

College of Education and Human Services
Section 008
THEORY & APPLICATION OF LEARNING & CRITICAL THINKING
FIRST-YEAR SUCCESS SEMINAR

FALL, 2016

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Office Hours: M-All Day, Tuesday-9-12, Wednesday-1-4, Friday-By appointment

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CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to theories of learning and critical thinking and provides a learning framework to apply them to their college and life experiences. Concepts studied include research and theory on how people learn, critical thinking, problem solving, perception, learning styles, memory, creativity, and how attitudes and values affect the learning and thinking processes. The course also shows students how to apply these theories and research findings to help develop practical skills in time management, reading, note taking, test taking, and other areas that will help them be more successful students and lifelong learners.

COURSE PURPOSE:

The First-year Success Seminar is designed to provide an opportunity for students to explore and learn from a variety of methods designed to increase academic and personal success in college. The focus of the course is on the development of practical skills and knowledge in the areas of critical thinking, reading, note taking, time management, memory skills, study techniques, communication skills, and an understanding of a variety of learning styles and how they relate to college success.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the completion of this course students should be able to:

- Apply creative and critical thinking skills to their college experience and everyday lives
- Identify and utilize a variety of learning styles to help create a successful college experience
- Develop and utilize skills in time management note taking, test taking, memory techniques, muscle reading, and other effective study techniques
- Effectively communicate in both written and oral form
- Use the University Library effectively
- Use the Internet and e-mail effectively
- Explore career opportunities related to college education, major and/or minor

CLASS FORMAT:

Every effort will be made to provide the best possible learning experience by blending brief lectures with discussions, field trips, group work, reading and writing assignments. This class is primarily taught as a seminar. Therefore class participation is not only expected; it is *required*.

CLASSROOM DECORUM:

Students are expected to be polite and courteous at all times. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated.

Class time should be focused on the topic at hand. **Please do not bring food or drink into the classroom.** Eat your meals and snacks before or after class.

Please turn off or silence all telephones, pagers, CD players, I-pods, Sonar detectors, nuclear missile launchers, and any other electronic devices that might in anyway disrupt class or disturb others.

STATEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

As stated in the student handbook: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, for more information.)

There will be two major examinations in this course worth 100 points each (a mid-term at 7 weeks and a final at 14 weeks). The exams include multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. The dates for these exams are noted on the tentative course schedule.

MAKE-UP EXAMS:

Both examinations should be taken on the date scheduled (see tentative course outline). If an exam is missed for an excused reason, you must arrange to take a make-up exam with the professor. If you know ahead of time that you must miss an exam for an excused reason, it may be possible to take the exam a day early. Check with the professor to see if such an arrangement can be made. If not, the exam can only be made up by making a personal appointment with the professor.

CRITICAL THINKING PAPERS/ASSIGNMENTS:

Students will attend three (3) events outside of class and write papers on them. These papers will be based on a summary of attendance at different types of university events: one (1) should cover an **athletic/sporting event** (football, volleyball, soccer, intramurals, etc.); one (1) should cover a **cultural event** (concerts, art shows, plays, etc.); and one (1) should be a **general university non-athletic event** (guest speakers, convocations, organization events, etc.). The paper due dates are spaced out during the fifteen-week period as indicated on the course outline. These papers are worth 10 points each (30 points).

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT:

You will visit the library and learn the current system. 903-886-5719.

CAREER AWARENESS/RESUME ASSIGNMENT

BOOK: STEAL LIKE AN ARTIST

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:

Successful students attend class. Attendance will be taken every class period and you will receive 1 point for every class you attend and participate (there are a total of 10 class periods—15 points will be figured into the grading scale, so perfect attendance earns you 1 bonus point). Good attendance is essential for doing well in this course and every course you will take in college. While you can borrow someone else's notes, there is no way to gain the information from questions, discussions, group work, etc., when a class period is missed. Remember that if you miss a critical thinking paper/assignment, it cannot be made up. Also, any changes to the tentative course outline will be announced in class—another important reason to be here each time the class meets!

NOTE: Successful students come to class on time! Lateness communicates a "don't care" attitude, and also is extremely disruptive. Repeated tardiness will not be tolerated. If you cannot come to class on time, drop the course! Also, it is quite possible that you might miss a critical thinking paper/assignment if you come in late. Remember, these cannot be made-up under any circumstances.

CHEATING & PLAGIARISM:

It should go without saying that every student is expected to do his/her own work. Anyone caught cheating in any form or fashion will receive an "F" for the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary action by the university. Plagiarism (the use of others' words, phrases, and ideas in your writing without giving credit to the original author) is a form of cheating and not only violates academic ethical standards, but is against the law. Don't do it!

POLICIES ON ENROLLMENT, "X," "DP," "DF," AND WITHDRAWAL:

All university policies regarding last day for enrollment, use of "X," "DP," and "DF," and withdrawal from class will be rigidly adhered to in this course. You should check the university catalog, current semester schedule, and other official sources for specific deadlines, policies, etc. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to see that all university procedures are properly followed.

GRADES:

Final grades will be based on: two exams worth 100 points each (200 points); a career awareness assignment worth 100 points; three critical thinking papers/assignments worth 10 points each (30 points), library quizzes (30 points), discovery wheel (10 pts), learning styles inventory (10 pts), preferred senses (5 pts) and attendance worth 15 points. Course grades will be calculated on the following scale:

A = 90-100% (360-400 points)

D = 60-69% (240-279 points)

B = 80-89% (320-359 points)

F = less than 60% (239 or less points)

C = 70-79% (280-319 points)

REQUIRED: complete the GCAA and ePortfolio

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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132**

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE*

*This outline is tentative and subject to change. All changes will be announced in class.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>
M , 29 August	Syllabus, Introductions, Overview of Course First Steps/Discovery Wheel	
M, Sept 5	Time President Ray Keck...Guest Speaker	
M, Sept 12	Learning Styles/Preferred Senses (10 pts) (5 pts) Right Brain/Left Brain	

Guest Speaker: Marty Jacobs, Counseling Center

M, Sept 19

Discovering How You Learn

Athletic Director

M, Sept 26

Notes

Tests

M, Oct 3

Memory

Guest Speaker: Career Services

M, Oct 10

Career Presentations (100 pts)

Career Presentations (100 pts)

M, Oct 17

Career Presentations (100 pts)

Alumni Association

M, Oct 24

Mid-Term Preparation

Mid-Term Exam

M, Oct. 31

Health Related Issues

M, Nov 7

Latest Drug Trends With College Students

Book Chapters Discussion (1-5)

M, Nov 14

Book Chapters Discussion (6-10)

Study Skills

M, Nov 21

Goal Setting Discussion

Reading Skills

M, Nov 28

Assignments

M, Dec 5

Final/ Book assignments

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.