Course Syllabus

Instructor: Chelsie Hawkinson
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Office hours: TR 8:30 am – 9:30 am, F 10:00-10:50, & MW 11:00 pm – 11:50 pm or by appointment

Courses:
- UCCP 1101.630 TR 11:00-11:50 pm OCNR 258
- UCCP 1101.631 TR 12:00-12:50 pm OCNR 258

Course Description

First-Year Seminar is a two-semester course sequence required of all full-time first-year students. As the central component of a learning community, Seminar helps students achieve success, academically and socially, as they make the transition to the university. 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 UCCP 1101, students are introduced to college level work and responsibilities, and provided with appropriate support and resources to navigate their first semester.

Course Objectives

The objectives of 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

Seminar is a discussion course that will focus on the assigned readings and your experiences as a First-Year Islander. 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).
- Positive attitude 😊

Course Evaluation

Attendance and Participation: (30%)
Attendance is the only way to benefit from my class. Most of your grade is based on your participation in critical activities and discussions. To learn to connect the concepts you learn in philosophy to your personal life, you must be present and prepared for class. 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.
Destination Graduation: Getting Out and About (5%)
In order to help you become more acquainted with the university, you will be expected to attend at least three Islander events throughout the semester and write a reflection about your experience.

- **First Event Reflection due before Friday, September 30 by 5 pm**
- **Second Event Reflection due before Friday, October 28 by 5 pm**
- **Third Event Reflection due before Monday, November 21 by 10 pm**
- **Fourth and Fifth Event Reflections due before Wednesday, December 7 by 10pm**

Learning Guides & ePortfolio (20%):
Because it is imperative that you keep up with the Philosophy readings each week, you will complete five learning guides (2% each) throughout the first half of the semester to help you understand and become critical of the readings. To help you examine the value of the assignment in relationship to your performance in Philosophy, you will be asked to construct a portfolio (10%) in the middle of the semester to demonstrate how the learning guides have been beneficial to your learning. The portfolio will be discussed in Seminar and will be due by **5pm on Friday, October 14**.

**Reflective Assignments**: The reflective assignments are designed to develop your metacognitive abilities. Metacognition means thinking about your own thinking. The more you reflect on your own experiences in college and make positive steps to improve, the better you will do. The assignments are as follows.

- **First Reflection: Statement of Philosophical Views (5%)**: Description: Provide a brief synopsis of your philosophical views. Further instructions will be provided in class. Your final reflection will be due **Monday, August 29 by 10pm**.

- **Final Reflection: Statement of Philosophical Views (10%)**: A final assignment will be based on the Dyad P themes. See the assignment description on Blackboard for a better understanding of this assignment. Your final reflection will be due **Monday, December 5 by 10pm**.

**Integrative Assignments**:  

- **Mind/Body Research Presentation (10%)**: Research teams will be assembled to explore the question of the mind and body relationship in light of recent science. Presentation materials will be due to Blackboard on **Wednesday, October 5 by 10pm**. Presentations will take place in Seminar on **Thursday, October 6 & Tuesday, October 11**.

- **Free Will Philosophy Essay (10%)**: Essay topic and specific instructions will be discussed in lecture and seminar. Your essay will be due on **Thursday, November 3 by 9:30 am**.

**First-Year Symposium (10%)**
For the First-Year Symposium, you will be responsible for creating a poster to teach other first-year students about a philosophical concept. Posters will be due and presented on **Tuesday, November 29**.

**Grading Policies**

**Late Work/Extensions:**
I will not accept late in-class assignments—these assignments are directly related to your attendance and participation in class. Unless you receive prior instructor approval, major assignments received after their date will be marked down 10% for each day late. If there is an event that prevents you from meeting a deadline for an assignment, you can request an extension to turn in the work late without penalty. The approval of an extension is entirely at my discretion and will depend on the reason(s) for your absence or necessity for an extension as well as your attendance and progress in the course up to that point in the semester. All extensions must be confirmed by email at least 24 hours before the due date. Due dates are already posted—please note them in your calendar and plan ahead.

**Communication Policy:**
The best way to contact me is through email. You can expect to hear back from me within 24 hours Monday through Friday during regular business hours. I do not check my email as frequently on the weekend, so expect more delayed responses if you email late Friday or on the weekend.

**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. 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 6, 2014, is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom Policies

Tardiness
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. If you are more than ten minutes late, you may be counted absent and you will miss the in-class writing assignment for the day.

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.