Comprehension: Topics in Environmental Policy – Climate Change**  
  *(Instructor: Jessica DeForest)*  
  This course will develop reading comprehension, conversation and topical vocabulary while exploring the connections between climate change and the Earth's frozen places. Included will be readings and videos of recent evidence of the stunning collapse of some of the Earth's largest glaciers and ice sheets. Readings and videos will be supplied by the instructor. This course offers one or two field trips including an organic farm and the Pow Wow of Love, organized by the MSU North American Indigenous Student Organization (NAISO) where we will see traditional dance, clothing, foods, and crafts of America's indigenous peoples.

- **VIP 441 Pronunciation and Public Speaking**  
  *(Instructor: Ian Leighton)*  
  This course will give you the skills you need to become a more engaging, dynamic presenter in English. The aim is to develop your ability to present academic material in English with confidence. You will practice developing a talk from a simple idea through to the final
presentation. We will study and practice various types of presentations, do activities to overcome stage-fright, study body language, proper voice projection and usage, American English pronunciation, eye contact, posture, and using visual aids. There will be several short (3-5 minute) presentations which are designed to be fun and require minimal preparation outside of class.

- **VIP 464 Business English (Instructor: Jessica Farrar)**
  In this integrated skills course, students will develop fluency, accuracy, and communication skills to gain confidence in a variety of English-speaking business situations. There is an emphasis on speaking, from practiced presentations to impromptu situations. We will also practice writing for various business purposes, such as professional biographies, emails, and contracts. The course also includes a review of essential business vocabulary. Participants will develop useful skills and vocabulary through active participation in everyday business situations.

- **VIP 470 Communication Skills in Speaking and Writing (Instructor: Ruth Mendel)**
  Over the course of the term, students will improve communication skills in navigating day-to-day situations as well as speaking and writing on a variety of different topics. Class activities are designed to stimulate interesting discussions, improve mastery of particular grammatical structures, and expand vocabulary. Classes emphasize the use of authentic materials and student interaction. The writing component is a new and smaller part of this course, designed to complement the academic writing course, and focuses on the different skills needed for non-academic writing. Students who take academic writing are free to take the communication skills course, bearing in mind this overlap of one lesson, and that they will be practicing skills in that lesson previously acquired.

- **VIP 485A Public Speaking (Instructor: Susan Derosa)**
  Many people would rather fight a tiger than speak in public. One of the most important business skills you can develop is the confidence to organize your thoughts, research your topic, and get to the point in a speech. These sessions will include demonstration, writing and delivering a speech, evaluation, and coaching. Participants will have the opportunity to practice speaking skills at every class session.

**B. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

- **VIP 440 Current Events (Instructor: Charles Matzke)**
  This class examines current political and social issues facing the United States and the world. Current events will be studied through the context of American politics and policy. The class will closely follow the 2016 presidential election campaign, study current events in the context of the election, and how the election reflects American political institutions (presidency, congress, courts), political process in America (political culture, citizen participation, groups), and current public policy issues (such as health care, the economy, education, crime, foreign policy, race/equality, etc.).

- **VIP 451 American Culture (Instructor: Joe Cousins)**
  This course examines American culture from the perspective of its own mainstream values. The goal is to familiarize you with various aspects of mainstream American culture. We will discuss current events, values, politics, racial assimilation, leisure time, and family. You will gain insights into uniquely American culture while at the same time improving your abilities to read, comprehend, and express yourself in English.
• **VIP 480 Cross Cultural Business Communication Skills (Instructor: Erika Butler)**
  As the workforce becomes more mobile and businesses form more international partnerships, managers must find or train employees who can be successful in a variety of cross-cultural circumstances. Individuals who excel in cross-cultural relationships are said to have high Cultural Intelligence (CQ). This six-week course will focus on developing your Cultural Intelligence and your cross-cultural communication skills to enhance your ability to interact globally. This course will include lectures to enhance your cultural knowledge and communication skills and a variety of exercises and discussions to practice recognizing and using cultural considerations in the business environment.

• **VIP 865 U.S. Legal System (Instructor: Reid Felsing)**
  This course introduces the student to the U.S. legal systems and court systems, including essential skills used in the litigation process and law practice. It also introduces student to legal terminology, legal analysis, procedural law, and substantive law.

**C. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

• **VIP 475 Corporate Governance (Instructor: Reid Felsing)**
  This course sets forth the concepts of entity formation and corporate governance. We will focus on the initial steps to form a business entity. Students will become familiar with the significant roles in the corporate structure including shareholders, directors, and officers. Students will also learn about the ethical obligations imposed on these roles. Lastly, the course will provide the essentials of corporate finance and the regulations of financing publicly traded companies.

• **VIP 483 Organizational Behavior (Instructor: Erika Butler)**
  This course is for students who are working professionals with some academic and personal experience with organizations and how they function. The course will review classic western-based organizational behavior theory from a macro and micro perspective. We will review theories of motivation in the work environment and how organizational design influences these processes. We will also review leadership, decision making and power theories. This course is a condensed form of a master’s level foundational course in Organizational Behavior.

• **VIP 488 Personnel Training & Development (Instructor: Todd Bradley)**
  This is a foundational program outlining human resources, training and personal development that all fit under the umbrella of Talent Management. We will explore basic knowledge of organizational behavior, professional development, systems, data collection, networking, communication, assessment and reporting. The goal of this program is to engage participants in an interactive experience with exposure to the functions of Central Human Resources, and the expertise of individual campus units. This includes engagement in program presentations and lectures with a focus on campus networking.

• **VIP 489 Compensation & Rewards System in HR (Instructor: Charles Folino)**
  This is a foundational program regarding Compensation and Reward Systems. The purpose of this course is to help students gain an understanding of how compensation decisions are made. This will include discussion of laws, rules, and regulations, recent theory and research, as well as performing example applications. We will consider how compensation fits with an overall Human Resources strategy, the internal focus on the firm (including alignment, job analysis, and
job evaluation), making pay competitive with the outside market (including designing pay levels, types of pay and pay structures), considering individual contributions (by examining performance appraisals and pay-for-performance), benefits (such as pensions, child care, and health care), management (including government regulation such as FLSA and managing budgets), and dealing with international issues in setting pay plans. In addition, we will have the opportunity to visit campus events involving compensation and reward systems.

- **VIP 815 U.S. Telecommunication System (Instructor: Erika Butler)**
  This course will explore how telecommunications systems and services developed in the United States. We will study how state regulated telecommunications systems developed in the rest of the world and how the U.S. telecommunications system was built through private investment and various lobbying efforts, and how regulation developed around the growth of this industry. We will study the Communications Act of 1934 and the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and review related terminology. We will focus on the history of regulation in the U.S. and its impact today on network neutrality and how other countries have handled regulation of their telecommunications systems and services.

- **VIP 841 Current Macroeconomic Issues (Instructor: Kiwon Kang)**
  This course is designed for professionals who are interested in the economics field. It is a hybrid course which merges a lecture-style EC 202 (Introduction to Macroeconomics) with a seminar-style special lectures (some Fridays). This course will give participants a thorough understanding of current economic issues in a real world as well as basic macroeconomic theory. At the end of semester, participants are required to make a presentation on their project or paper.

- **VIP 842 Current Economics Issues (Instructor: Kiwon Kang)**
  This course is designed for professionals who are interested in the economics field. It is a hybrid course which merges a lecture-style EC 201 (Introduction to Microeconomics) with a seminar-style special lectures (some Fridays). This course will give participants a thorough understanding of current economic issues in a real world as well as the basic microeconomic theory. At the end of semester, participants are required to make a presentation on their project or paper.

**D. RESEARCH/ METHODOLOGY**

- **VIP 463 Legal Research (Instructor: Teresa Svec)**
  This course is designed to introduce participants to U.S. legal research techniques and analysis. Through this course, participants will gain an understanding of the U.S. legal system, including statutory law and case law. We will review legal research strategies, including how to locate appropriate sources of authority, how to read and analyze case law, and how to organize research findings. Participants will also learn to identify the types of legal documents used in the U.S., and how to present a legal argument in writing.

- **VIP 856A TESOL Pedagogy (Instructor: Sonja Wang)**
  This English methods workshop focuses on writing and reading pedagogy. This class brings together three interrelated strands of intellectual and pedagogical work that English teachers do as part of their professional lives: experiencing literacy as readers and writers themselves; teaching writing and reading with a wide array of well tested instructional materials; and mindfulness of the theory and research about literacy instruction. As a community of teachers we will study the nature of literacy, how it is learned, and how to support its development.
• **VIP 856B Pedagogy of University Teaching (Instructor: Sonja Wang)**
  This course will provide learning and professional development opportunities to international educational professionals, especially college and university professors from non-native English speaking countries. Functioning as a faculty learning community, this course extends experienced teachers’ skills and competencies in supporting student learning. It will combine theoretical, empirical, and philosophical discussion on teaching and learning. This will guide our discussion and practice with procedures for designing, implementing, and evaluating curricular at the senior college level. This includes identifying and articulating learning outcomes, crafting course syllabus, designing activities, lessons, units, and assignments, and implementing effective assessment tools.

• **VIP 858 General Research Methodology (Instructor: Teresa Svec)**
  This course will introduce participants to research methodologies used in conducting scholarly research. Participants will learn to distinguish between scholarly and popular sources, locate research materials electronically and in print, search online databases, and evaluate sources. Participants will practice developing a research question, creating a research plan, locating materials, and describing research findings in writing.