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Office Phone: (361) 825-3670
Office Hours: Mon. (3:30-4:30pm) Tues. (9:30-10:50am / 3:00-4:20pm), Thurs. (9:30-10:50am), Fri (11:00-12:00pm – by APPOINTMENT ONLY)
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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.

A successful experience in this course will depend on your individual commitment and work ethic, as well as your ability to be an active participant. I encourage all students to visit with me regularly throughout the semester, rather than waiting until the end of the semester to ask questions or express concerns. As in most courses, students should be proactive about their work and ready to discuss concepts and share examples during class. Furthermore, a professor who is familiar with their students is better able to help their students accomplish their personal goals, so make yourself known for doing good work, contributing to class discussion, pursuing your professional interests outside of the classroom, and sharing your goals, successes, and challenges with us.

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

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

Student Learning Outcomes
• Reflect and integrate learning from learning community 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 learning community discipline(s) in a public forum.

Important Dates
Monday, September 3rd — Labor Day Holiday — NO CLASSES
Tuesday, September 4th — Last day to register/add a class
Friday, November 9th — Last Day to Drop a Class
Wednesday, November 21st — Reading Day — NO CLASSES
Thurs/Fri, November 22nd & 23rd — Thanksgiving Holiday — NO CLASSES
Tuesday, December 4th — Last Day to Withdraw from the University
Wednesday, December 5th — Last day of classes
Thursday, December 6th — Reading Day — NO CLASSES
December 7th-December 13th — Final Exams
Grade Distribution and Major Assignments

PARTICIPATION (15%) AND ATTENDANCE (15%) – 30 %
There is nothing that we will do in class that is not important to your overall success in the learning community; 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.

MIDTERM/FINAL REFLECTION – 20%
Two reflections, each worth 10% of your course grade, will be due during the semester. The Midterm Reflection will be completed in class on Thursday, Oct. 11th. The Final Reflection will be completed in class on Tuesday, November 27th. YOU MUST BE IN CLASS ON BOTH OF THESE DAYS TO COMPLETE THE REFLECTIONS. THERE WILL BE NO MAKEUPS OR EXTENSIONS GIVEN FOR EITHER ASSIGNMENT. More information for these reflections will be provided in the form of class discussion and an online assignment description.

LEARNING COMMUNITY RESEARCH INTEGRATION AND PREPARATION- 20%
As part of your learning community experience, you will complete an oral/visual presentation called “Green Campus Team Project” in which you will present your research and your conclusions to your peers and learning community instructors. Research topics will be chosen and groups will be assigned in early September. For this project, you will work with three or five students in our class. **Throughout the semester, you will have several graded assignments that you must complete in order to prepare you for your projections in this learning community.**

FIRST-YEAR SYMPOSIUM – 30%
(15% for the poster; 15% for oral presentation)
All learning community students will participate in First-Year Symposium (FYS) at the end of the Fall 2018 semester. FYS is an opportunity for students to share their academic work with the campus community. You will be required to create a tri-fold poster board that reflects your group’s presentation content. More information will be provided in the form of class discussion and an online assignment description. FYS is scheduled to take place on Friday, November 30th.

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. For any major integrative learning community assignment, please email your professor’s at least 48 hours before the due date if there are extenuating circumstances that will cause you to miss an assignment deadline. In the email, you will need to propose a new due date that does not exceed SEVEN days (one week) past the original due date. Upon submission of the final product, documentation that proves an extension was granted must be provided. This policy includes weekends. **NO ASSIGNMENTS RELATED TO LEARNING COMMUNITY COURSES WILL BE ACCEPTED OVER EMAIL. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

OFFICE HOURS Attending office hours is a key to success in higher education. Because of FERPA regulations, we cannot discuss grades in the classroom; this must be done during office hours. We want to give you feedback on your writing or any of the course content. In order to be fair, please abide by the following guidelines: we can’t spend more than 15 minutes with you during office hours if other students are waiting. Obviously, we are delighted to spend more time with you if our schedules permit. We are happy to answer specific questions about assignments via email. However, we will not provide any detailed feedback via email.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION Please consider e-mail as official correspondence. All email correspondence will be sent to your Islander email and via Blackboard. Efforts will be made to address your e-mail within 24 hours. If you do not receive an email within 24 hours, please send a follow-up email.
- No email correspondence on the day before an examination or deadline.
- E-mail communications should be about class business. E-mail is not the place for summaries of lectures, discussions, or readings, however.
- Please use the subject line in a way that indicates the content of the message. Please use professional language and include your full name and a complete inquiry in the body of the message. Unprofessional emails will result in non-response.
Electronic Device Policy
Use of electronic devices for class purposes (look up a word, find an article to support an argument, etc) is allowed. However, using electronic devices to peruse Twitter or Instagram, play Fortnite etc is distracting not only to you but also to your instructor and peers and thus will not be allowed. The electronic device policy will be discussed more thoroughly in class.

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.

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/ Blackboard: It is VERY IMPORTANT that you activate your Islander Email account and log onto Blackboard, 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. I generally will respond to email within 24 hours, except on the weekends. I am always ready and willing to make myself available to help you succeed in this course. I highly encourage you to come to me with your questions and concerns at any point that you need the assistance. I am very good at answering email and many of your questions could probably be answered in that way. For more complicated concerns, I encourage you to drop by my office or make an appointment so we can discuss whatever it is that is causing you to struggle. I advise you to identify and remedy any concerns as early as you can during the semester – the more time we have to address it – the more likely it is we will be able to resolve it in a way that allows you to be successful. If you wait until the end of the semester, there is little I can usually do to help at that point.

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.

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 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.

I-CARE
TAMU-CC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of our campus community. If you need support or have a concern about the behavior or safety of a fellow student, you may share your concerns with I-CARE by submitting an online referral to icare.tamucc.edu. Your report will help us to provide outreach, support, and early intervention.
Think About It
All UCCP 1101 students are required to complete the Think About It training to prepare you for the unique challenges associated with being a university student. You should have received an email prompting you to take the course before you arrived on campus. Please complete the training before October 1st, to avoid a registration hold that will prevent you from registering for Spring 2019 classes. If you did not receive the email, please talk with me or contact thinkaboutit@tamucc.edu for a new access link.

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 Chair of the Department of Undergraduate Studies. For complete details, please visit: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures

** This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate students’ and/or instructional needs. However, you will be notified of those changes as they occur. Please visit course website and view the class schedule on a regular basis to remain informed of such changes.