Course Syllabus
First-Year Seminar ONLINE Spring 2018
Strengths and Wellness

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Welcome
Welcome to UCCP 1101 ONLINE. My goal for this course is to help you to succeed and assist you in your personal, academic and professional growth and development. This is a real course that will impact your GPA and must be completed as part of your Core Curriculum. I anticipate a wonderful semester and positive learning experiences. Please feel free to contact me any time or to come by my office and see me.

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. The goal of UCCP 1101 is for students to participate in academic discourse and take ownership of their education in preparation for their future coursework and careers.

Course Objectives
The First-Year Seminar objective is to advance the six intellectual and practical skills defined by the Texas Core Curriculum:

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

Student Learning Outcomes
- Interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters through daily activities and discussions.
- Students will interpret and evaluate various research materials and/or perspectives
- Identify personal strengths and ways to apply those strengths to increase personal success (utilizing Clifton Strengthsfinder Inventory).
- Examine and clarify personal goals regarding all aspects of wellness including but not limited to emotional, physical, social, spiritual, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational (the Wellness Wheel concept- the 6-8 dimensions of wellness).
- Improve discussion skills as both a moderator and an active participant.
- Create and moderate a lively intellectual online discussion
- Create and /or improve one’s professional resume and letter of application.

Theme- Strengths and Wellness
Seminar is intended to help you succeed as a student and beyond the university. We will be exploring the theme of strengths and wellness this semester through personal exploration and discussion. You will get out of it what you put in. Luckily, we all want to live a long, healthy successful life, so I expect this will be a lively and thoughtful discussion.

Seminar is a discussion based course and is student centered. This means most the content will come from you and your classmates. You will be required to research, present discussions, participate actively in discussions and be a good citizen of the class. This seminar is entirely on Blackboard and is an asynchronous online course. This means you can “attend” and participate on your own schedule for the most part. There are no set meeting times, but you visit the site and interact at least twice per week. It can be hard for some to stay focused in this type of course. Be forewarned, failure to regularly participate vigorously throughout the semester will affect your grade.
Discussions will be posted Sunday night or Monday morning and a round of discussion will follow. Midweek on Tuesday night or Wednesday morning a follow-up prompt will be posted and another round of discussion will follow. This is a real course, you can get a B, C, D or F, but it is not hard to get an A. My hope is that everyone gets an A!

Course Materials

Clifton Strengths Finder- The Clifton Strengths Finder is a way to identify and develop your unique strengths as a person. Understanding and applying your strengths rather than focusing on your weaknesses is a great way to maximize your success in education and life. You will be provided with a “StrengthsFinder” code free of charge which comes with an online book. You will need to take the StrengthsQuest inventory online and read sections of the book as they pertain to your own personal strengths and those of others.

This is a student centered online discussion based course, much of the course will come from you. There are no other materials or books.

Course Evaluation

PORTFOLIOS – 60%
Two reflective portfolios, each worth 30% of your course grade, will be due during the semester. See the online description for a better understanding of the portfolios, which are due on the following dates:

Portfolio 1: Strengths and Wellness Portfolio – Due Friday, March 23, by 11:59
Portfolio 2: Personal Mission Statement, Resume and Letter of Application – Due Friday, April 27, by 11:59 pm

You will be provided with opportunities to meet with me prior to turning in Portfolio 1 and 2.

PARTICIPATION – 30%
It is vital that you check your Blackboard account several times per week. Although this class is online, your participation is REQUIRED. There is nothing that we will do that is not important to your success in this course. There will be weekly discussions on posted articles or videos throughout the course. You will have specific instructions on each posting and these weekly assignments will be due on Sunday or first thing Monday morning.

FACILITATION – 10%
This is a student-centered course, meaning you will be researching and presenting much of the content. Each student in the course will be responsible for facilitating one weekly discussion. There will be 2 and sometimes 3 discussions happening in the same week. As part of this facilitation, the student will select a provocative topic for discussion which relates to the Strengths and Wellness theme, choose an article, short video, or other media, or write a written prompt to explain the topic, create provocative open-ended questions and/or prompts, and then moderate the responses.

Important Dates

Weekly discussions will occur except during Spring Break.

- Tuesday Jan 16- First Day of Classes- Begin saving evidence for your midterm portfolio such as ways you are applying your strengths, and achieving your wellness goals. Meaningful photos, screen shots, documents, etc. Begin writing or updating your personal mission statement, resume and letter of application to an internship, job, or graduate program.
- Friday, Jan 26- Blackboard Profile Created or updated by 11pm
- Friday Feb 9- Topic Selection for Facilitation Due- Any provocative and valuable topic that fits under the theme of Strengths and Wellness. More information will be given later.
- Monday Feb 12- Strengths and Wellness Challenge Begins (Identify measureable goals and attempt to achieve these goals).
I require few assignments, so note that if you fail to turn in any assignment you drop up to 3 full letter grades!

Expectations

Conduct yourself as a professional college student and aspiring professional at all times.
- My class is a safe place for all.
- Avoid derogatory comments toward any individual or group.
- Have an open mind.
- Acknowledge the previous participant’s thoughts before offering a comment or rebuttal.
- Be on your best behavior during online discussions, as you know sarcasm and facial expressions are hard to convey via text, so use caution, be kind, and always assume one has good intentions.
- Stay on topic.
- Be honest and thoughtful in discussions.
- No foul language.

Electronic Communication Policy

The best way to contact me is email. I am available electronically Monday through Friday 8-5 pm when I am not in class or other meetings. I strive to respond as soon as possible during business hours. I may respond at other times, but please don’t expect me to always be available immediately. Please tell me what class you are in for a faster response. I am available to chat via Blackboard or for phone calls during office hours, but students physically in my office take precedence. I do not accept friend requests on Facebook or other social networking sites while you are taking classes from me but feel free to friend me later. Your writing in e-mail should be very concise and to the point, but should also be professional. E-mail is not the same as instant messaging or text messaging and should have appropriate grammar, punctuation, and capitalization throughout, even if you are using a handheld device.

No Assignments can be turned in via email. They must be turned in to the proper link in Blackboard.

Late Work

Portfolios will be accepted late, at a penalty of a half-letter grade per calendar day. Weekly discussion postings will not be accepted after the assignment deadline. Please post thoughtful robust discussion responses to discussions at least twice between Monday and Friday of each week for full participation credit.

Starfish

Starfish is a software communication program used to connect you to your “Success Network” of instructors, advisors, and other academic support programs on campus. If you receive an email from starfish@tamucc.edu, this means I have raised a Starfish “communication” item useful for connecting you to campus resources and course progress guidance. Starfish “communication” items include:
- Flags: Early Alerts regarding Course Effort/Progress
- Kudos: Commendation for Course Effort/Progress
- Referrals: Recommended utilization of services: tutoring, mentoring, coaching, advising, etc.
- To-dos: Assigned tasks, such as “Meet with me”

Acting on these messages in a timely manner is vital to your success as a student at TAMUCC.

Academic Honesty

Islanders 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 possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism. Students are expected to read and follow the University Code of Conduct. They are expected to conduct themselves according to the Islander Pledge. It is the student’s responsibility to uphold these standards by reporting any
dishonest behavior in themselves or others. While collaboration and teamwork are often encouraged, a student must know when an assignment requires individual effort or is collaborative. If any doubt exists, ask the instructor. As an Islander Alumnus I must uphold the reputation of this institution.

**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 contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit CCH 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.

**Academic Advising**
The College of Science and Engineering requires that students meet with an academic advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major or career emphasis. The academic advisor will set up a degree plan and assign the student a faculty mentor. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Center for Instruction, Room 350, (361) 825-5777.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. You must drop prior to the university posted drop date.

**Grade Appeal Process**
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 further assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the First-Year Seminar Coordinator.

I am thrilled that you chose Texas A&M University- Corpus Christi and Science & Engineering Learning Communities. Go Islanders!