Honors First-Year Seminar I
Fall 2016

Course Syllabus

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Office hours: TR 10:00-11:00 am, F 12-1 pm; or by appointment

Courses:
Honors First-Year Seminar I - HONR1101.002 TR 8:30-9:20am CS 111

Course Description

Honors First-Year Seminar is a two-semester course sequence required of all first-year students. As the central component of the First-Year Experience and the Honors Program, Seminar helps students achieve success, academically and socially, as they make the transition to the university. Honors Seminar provides students with opportunities for meaningful interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters as well as timely, constructive feedback about their learning. Students are immersed in an active learning environment with a purposefully integrated and contextualized curriculum, fostering the development of transferable skills and engaging them in the academic community. In HONR1101, students are introduced to college level work and responsibilities, and provided with appropriate support and resources to navigate their first semester.

Honors Expectations

- Students read assignments on time, completely, to the last page.
- Students make connections between the material at hand and what has been explored in previous classes.
- Students understand that open and equitable discussion and critique is the soul of an honors course. Everybody listens attentively to the professor and to each other. Everybody feels welcome to participate.
- Students think “outside the box” and are not afraid to take risks and try out new things.

Course Objectives

The objectives of Honors First-Year Seminar are to advance the six intellectual and practical skills defined by the Texas Core Curriculum:

- Critical Thinking Skills
- Communications Skills
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills
- Teamwork
- Social Responsibility
- Personal Responsibility

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Reflect and integrate learning from current courses, including development of critical thinking skills, social and/or personal responsibility.
- Interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters through daily activities and discussions.
- Demonstrate competence of knowledge related to the course themes in a public forum.

Course Materials

Honors Seminar is a discussion course that will focus on the assigned readings, information gained in your other courses, and your experiences as a First-Year Islander in the Honors Program. Readings will be supplied to you as handouts or online postings for discussion in Seminar. It is vitally important that you keep up with readings that are assigned at all times.

You will also need the following for seminar and other learning community courses:

- Regular computer access with Microsoft Office (available on campus).
- Islander email and Blackboard. Be sure to check both regularly.
- Ability to save your computer generated work and transfer it between school and home and among university computers (Laptop, USB Flash Drive, or cloud access).
Course Evaluation

**Attendance and Participation: (40%)**
Your knowledge and opinion is valued and appreciated at every class meeting. Attendance will be taken daily throughout the semester at the beginning, middle, or end of class, or via Blackboard.

**Leadership Project (25%)**
Students will work in teams to explore leadership characteristics found in individuals on campus or in the community.

**Reflective Assignments: (35%)**
You will complete three reflective assignments this semester. The reflective assignments are designed to develop your metacognitive abilities. Metacognition basically means thinking about your own thinking. Topics will be assigned by instructor in class.
- First Reflection (5%): Due September 9
- Midterm Reflection (10%): Due October 18
- Final Reflection (10%): Due December 2

**First-Year Symposium (Leadership Project Presentation): Optional**
First-Year Symposium is an opportunity for students to share their academic work with the campus community. You will present your research and results associated with the Leadership Project.

Grading Policies

**Late Work/Extensions:**
If there is a crisis that prevents you from meeting a deadline or attending class, you can request an extension to turn the work in late without a penalty. The approval of an extension is entirely at my discretion and will depend on the reason for your absence, your record of completion of work, and attendance. All extensions must be confirmed by email.

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that his or her final grade reflects academic evaluation which is arbitrary, prejudiced, or inappropriate in view of the standards and procedures outlined in this class syllabus, may appeal the grade given for the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the student believes the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at the student-faculty level, an appeal of the final grade in the class may be submitted, in writing, to the Director of University Core Curriculum Programs. For complete details, please visit: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Seminar Coordinator.

**Dropping the Class**
If you are considering dropping this course, please discuss it with me to be sure it is the best course of action. Should you decide to drop the course, you must initiate the process by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Simply stopping attendance and participation will NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 11, 2016 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom Policies

**Attendance**
All class meetings will start on time unless otherwise announced in advance. You are expected to be on time. Part of your course grade reflects your attendance and participation in class, and, therefore, it is imperative that you are prepared to attend class to be successful in this course. Make sure you communicate with if you have any extenuating circumstances.

**Rights, Responsibilities and Civil Discourse**
In this course we will engage in active learning including frequent group activities and interactions. To meet these many significant learning objectives it will be necessary to establish some ground rules for class discussions so that no one individual dominates the discussion and so that the diverse opinions of others can be respected. You and your classmates will make suggestions that will ultimately be compiled into a set of rules responsibilities and guidelines for civil discourse in this class. Students are expected to read and follow the University Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook.
Class Decorum
During class you are expected to behave respectfully and contribute to a positive learning environment. This means that you should refrain from using technology inappropriately in class. Also, during class discussion, you are expected to be respectful of others’ opinions and open to a diversity of ideas.

Course Communication
All course communication is sent through your university email account (Islander account), and all course materials and announcements are posted to Blackboard. If you need assistance with these, contact the Student Computer Helpdesk at 361-825-5618.

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.

Students with Disabilities and Veterans
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 Corpus Christi Hall 116.

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.