Berrien Springs Partnership Lab Syllabus and Instructor Qualifications

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

COMMUNITY CLASS TITLE: Computer Basics for College-Bound Students

GRADE OR AGE LEVELS: Grades 6 – 12 (younger students may need more assistance than older students)

FORMAT: Online

DAY AND TIME OF THE WEEK: Asynchronous course; students will complete assignments by weekly deadlines.

TOTAL REQUIRED HRS: 1-2 hours per week

TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS POSSIBLE: 16 – 32 hours

LOCATION: Online

INSTRUCTOR: Mark Pelfrey

CONTACT INFORMATION: pelfreyfamilyschooling@gmail.com

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

I am a Professor of Mathematics at a local community college, where I have taught since 2012. I am also the co-founder and co-Director of our College's Honors Program, which is entering its 10th year in 2025-2026. I work regularly with students in my courses to remind them (or teach them for the first time) how to complete tasks essential to our courses that require the use of computer technology. I also do one-on-one advising with Honors Program students, and regularly work with them on seeking scholarships, internships, and admittance to their next program of study. I am a big believer in education, and believe it is a gateway to prosperity for so many students – I look forward to working with each and every one of my students to help them find this out for themselves!

COURSE DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW):

College-bound students need more than academic knowledge – they need digital literacy. This beginner-friendly course equips students with practical skills in topics that will be essential to their success throughout their academic careers. If you are headed to college, you want your tech skills to be ready for the challenge!

Each week, students will complete hands-on, practical projects that will mimic skills used in nearly all college courses today. From computer basics, key details about commonly used programs, and even including sections on learning management systems and creating shared presentations, students will come away from this course prepared to step into their college classes with confidence.

Students will be able to use Google Workspace applications (Docs, Spreadsheets, Slides, etc.) or comparable Microsoft products for submissions, but the course will be based in Google Workspace. Students will need regular access to a computing device that can run these applications, and will probably find the course easier with a keyboard/mouse as well.

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

Week 1: What Is a Computer?
Topics: Types of computers, input/output devices, history of computers
Assignment: *My Tech Toolbox:* Create a Google Doc with a list and description of every device you use regularly. Include a few sentences per device explaining what it does and why you use it.

Week 2: Operating Systems and File Management
Topics: File types, folders, OS overview
Assignment: *Organize my Stuff:* Submit a screenshot of a newly organized folder structure on your desktop/cloud. Include a short reflection on how you'll keep files organized for school.

Week 3: Hardware Basics
Topics: Internal components, peripherals, specs
Assignment: *Inside a Computer*: Make a presentation slide to label parts of a computer (you can draw or copy images). Add a few facts about each part.

Week 4: Software Overview
Topics: Applications vs. systems, updates
Assignment: *Software Tour*: Create a short screen recording or annotated screenshot walkthrough of a software program you use and explain what it's for.

Week 5: Word Processing
Topics: Formatting, tables, citations
Assignment: *Mini Report*: Submit a one-page document using a template and use proper formatting and components from the week's lesson.

Week 6: Spreadsheets
Topics: Formulas, charts, formatting
Assignment: *Budget Tracker*: Create a spreadsheet that tracks 7 days of hypothetical spending. Include a total row and at least one chart.

Week 7: Presentations
Topics: Slides, transitions, design
Assignment: *3-Slide Pitch*: Make a presentation with 3 slides about a hobby you want your reader to try out. Use the key components from the week's lesson.

Week 8: Group Presentations
Topics: Collaboration, presenting,

Assignment: *Group Presentation Practice:* Work in pairs on a shared Google Slides deck. Submit the final presentation and a brief reflection about the collaboration process.

Week 9: Internet Basics
Topics: Browsers, searching, source evaluation
Assignment: *Search Smarter*: Submit a short document comparing at least two sources for the same topic. Include screenshots and a brief analysis about the credibility of each source.

Week 10: Email & Communication
Topics: Email/online etiquette, CC/BCC usage
Assignment: *Professional Email Draft:* Write a sample email to a future college professor, introducing yourself and asking a question about the syllabus.

Week 11: Cloud Storage & Collaboration
Topics: Google Drive, sharing files
Assignment: *Shared Folder Setup*: Create and share a Google Drive folder titled "Computer Basics Portfolio" with the instructor. Upload assignments from previous weeks.

Week 12: Digital Citizenship
Topics: Digital footprint, netiquette, social media
Assignment: *Online Persona Audit*: Google yourself and write a reflection. What did you find? What does this look into your digital footprint say about you?

Week 13: Cyberscurity
Topics: Passwords, phishing, malware
Assignment: *Cyber Safety Poster*: Design a one-page digital poster (Google Drawings, Canva, etc.) that includes at least 3 cybersecurity tips for college students.

Week 14: College Tech Essentials
Topics: Learning Management Systems (LMS – Moodle, Canvas, etc.), Zoom/Google Meet
Assignment: Design and glue any felt creation—student choice!

Week 15: Troubleshooting and Maintenance
Topics: Basic diagnostics, DIY vs. tech support
Assignment: *Troubleshooting Log*: Think of a tech problem you've faced. Create a step-by-step log on how you solved it (or how you would solve it with what you've learned).

Week 16: Final Project & Reflection
Topics: Review of course materials, final questions
Assignment: *College Tech Survival Kit*: Submit a folder that includes all previous assignments, and a two-page reflection on the three most important things you think you learned throughout the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND APPROXIMATE TARGET DATES:

Each week, students will check in using Google Classroom. Students will receive their assignments on Sunday evenings, and will need to submit their assignments by Sunday of the following week. When

each assignment is complete, students will upload a document or photo of their work and answer reflection questions about their experience completing that week's assignment.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT - what will be used to evaluate student progress and/or end of semester pass/fail status?

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) We will keep track of course progress in Google Classroom. Your photos/document submissions and comments will be proof of your participation in the course for each week.