
Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Eric Busby
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Office Hours: By Appointment

Mission

The mission of First-Year Seminar is to provide first-year students an opportunity (1) to experience and develop knowledge, behaviors and attitudes that promote successful college study and positive campus participation, and (2) to appreciate multiple perspectives that reflect intellectual and cultural diversity within and beyond college.

Course Description

First-Year Seminar is designed to help students develop strategies and skills necessary for a successful college career. Topics include adjusting to college, setting academic goals, managing time and keeping organized, learning and studying in college, preparing for and taking tests, understanding college policies and regulations, and accessing and using SRSU computer technology. Students will learn about SRSU's resources, activities, and rich cultural diversity. Throughout the course, students will use critical thinking skills to make informed choices, to understand their responsibilities for academic success, and to become independent, motivated learners.

All First-Year Seminars have the same five common goals. The student will be able to:

1. Expand and deepen his/her understanding of the world and of self.
2. Enhance his/her ability to read and think critically.
3. Enhance his/her ability to communicate effectively, in writing, speech, and other appropriate forms.
4. Develop the fundamentals of information literacy and library research.
5. Work closely with a faculty mentor.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Implement personal time management strategies based on short and long-term goals.
2. Describe behaviors that support personal responsibility for learning, characteristics of an effective learner, techniques that promote student success and problem solving of academic issues, and be able to discuss respect, civility, and academic integrity at SRSU.
3. Describe institution, department, and course requirements to earn a college degree and be able to identify SRSU policies in relation to them.
4. Identify and/or utilize college resources, activities, and events and demonstrate use of SRSU technology: student e-mail, SRSU website, Blackboard, and Lobo Online.
5. Exhibit financial literacy in relation to college and beyond.
6. Discuss the importance of SRSU in the larger community.

Attendance & Class Participation

A high degree of engagement is expected and will contribute to your learning as an active participant. This includes interacting with the guest presenters and other students, completing your degree plan and being prepared to participate in class discussions. This class is the beginning of your journey to becoming a professional. All unexcused absences will result in a 10-point deduction from your final grade. You must talk to me “in person”; voice and email messages are not considered valid excuses. Evidence of professionalism includes attendance, collegial attitude, participation, and punctuality.

The instructors will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three-hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized absence.

A student who is dropped from a course for excessive absences will be notified in writing by the Director of Records and Registration after the drop has been approved by the Provost and Vice-President for Academic and Student Affairs. Any student dropped for excessive absences will receive an "F" in the course dropped.

Classroom Behaviors

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in class discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts. **Please be respectful of others by avoiding disruptive behaviors such as side conversations, cell phone use, arriving late, leaving early, etc. Keep your cell phone on silent or off.**

Please provide your classmates and instructor the professional courtesy of arriving on time for the beginning of class and staying for the full duration of every class. **Cell phones are permitted in class; however, phones must be placed in silent mode or turned off. No texting is allowed during class.**

Academic Honesty

“The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.”
--Excerpt from the Student Handbook

SRSU Disability Services

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Rebecca Greathouse Wren, LPC-S, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email rebecca.wren@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

SRSU Library Services

The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

Virtual Tour: <https://sulross.libguides.com/SRSU1101>

Late Work

All assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard. No late work will be accepted without proper documentation or prior approval by the instructor. All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless I state otherwise. No consideration of extending a due date will be considered on the day an assignment is due, students should contact the instructor if they are expecting to be unable to meet a deadline. Should I decide to accept a major assignment late, then a significant penalty will be assigned depending upon the circumstances.

Grade Breakdown:

Final grades will be determined by the totals in these areas:

- 30% Attendance, Participation, In-class assignments
- 20% Service Learning Project
- 20% Interview/Presentation
- 15% Homework and other assignments

Grading Scale:

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

Below 60 = F

Required Textbook

No required text

Required: Blackboard 9 access and a Sul Ross email address

Course Communication: The official e-mail communications channel for this course is the Sul Ross State University e-mail account (yourname@sulross.edu) of each student and professor. For the purposes of this course, no other e-mail account is acceptable.

Description of Course Assignments

Writing Requirement

APA writing format is required. Assignments must be typed using one-inch margins, 12-point type, and double line spacing; have all pages beginning with the first page numbered; and be edited for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Your writing is a reflection of your professional growth.

- Attend one student club meeting and reflection

DUE: Wednesday, Oct. 14

You are required to attend one student club meeting. You must get the signature of an officer. In addition, you will need to write a two-paragraph reflection paper over the meeting. One paragraph should give an explanation of what happened at the meeting, and the second paragraph should be a reflection of what you thought about the meeting.

Service Learning Project Details: Due Wednesday, Nov. 18

You are required to complete 5 hours of volunteer work. You must get a verification statement and signature from the agency confirming that you did complete 5 hours of volunteer work. In addition, you will need to write a two-paragraph reflection paper over the volunteering experience. One paragraph should give an explanation of what type of volunteering you did/what you did, and the second paragraph should be a reflection of what you thought about the experience. A list of volunteer opportunities will be given out during class and discussed.

-Presentations/Power Point Due Wednesday, Nov. 4.

Interview/Paper: Due Wednesday, Nov. 18

1. You will need to conduct an interview with any one of the following:

- Faculty member in your intended major/field of interest,
- Upper division student in your intended major/field of interest,
- Professional in a career that you may be interested in pursuing,
- Graduate student in your same academic specialization, or
- Student from a diverse background; international, underrepresented group, etc.

2. You will need to write a 2-page, paper detailing your findings. You may present the information in the form of a script, using titles for yourself and the person you interviewed. The reader needs to be able to understand what you asked and the responses from the person you interviewed. Additionally, you will need to give a synopsis of your thoughts about your findings.

3. Present your interview to the class. In addition, you will need to create some type of a graphic organizer (flow chart/power point/map) of the interview and present it to the class. Your presentation should be 3-5 minutes.

<u>Course Assignments</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Points</u>
<u>Attendance (12 sessions)</u>	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>120 points</u>
<u>Attend Club Meeting and Reflection</u>	<u>October 14</u>	<u>100 points</u>
<u>Interview Presentations</u>	<u>November 4 and 18</u>	<u>100 points</u>
<u>Interview Paper</u>	<u>November 18</u>	<u>75 points</u>
<u>Volunteer hours and Reflection</u>	<u>November 18</u>	<u>75 points</u>
<u>Total Points</u>		<u>470 points</u>

Tentative Weekly Schedule: Wednesdays, 10:00-10:50

Week

1: 8/26 - Introduction to class/syllabus/College Culture/Student responsibilities/Faculty Expectations

2: 9/2 - Email/Blackboard/Lobo Online Review (Tim Parsons)

3: 9/9 - Complete Kognito At-Risk for Students (bring lab top to class)

4: 9/16 - Library Workshop: Info. Literacy/Plagiarism/Academic Integrity (meet at the library)

5: 9/23 - Student Organizations/SRSU Traditions

6: 9/30 - Note-Taking/Study Skills/Learning Strategies

7: 10/7- Sports & Recreation for Stress Relief and Community Building

Attend Club Meeting and Reflection DUE

8: 10/14 - (1) Title IX video

(2) Guidelines for interviewing a professional, writing the paper, and presentation of interview.

9: 10/21 - Career Planning and Exploration with Career Services

10: 10/28 - Financial Aid/Money Matters

11: 11/4 - **Presentations of Interviewing a Professional Due** (*I will choose students randomly to present*)

12: 11/11- Holiday

13: 11/18 - Continue Presentations of Interviewing a Professional Interview Paper Due

Service Learning Project Volunteer hours and Reflection Due

End of Semester for First Year Seminar!

Important University Dates:

8/27	Last day to add a class to your schedule
9/9	Last day to drop a course (without it counting against you)
9/5	University "Meal on the Mall"
11/13	Last day to drop a course with a "W" (by 5 p.m.)
11/25	Res halls close for Thanksgiving at 9 am
12/2	Last class day before finals
12/3	"Dead Day"
12/4	Final Exams
12/12	Graduation begins at 7 pm
12/12	Residence halls close at Noon