

# Berrien Springs Partnership Lab Syllabus and Instructor Qualifications

LABS (CLASSES) ARE PROVIDED AS AN EDUCATIONAL SOURCE FOR PBL (PROJECT BASED LEARNING)

**COMMUNITY CLASS TITLE: Mental Malware: Spotting Faulty Thinking**

**GRADE OR AGE LEVELS: Middle and High School**

**FORMAT: IN-PERSON**

**DAY AND TIME OF THE WEEK: Tuesdays, 1:00-2:30, 9/4/2025 to 10/9/2025**

**TOTAL REQUIRED HRS: 13.5**

**TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS POSSIBLE: 16.5**

**LOCATION (address):**

**Innovation Central @ Lakeside Family Church**

6999 Red Arrow Highway

Stevensville, MI 49127

**PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR:** Christopher Peddie

**- list additional instructors that will be background checked:**

In the event of an absence, Innovation Central reserves the right

**CONTACT INFORMATION: phone: 269-208-2282**

**email: cpeddie@sbcglobal.net**

**ADDITIONAL REGISTRATION AT SITE REQUIRED? NO**

**INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS (may attach a separate page if necessary):**

Christopher Peddie has served as a pastor for over 30 years and is the Senior Pastor of Lakeside Family Church, which he and his wife, Renée, founded in 1992. Renée serves as the Administrative Pastor, and together they have built a thriving church community rooted in faith and service.

Throughout his ministry, Christopher has also been a Worship Leader, Bible School Instructor, and a key leader in several church plants. In 2019, Christopher and Renée founded STEM 4 Them, an organization dedicated to connecting children in the foster care system with families interested in adoption.

Christopher is also a passionate bass guitarist, sharing his love of music in church and with para-church ministries, using his talents to inspire and uplift others.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW):

"Ever wonder why smart people make dumb decisions—or why we're so good at justifying bad ones? **Mental Malware: Spotting Faulty Thinking** is a fun, eye-opening 10-week course that explores how our brains really work when it comes to making decisions, forming beliefs, and falling for bad ideas.

Using real-world examples, group discussions, and engaging activities, students will uncover the hidden mental shortcuts (called heuristics), common cognitive biases, and classic logical fallacies that shape how we think—often without us even knowing it. We'll explore topics like confirmation bias, the Dunning-Kruger effect, ad hominem arguments, the anchoring effect, and more.

Based on the bestselling books *Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman, *You Are Not So Smart*, and *You Are Now Less Dumb* by David McRaney, this course will challenge students to think more clearly, argue more logically, and recognize when their brains are trying to trick them.

## SYLLABUS/OUTLINE: WEEKLY BREAKDOWN OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING LAB ACTIVITIES

*Week 1 – Introduction to Thinking Errors*

*Theme: Why We Think the Way We Do*

*Week 2 – Heuristics: Mental Shortcuts*

*Theme: Helpful but Hazardous Shortcuts*

*Week 3 – Cognitive Biases 1: Errors in Judgment*

*Theme: Why We Misjudge Risk, Probability, and Reality*

*Week 4 – Cognitive Biases 2: Social and Emotional Biases*

*Theme: Emotions and Ego in Thinking*

*Week 5 – Logical Fallacies 1: The Basics*

*Theme: Faulty Reasoning Patterns*

*Week 6 – Logical Fallacies 2: Appeal and Authority*

*Theme: Persuasion Gone Wrong*

*Week 7 – Cognitive Dissonance and Self-Deception*

*Theme: How We Trick Ourselves into Feeling Good*

*Week 8 – Bias in Media, Advertising, and Culture*

*Theme: Manipulation and Mass Influence*

*Week 9 – Fighting Bias: Can We Overcome?*

*Theme: Becoming More Aware and Rational*

*Week 10 – Capstone: Demonstrating Understanding*

*Theme: Put It All Together*

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT - what will be used to evaluate student progress and/or end of semester pass/fail status? Students will create a capstone project to demonstrate mastery.

- 1) Student agrees to attend at least 80% of class sessions/lessons offered. Attendance is kept online and tracked by Partnership staff. Failure to meet 80% or be on track to meet 80% may result in program discontinuation.
- 2) The Partnership Student Assessment or Performance Form is filled out by the teacher and turned in to Partnership staff. The link to this form is found on the web page for this class. Failing marks for lack of participation, behavior issues, practice time, etc. may result in program discontinuation.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND APPROXIMATE TARGET DATES:

*Steps to check for student understanding, along with dates or # of weeks into class:*

By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand the difference between fast (intuitive) and slow (analytical) thinking
- Identify dozens of common thinking errors and logical fallacies
- Learn how to critically evaluate information, arguments, and their own beliefs
- Develop tools for better decision-making and intellectual humility

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: (online, books, video, etc.):

## CLASS POLICIES: ATTENDANCE, BEHAVIOR, WEATHER, ETC.

**Attendance:** The Partnership requires 80% attendance during this 16 hour course to pass the class. Please let your instructor know if your student will not be attending due to illness or vacation. You can just call and leave a message or text your instructor.

**Weather:** If Lakeshore Public Schools, closes for weather, we will not have class. No matter where you are coming from, if you do not feel safe going out, then please stay home and just let your instructor know via a text or voicemail. We will hold a make up class or arrange an at home activity for your child to complete if needed.

**Behavior:** We expect students to be kind and respectful of other students and of other student's work and work space. Treat others as you would want to be treated.