First Year Experience Fall 2024

Course: SRSU 1101
Instructor: Dr. Christopher M. Ritzi   **Peer Mentor:** Rylea Jackson
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Office: WSB 217   **Time:**   Wednesdays 1-1:50 PM
Office Hours: TR 9:30-10:45, W 2-5,   **Location:**   WSB 201
                  or by appt.

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 academic and non-academic 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 their understanding of the world and of self,
2. enhance their ability to read and think critically,
3. enhance their 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 the class instructor.

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.
1. Describe institution, department, and course requirements to earn a college degree and be able to identify SRSU policies in relation to them.
2. Identify and/or utilize college resources, activities, and events and demonstrate use of SRSU technology: student e-mail, SRSU website, Blackboard, and Banner.
3. Exhibit financial literacy in relation to college and beyond.
4. Discuss the importance of SRSU in the larger community.

Critical Thinking.
Students will develop critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.

Communication.
Students will develop communication skills to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.

Course Materials
Student are expected to have access and use Blackboard on the web, as well as to come to class prepared to take notes that can be turned in (paper and pen). The use of laptops and tablets will be allowed as long as they are used for class activities.

Attendance & Class Participation
Your attendance and participation in this course are reflected in your grade. According to SRSU policy, any student missing 20% of a class (3 classes), will be dropped with an F. As this course is largely based on participation, missing class is the fastest way to fail. If you must miss a class, please inform me by email, phone or in person within 24 hours of the missed class with a valid excused reason for the absence. Otherwise, absences will count as 0's for all missed work on that day and makeup opportunities will not be allowed. Additionally, participation is critical for this course, so students are expected to interact in class. Sleeping in class, chair warming, and merely breathing does not constitute participation, and such behavior will count as being absence that day. Finally, if you are feeling sick, running a fever over 100 F, or exhibiting any symptoms of COVID infection, please stay home and self-quarantine. An email or phone is sufficient for me to mark your attendance as sick for the day.

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. We will discuss this in more detail in the semester when we cover this topic.

Classroom Climate of Respect
Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Academic Integrity
Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused;

meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

Students should also avoid using open AI sources *unless permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

ADA Statement

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. Alpine Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email mary.schwartze@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

Counseling

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free online counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/356 support by visiting Timelycare/SRSU. The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

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).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the

TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Supportive Statement

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or

even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Technical Support

The Support Desk is where you can direct your more technical questions. For example, the Support Desk can help you if you are having issues submitting a document, getting videos to play, or using BlackBoard. The support desk is open 24 hours a day/7 days a week for your convenience.

You can reach the support desk:

By calling 888.837.6055

Via email blackboardsupport@sulross.edu

Using resources from the Technology Support tab within blackboard

Clicking the Support Desk graphic on the course homepage

Tutoring:

    a) Tutoring and Learning Center located in the library (call 432-837-8982 for a reservation with a tutor)

    b) Tutor.com (online tutoring services available on BlackBoard) – be sure to allow 48 hours turnaround time for a writing assignment.

Late Work

Late work is not encouraged, as it reflects poorly on you the student to your professor, and would be very detrimental if it was as a worker missing deadlines for an employer later in life. As such, any work submitted late (either in person or on Blackboard), will have 5 points subtracted per day late.

Grading Scale:

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below 60 = F

Grade Breakdown:

Attendance, Participation, and In-class assignments	10%
Email Assignment	10%
Office Meeting with Instructor	10%
Registration Exercise	10%
Traditions assignment and selfie	10%
Campus Clean-Up	10%
Homework and other outside Blackboard assignments	30%
Final	10%

Weekly Schedule:

Week	
1-8/28	Intro to Syllabus, Campus Resources
2-9/4	Fall on the Mall: Student Engagement Fair
3-9/11	E-mail/Blackboard/LoboOnLine/OneDrive Review
4-9/18	Workshop: Counseling (in Marshall Auditorium)
5-9/25	Note-taking/Study Skills/Learning Styles
6-10/2	Time Management
7-10/9	Motivation/Goal Setting
8-10/16	Library/Academic Integrity/Plagiarism
9-10/23	Academic Advising
10-10/30	Sul Ross Organizations and Traditions
11-11/6	Financial Aid/Money Matters
12-11/13	Career Planning/Discipline Exploration
13-11/20	Service Leadership: Campus Clean-Up
14-11/27	Thanksgiving Break
15-12/4	Stress Management
16-12/6	Final Exam Friday Dec 6th at 12:30 PM