

Recommended Syllabus

First Year Experience Seminar

FYEX 100-Section #

Day/Time of Course

Instructor:

Office:

Phone:

E-mail:

Office Hours:

Course Goals:

To promote further development of student success skills, such as reading, writing and speaking; help students gain intellectual confidence; build in the expectation of academic success; and to provide assistance in making the transition to the University.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- a) Experience higher personal expectations of his/her ability to meaningfully participate in academic life;
- b) Define and give examples of critical thinking;
- c) Interact with other students regarding academic matters;
- d) Affirm that careful thinking is an important aspect of the educational process;
- e) Make a comfortable transition to college life (Page 49, MSU Undergraduate Bulletin).

Required Text:

Carter, C., Bishop, J., & Kravits, S.L. (2009). Keys to success: Building analytical, creative and practical skills. (brief 5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Publishing.

Attendance:

Class attendance is mandatory and will be taken at each class session. Attendance contributes to 10% of a student's final grade. The instructor must be notified in advance of late arrivals or absences.

Participation:

The seminar class is designed to be experiential, and learning will occur through in-class activities and discussions. Students are expected to fully participate in all class discussions and activities. All assigned reading material will need to be completed before each class meeting. Class participation will contribute to 10% of a student's final grade.

Students with Disabilities:

Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss necessary accommodations and/or contact the Disability Services Office at (507) 389-2825 (v) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY). This document is available in alternative format by calling (507) 389-2213 (v), or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY)."

Assignments:

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** All assignments are expected to be neat, typed, and double spaced with 1-inch margins.

Critical Thinking

Definition of Critical Thinking:

“Analytical thinking – commonly known as *critical thinking* – involves analyzing and evaluating information, often in order to work through a problem or decision... Analytical thinking is required to solve problems and to judge the quality of ideas” (Carter, Bishop & Kravits, 2009, p. 9).

Assignment: Two page paper on a topic assigned by instructor. Topics can include reaction/personal position on current event topics. Paper is a student position piece utilizing the above definition of Critical Thinking. Paper must be a minimum of two full pages in length, submitted in MLA or APA format. Student must submit a resource page, outlining 3 sources.

Competencies addressed? a & b

This assignment will challenge students to apply critical thinking skills to the above topic.

Campus Involvement

Students are required to attend **3** campus activities out of class. These can include theatre productions, student involvement activities, guest speakers, music department events, and athletic events. (One assignment must be attendance to a Multi-Cultural event on Campus). If students have questions regarding other activities, please ask instructor for approval.

Assignment: One-page reflection paper for each activity attended. Each reflection paper should address the following questions:

1. Rational for attending event. Why did you choose this specific event?
2. Did attendance to the event assist with transition to MSU? Why or why not?
3. Would this be an event to attend again in the future? Why or Why not?

Competency addressed? e

This assignment will challenge students by creating opportunities for MSU campus involvement.

Library Tour

Option #1- Students will attend a 60-minute library orientation session aimed at increasing student awareness and comfort level with using the MSU library.

Option #2- (for students who have completed the library tour for another class) Students will identify a personal topic of interest and find the following resources within the library in support of the chosen topic:

- One *credible* internet source
 - One academic journal article (a copy of the article must be attached)
 - One book must be checked out and shown to instructor at the class period assignment is due.
- Students should submit a reference page citing these 3 resources in MLA or APA format.

Competencies addressed? a & e

By challenging each student to learn the library, students will naturally develop a higher level of comfort with library facilities and staff.

Meeting with Academic Advisor

Students will meet with their academic advisors during the weeks of October 13th through November 10th. Students will submit a 3-page reaction paper outlining the following:

- Description of their experience, including both positive and constructive reactions will be provided.
- Students will discuss class choices and rationale for their choice of schedule.
- Discuss decision regarding major. What resources are employed to aid with decision-making?
- Explore the admission requirements for the major(s) and minor(s) fitting interests.
- Find out if there are any special requirements/pre-requisites courses required to be admitted to a specific major or minor.

Competencies addressed? a, c, & e

This assignment uniquely blends an opportunity for exploration of a major and minor within an area of interest, as well as illustrating a possible career path, thus providing meaning and purpose to the academic experience.

Weekly Journal

Due each class period, week 1 – 13.

Students will keep a weekly typed journal. A variety of journal options are available. For example: 1) Students can be expected to use a binder to keep track of weekly 1-page typed journal entries on topics assigned by instructors. 2) Students can utilize D2L to maintain an electronic journal of comparable length.

Competencies addressed? a, d, & e

The goal of the journal is for active personal reflection over structured topics examining areas of challenge for freshmen students. This active reflection will enable students to bring connection to in classroom and out of classroom experiences with the opportunity to develop a higher understanding of personal values and growth.

Reflection paper

Students will reflect on the semester as a whole by developing this 5-page paper, and answering the following questions:

- Discuss your personal involvement with the Minnesota State Mankato (MSU) campus community. Talk about your level of involvement, and which activities you attended. Did attending campus events encourage involvement?
- What specifically assisted with your transition to MSU? What services or assistance could MSU have provided that would have made your transition easier?
- How will critical thinking be applied to your academic experience at MSU?
- What are your academic and personal goals for spring semester? For the second year? What assistance do you need to achieve those goals?

Competencies addressed? a, b, d, & e

This is an assignment designed to bring together all the class components in a comprehensive reflection piece.

Grading:

All course work will be graded on content, neatness, and timeliness. Students should submit only their best work, and should be reminded to take time to proofread and correct papers ahead of submission.

Each assignment will be worth the following points:

- Attendance 50 points (10 pts deducted per absence, up to 50 pts)
- Weekly journal 125 points
- Quizzes (over assigned readings) 25 points
- Library assignment 25 points
- Critical thinking paper 100 points
- Advising reflection paper 50 points
- Involvement reaction papers 25 points per paper (total 75 points)
- Final reflection paper 100 points

Grades will be based on the following point scale:

A = 90-100%	495-550 points
B = 80-89%	440-494 points
C = 70-79%	385-439 points
D = 60-69%	330-384 points
F = below 60%	329 or fewer points

Academic Honesty:

“All students have a responsibility to maintain the academic integrity of the university and each student must at all times keep in mind that his or her behavior reflects not only upon him/herself, but upon other students, upon the faculty and upon the university as a whole. Each and every student is responsible for becoming familiar with and abiding by the University policy on plagiarism and academic honesty as well as the guidelines and policies established by their instructors and programs of study.

Examples of violations include but are not limited to: plagiarism (such as using another’s phrasing, concepts or line of reasoning as your own); submitting course assignments that are not your own; submitting the same paper in different classes without prior approval from both instructors; cheating on assignments, laboratory reports, or examinations; acquiring or using test materials without faculty knowledge; failure to follow class policy; obtaining academic benefits through inappropriate application of technology; computer fraud or unauthorized access; engaging in academic fraud alone or with others; downloading material off the Internet without proper citation; illicit attempts to influence grading; failing to abide by test-taking procedures; signing the class attendance roster for an absent student” (**Basic Stuff Handbook 2008-09, p. 30**).

Plagiarism-Submission of an academic assignment as one’s own work, which includes critical ideas or written narrative that are taken from another author without proper citation. This does not apply only to direct quotes, but also to critical ideas that are paraphrased by the student

Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction to class – FYEX 100 Pre-test Assessment

Week 2: “Welcome to College: Opening Doors to Success”

*** Assigned Readings:** Chapter 1, pages 3-33

Week 3: "Values, Goals, Time and Stress: Managing Yourself"

*** Assigned Readings:** Chapter 2, pages 35-65

Week 4: "Diversity Matters: How You Learn & Communicate"

*** Assigned Readings:** Chapter 3, pages 67-108

Week 5: "Critical, Creative and Practical Thinking: Solving Problems & Making Decisions"

*** Assigned readings:** Chapter 4, pages 111-143

Week 6: Library Orientation Session

Meet in library.

Week 7: Campus Presenter – Center for Academic Success or First Year Experience

Essential Study Skills & Habits

Week 8: "Reading and Studying: Focusing on Content"

***Assigned readings:** Chapter 5, pages 145-179

Week 9: "Listening, Note Taking and Memory: Taking in, Recording, and Remembering Info"

***Assigned readings:** Chapter 6, pages 181-217

Week 10: "Test Taking: Showing What You Know"

***Assigned Readings:** Chapter 7, pages 219-251

Week 11: Career Development Center Tour

Meet in Career Development Center (WA 209)

Week 12: "Wellness, Money & Careers: Building a Successful Future"

***Assigned Readings:** pages 253-298

Week 13: Campus Presenter – Health PROS

Sexual Decision Making

Week 14: Campus Presenter – Student Financial Services Office

Managing your Money

Week 15: Final Evaluation & FYEX 100 Post-test Assessment