Instructor Name: Amanda Marquez
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Office Phone: (361) 825-3651
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 12:00-2:00 pm, Tuesday and Thursday 1:30-2:30 pm
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Website: http://critical.tamucc.edu/wiki/AmandaMarquez/Home

Course Information:

UCCP 1101.160 TR 11:00-11:50 am CCH 110
UCCP 1101.161 TR 12:30-1:20 pm CCH 110
UCCP 1101.162 TR 8:00-8:50 am CCH 114

Course Description

UCCP 1101 First-Year Seminar I is an important part of Triad B. The first-year learning community—especially the seminar—is designed to help you achieve success, academically and socially, as you to make the transition to university life.

Your seminar will challenge you to engage in significant learning in college-level intellectual work. You will develop your skills to work productively in small groups, and will engage in meaningful class discussions that relate to your other courses within the triad. To develop your critical thinking skills and your information literacy, you will learn how to examine problems and questions from multiple perspectives. My seminar sections, in particular, will focus on self-assessment, interpretation, and participation, all the while providing opportunities for you to become more familiar with postsecondary culture (specifically at TAMUCC). For more information, see this site: http://firstyear.tamucc.edu/wiki/Main/AboutFYPrograms.

Course Objectives

The primary objectives of First Year Seminar are for students to:
- Explore the interconnections among the Triad courses;
- Develop critical thinking skills and significant learning;
- Clarify personal values, goals, and strengths;
- And develop the ability to learn through study, discussion, writing, cooperation, and collaboration.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will apply interdisciplinary knowledge to address and analyze real world issues
- Students will interpret and evaluate various research materials and/or perspectives

Online Schedule: A detailed schedule for this course can be found at: http://critical.tamucc.edu/wiki/AmandaMarquez/ClassPlans

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Learning Community Objectives:
By the end of the term, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of sociological concepts.
- Demonstrate understanding of how culture, social class, race/ethnicity, and gender influence life chances.
- Demonstrate understanding of how the structures present in the family system, the media, and the education system influence life chances.
- Correctly employ those sociological concepts and information to analyze personal experiences and observations.
- Use writing to communicate his/her understanding of sociological concepts and information.
- Use writing to communicate his/her analysis of personal experiences and observations.

Grade Distribution and Major Assignments

PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE – 30 %

There is nothing that we will do in class that is not important to your overall success in Triad B; therefore, attendance is imperative. Missing class will affect your grade, as will not being prepared or not participating in a meaningful way. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions and to compose thoughtful short assignments. To encourage attendance, I will take attendance each time we meet. In addition, individual and group exercises will be assigned each class meeting through which I will evaluate your performance and engagement. Simply being present in class will not earn you full points for the day.

I will take into account participation, preparedness, and promptness when assigning daily participation grades. In addition, any disruptive behavior or use of electronic devices (including any use of laptops, cell phones and/or portable music devices) will be noted, resulting in a deduction of daily participation points. I reserve the right to award daily or average points to students who continually surpass classroom expectations. I also reserve the right to deduct daily or average points from students who consistently lack engagement or disregard classroom rules.

The official attendance policy for this course is as follows:
You will be allowed three absences this semester without receiving a daily grade of zero points. This policy is designed to provide for any possible family emergency, medical appointment, illness, or other unforeseen, unavoidable conflicts. Use these absences wisely as there will be no excused absences beyond this allowance. However, the instructor reserves the right to consider individual circumstances in assessing class attendance.

PORTFOLIOS – 30 %

Two portfolios will be due throughout the semester. Two portfolios, each worth 15% of your course grade, will be due throughout the semester. The midterm portfolio will be due on September 30th (~Week 6), while the final portfolio will be due on December 6th (~Week 16). We will talk more about portfolios as their due dates approach. See the online description for a better understanding of the portfolios:
http://critical.tamucc.edu/wiki/AmandaMarquez/PortfolioInfo

INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES – 25%

Most of the work we will do in this course will relate to your other courses in the learning community. To reward and encourage success on learning community assignments and projects, many will also count for credit in your First-Year Seminar course. We may also do small activities and assignments in Seminar to support the completion of – or reflection over – various assignments in the learning community.
FIRST-YEAR CELEBRATION – 15%
All learning community students will participate in First-Year Celebration (FYC) at the end of the Fall 2011 semester. FYC is an opportunity for students to share their academic work with the campus community. More information will be provided in the form of class discussion and an online assignment description.

Other Information

LATE WORK
I will NOT accept late daily work assignments in Seminar because those assignments are, in essence, part of your attendance and participation grade. There will be no make-ups for missed daily grades. Any major assignment (such as a portfolio) will be accepted late, at a penalty of a half a letter grade per business day. Please email me at least 24 hours before the due date if there are extenuating circumstances that will cause you to miss a due date. You will have one week in which to turn in the assignment.

NO ASSIGNMENTS RELATED TO TRIAD B COURSES WILL BE ACCEPTED OVER EMAIL. NO EXCEPTIONS.

GRADED EVENTS: If you feel that you were graded unfairly & disagree with a grade that you earned, please follow these steps:
- Read the rubric, assignment description; did you follow all of the guidelines?
- Look on your paper for my specific, hand-written comments...do these shed any light?
- Next, come see me during office hours or schedule an appointment to see me to discuss your concerns.
If you are disappointed in your performance, and believe that the assignment you turned in is not representative of your best work, please come and see me as well. I am open to discussing ways to help you improve the grade you earned. You must observe a 24-hour waiting period and meet with me personally to discuss these options.

Islander Email Account: It is VERY IMPORTANT that you activate your Islander Email account, as it will serve as my primary means of correspondence with you. Throughout the semester, I will be sending emails sharing important information relating to the learning community and I want to ensure that you receive this information. For quick questions or minor issues, you may contact me via e-mail. For more complicated concerns or questions, please make use of my office hours or make an appointment to meet with me.

Laptops, Cell Phones & Other Technology: Please turn off your cell phones (or IPods, laptops, etc.), or turn them to silent, and put them away, before class begins, out of respect for your peers and me. Laptops will be permitted for particular activities as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Academic Honesty: University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possessions of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. Please see: http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/handbook.html for further information.

Rights Responsibilities and Civil Discourse: In this course we will engage in active learning including frequent group activities and interactions. We will be exploring real world topics that may at times result in contentious discussions as we meet the objectives of the course. To meet these many significant learning objectives, class dialogue that no one individual dominates the discussion and that the diverse opinions of others can be respected. Students are expected to read and follow the University Code of Conduct, Student Handbook, and state and local laws.

Respect for Diversity:
We are the most diverse campus, in terms of self-disclosed ethnic identity, in the Texas A&M system. This means that we are all meeting and working with people who are different from ourselves in terms of their identities:
whether that is defined by their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and/or religion. Respecting and accepting difference is vital to your success in this class, on this campus, as a future professional, and in the global community.

Notice to Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeal Process. As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Fall 2011 Important Dates

Wednesday, August 31 Last day to register/add a class
Monday, September 5 Labor Day Holiday
Friday, November 4 Last day to drop a class
November 24-25 Thanksgiving Holiday
Tuesday, December 6 Last day of classes