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 1102 is for students to participate in academic discourse and take ownership of their education in preparation for their future coursework and careers.

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
- Communication Skills
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills
- Teamwork
- Social Responsibility
- 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.

Habits of mind
Habits of mind are ways of approaching learning that are both intellectual and practical. They are crucial for all college-level learners. Beyond knowing particular facts or completing mandatory readings, students who develop these habits of mind approach learning from an active stance. These habits help students succeed in a variety of fields and disciplines. They are cultivated both inside and outside school. These habits include:

- **Curiosity** – the desire to know more about the world.
- **Openness** – the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking in the world.
- **Engagement** – a sense of investment and involvement in learning.
- **Creativity** – the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas.
- **Persistence** – the ability to sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects.
- **Responsibility** – the ability to take ownership of one’s actions and understand the consequences of those actions for oneself and others.
- **Flexibility** – the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demands.
- **Metacognition** – the ability to reflect on one’s own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes and systems used to structure knowledge.

**ATTENDANCE 15%**
There is nothing that we will do in class that is not important to your overall success; therefore, attendance is imperative and missing class will affect your grade. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions and to compose thoughtful responses to short in-class assignments. In any case, you are allowed 2 unexcused absences. We are giving you these absences for your physical and mental health, so please do not abuse them. After your 2nd absence, your overall grade will be affected.

**PARTICIPATION 15%**
Simply being present in class will not earn you full points for the day. I will consider participation, preparedness, and promptness when assigning participation grades. In addition, any disruptive behavior or inappropriate use of electronic devices will be noted, resulting in a deduction of your daily participation grade.

**Philosophical Issue Facilitation (20%)**
During the semester, you will form into groups and choose a philosophical issue to explore. You will develop an activity for guiding the class through this philosophical issue. Your activity should focus on encouraging your classmates to engage in philosophical inquiry related to your chosen topic, with the goal of helping your classmates develop a deeper understanding of your chosen philosophical issue. More information will later in the semester.
Integrative Assignments 30%

**Learning Guides (10%)**
Because it is imperative that you keep up with the Philosophy readings each week, you will create and complete five learning guides throughout the semester to help you understand and engage with the readings from Philosophy. Though we may work on these learning guides together in class, generally each learning guide will be due before the reading is discussed in class.

**ePortfolios (10%)**
During the semester, you will establish and maintain a digital portfolio, collecting all the course work you are doing. Regularly during the semester, you will compose reflective overviews that will help you to connect the writing, reading, and research you are doing with the learning goals for the course. At least two times, at mid-terms and finals, you will assemble and submit a "strategic" portfolio to earn a grade.

The strategic portfolios you submit to earn your grades will include ample and appropriate evidence and an extensive reflective overview. With these reflective overviews you will show and tell how the materials you include have expanded your learning during the semester and the extent to which you have achieved the learning goals for Philosophy and Seminar. You will upload your portfolios to your Online Folder that you will create in class. More details will be given as we progress through the course. More information will be provided in the form of class discussion and an online assignment description.

**Multimodal Presentation (5%)**
Students will engage in research over the course of the entire semester. Students will take some of this research and critically assemble a multimodal presentation. This assignment is to encourage students to engage with course materials directly and apply philosophical problems to real world issues. Presentations will take place in Seminar. More information will be provided in the form of class discussion and an online assignment description.

**First-Year Symposium 5%**
All learning community students will participate in First-Year Symposium (FYS) at the end of the Fall 2018 semester. First-Year Symposium 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.

Reflective Assignments 20%
The reflective assignments are designed to assess your views, understandings, beliefs concerning philosophy, and to track how those views grow and develop over time.

**First Reflection Statement of Philosophical Views (10%)**
Description: Provide a brief synopsis of your philosophical views. Further instructions will be provided in class.

Final Reflection Statement of Philosophical Views (10%):
A final assignment will be based on the Dyad P themes. More information will be provided in the form of class discussion and an online assignment description.

IN-CLASS CONDUCT
In general, treat each other and the instructor with respect and follow standards of common courtesy. Here are a few specifics:

- Please turn off all cell phones or other electronic communication devices and place them out of sight (in a bag, purse, pocket) while in class.
- However, the use of laptops and/or phones is permitted on the basis that it is for Triad work.

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 advise you to identify and remedy any concerns as early as you can during the semester. The more time we have to address your issue, the more likely it is we will be able to resolve your issue. If you wait until the end of the semester, there is little I can usually do to help you.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism
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.

Definition: In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.
This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers. Most current discussions of plagiarism fail to distinguish between:

1. Submitting someone else’s text as one’s own or attempting to blur the line between one’s own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source, and
2. Carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source.
Such discussions conflate plagiarism with the misuse of sources. Ethical writers make every effort to acknowledge sources fully and appropriately in accordance with the contexts and genres of their writing. (Quoted from “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices”)

It is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Students sometimes commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes

- using the work of another as your own,
- downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- using resource materials without correct documentation,
- using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation, or
- turning in a researched paper without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

Be aware that there are many ways to plagiarize. English 1301 and 1302 courses and the Writing Center at CASA will review rules of academic citation. Information academic citation is available at the Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/ and/or from our local Writing Center at CASA.

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.

Notice to Student Veterans
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.

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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me before you decide to drop this course. 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.

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.tamu.edu/rules_procedures/index.html.

** 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.