

# First Year Seminar, Spring 2021

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**SRSU 1101 Web-format**  
**Instructor: Jessica Velasco, DPA**  
**E-mail: [jessica.velasco@sulross.edu](mailto:jessica.velasco@sulross.edu)**  
**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 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.

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## Course Assignments and Due Dates:

More information and instructions for each assignment are provided in Blackboard in the “Course Content” folder. Each area has a folder with materials you are to view, complete, read, and submit. All assignments must be submitted via the appropriate location in Blackboard.

In general, you will be completing one area each week. However, the entire course is available from the start of the semester, and you are welcome and encouraged to complete work before it is due.

Assignment	Due Date	# of Points
Introduction Post	January 15, 5 p.m.	25 points
Syllabus Quiz	January 15, 5 p.m.	50 points
Video 1 Discussion Post	January 22, 5 p.m.	50 points
Virtual Meeting w/me	By January 29, 5 p.m.	100 points
Time Management Reflection Paper	January 29, 5 p.m.	100 points
Learning Style Reflection Paper	February 5, 5 p.m.	150 points
Academic Integrity Reflection Paper	February 12, 5 p.m.	50 points
Title IX Training	February 19, 5 p.m.	50 points
SRSU Library Quiz	February 26, 5 p.m.	50 points
Forming Your Tribe Paper	March 5, 5 p.m.	50 points
Financial Matters Discussion Post	March 19, 5 p.m.	100 points
Career Exploration Paper	April 9, 5 p.m.	200 points
Copy of Degree Plan	April 16, 5 p.m.	25 points

## Course Grading

Your grade for the course will be based on the **number of points you earn** using the scale below. Do not pay attention to the average in Blackboard, as that will only give you the average for the items you have submitted and will not include items you have not submitted.

Points	Grade
895-1000	A
795-894	B
695-794	C
595-694	D
594 or below	F

## **Grading of Written Assignments**

Your grade for written assignments will be based on whether you:

- provide a thorough response to each question and follow the instructions
- demonstrate your understanding of the readings and materials and for the week in your responses

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- appropriately cite any sources used (any style is fine—just be consistent)
- use appropriate spelling, grammar, and punctuation (Remember: These are formal, college assignments, not social media posts or text messages.)

Written assignments that are not submitted on the discussion board should be submitted in a Word document with 12 inch, single-spaced, Times New Roman font, normal margins, and no header. **Please include the question you are answering before each response.**

## **What you can expect from me:**

- I will provide weekly communication with the class through announcements (email and posted on Blackboard), email notifications, virtual office hours, and Blackboard Collaborate sessions (as appropriate).
- I will provide email responses within 24 hours of receipt during the hours of 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday.
- I will provide grades and feedback for assignments within one week of the submission due date.
- I will provide clear and concise instructions on how to complete the online course requirements.
- I will provide a range of opportunities to engage in the course content in a meaningful way.

## **What I expect from you:**

- You will familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, policies, assessments, evaluation, grading criteria, and course design.
- You will acquire the tools necessary to be successful in this class. This includes reliable Internet access and a device other than your phone for completing assignments.
- You will complete all assigned readings and coursework by assigned due dates.
- You will engage in the course, with your peers, and with me, using open and appropriate communication
- You will be diligent about using communication in a way that shows respect to me and your classmates
- You will submit college-level work that has been checked carefully for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation (using a free extension like Grammarly is recommended).
- You will respond to communication from me and your classmates in a timely manner (within 24 hours).
- You will not plagiarize the work of others or yourself, and you also will not collaborate with others on class assignments
- You will reach out to me immediately if you are having trouble in the class or with access to course materials (although please call the Help Desk--888.837.6055 for general access issues).

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## **GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION BOARDS**

SOURCE: Center for Teaching and Learning. (2020). Sample discussion board ground rules. Retrieved from <https://ctl.wiley.com/sample-discussion-board-ground-rules/>

- **Ask questions.**  
If you find something confusing or want to know more, do not hesitate to ask questions. Make sure to post your questions in the appropriate thread.
- **Participate.**  
Do not hide in the background; it is not fair to lurk and let others do all the work. Contribute to discussions to get as much as possible from the course and to maintain your participation grade.
- **Do not dominate a discussion.**  
Share your knowledge, but not to the point of excluding others. If you have something to offer, please share it, but allow everyone to contribute equally to a discussion.
- **Be intellectually rigorous.**  
Do not excuse sloppy or illogical thinking. Challenge yourself and one another.
- **Be tactful.**  
Be critical of ideas, but remember there are other people involved. Be tactful and kind. You can hurt the feelings of a person reading your post.
- **Forgive other students' mistakes.**  
Do not correct others, even if you follow the rules of netiquette and use good manners. Just because you do not agree with a student's post does not mean that he or she is wrong. Instead, offer a different perspective to encourage further discussion.
- **Read the whole thread before posting.**  
Read all the posts in a thread before responding so you don't repeat what others have already said. Try to contribute clarifying information or a new idea to a discussion.
- **Be concise.**  
Do not waste people's time by posting basic, repetitive information. Make your point clearly and quickly.
- **Reread and check your posts.**  
Practice professionalism. Be mindful of how you look online; others will likely judge the tone and quality of your writing. Reread your posts and edit for clarity and mechanics.
- **Cite your sources.**  
If you use a source, cite it properly. Give credit where credit is due. Include links where appropriate.
- **Maintain confidentiality.**  
Respect your classmates' privacy. Do not repeat the personal information that others share.
- **Report technical problems.** If the platform is not working properly, please let me know as soon as possible

## **OTHER COURSE POLICIES & RESOURCES**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Academic dishonesty hurts everyone and reduces the value of college degrees. Doing someone else's work, presenting the ideas and work of others as your own, submitting the same paper for multiple classes, and/or failing to cite your sources when you utilize the ideas of others, are all examples of academic dishonesty. It is your responsibility to read and understand the

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university's policy on academic dishonesty in the SRSU Student Handbook, as all violations will be taken seriously and handled through the appropriate university process. The Student Handbook can be found at: <https://www.sulross.edu/page/2454/student-handbook> (page 80).

In addition, please note that plagiarism detection software will be used in this class for written assignments, as well as monitoring software for course exams.

If you have any questions about this, please ask!

**LATE WORK:** Given that all assignments are accessible from the beginning of the term, the occurrence of late work should be rare, except in cases of emergencies. Prompt and clear communication will assist with any accommodations and exceptions.

**COURSE BLACKBOARD RESOURCES:** There are several resources on the course Blackboard page. You are expected to review and familiarize yourself with the items in Blackboard in the first week of class. NOTE: Please post general, course-related questions to the discussion board forum I have set up for this. Typically, if one student in the class has the question, others do as well. Please allow 24 hours for a response, and then feel free to email me or call me directly with your question.

**BLACKBOARD TECHNICAL SUPPORT:** SRSU 24/7 Blackboard Technical Support Online Support Desk Contact Info: Toll Free: 888.837.6055. Email: [blackboardsupport@sulross.edu](mailto:blackboardsupport@sulross.edu)

**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](http://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](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

**SRSU DISABILITY SERVICES:** 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](mailto: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.

**DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT:** Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student

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handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

*An investment in knowledge pays the best interest. – Benjamin Franklin*

*Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today. – Malcolm X*

*The more that you read, the more things you will know, the more that you learn, the more places you'll go. – Dr. Seuss*