



Class: SRSU 1101

Class Time: Wednesdays 1:00 – 1:50

Instructor: Thomas Matula

Office: MAB 309-C

Phone: 432.837.8073

Credit: 1

Location: MAB 302

E-mail: Thomas.Matula@sulross.edu

Office Hours: TWTR 8-12 Noon

Course Mission: The mission of the First Year Seminar is to provide first-year students opportunities to:

1. develop knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes that promote successful academic and non-academic participation, and
2. appreciate multiple perspectives and 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 experience. 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.

Course Goals: All First-Year Seminars have five common goals for every student enrolled:

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: Upon successful completion of this course students will:

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 the institution, department, and course requirements to earn a college degree and be able to identify SRSU policies in relation to them.
4. Identify and utilize college resources, activities, and events and demonstrate the 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.
7. Develop critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
8. Develop communication skills to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.

Attendance & Class Participation

Your attendance and participation in this course are reflected in your grade. Please be proactive in informing the professor of any expected absences in advance in order to meet class requirements.

Required Materials: Blackboard Ultra access (via personal computer or SRSU computer labs); SRSU email address (firstname.lastname@sulross.edu)

Supplemental Materials: (Provided through SR Blackboard)

Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as 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.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

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 Mary Schwartz, 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 mary.schwartz@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.

Classroom Climate of Respect

Big Three:

- Show up on time.
- Be present for the 50 minutes we are together.
- Be respectful to other classmates.

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.

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](https://www.timelycare.com/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 888.837.8888 or by email blackboardsupport@sulross.edu. You may also reach the Support desk from the Technology Support tab within Blackboard by clicking the Support Desk graphic on the course homepage or calling 936.294.2780.

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: There will be a 10% penalty for assignments submitted late.

Grade Breakdown/Assignments:

Assignment	Points	Grade Scale
Weekly Attendance (20 points per week)	300	A = 900 to 1000 points
Email to Instructor	50	B = 800 to 899 points
Student Engagement and Career Fair	50	C = 700 to 799 points
Meet with Instructor	50	D = 600 to 699 points
Discussion Board Post	100	F = less than 599 points
Written: Your Post-College Goals Essay	100	
Workshop: Counseling	50	
Written: Cover Letter and Resume	100	
Presentation: My future at Sul Ross	200	
	1,000	Total Points

Course Calendar

Date	Topic	Preparation/Assignments
Aug. 27	Introduction of Syllabus and course requirements <i>Email to Instructor Due: Aug. 29</i>	Read Syllabus
Sept. 3	Student Engagement and Career Fair (Location: UC) <i>Attendance Proof due: Sept. 5</i>	
Sept. 10	e-mail/blackboard/lobo online and other online sources, information literacy/plagiarism <i>Assignment: Post Introduction on BB Discussion Due: Sept.16 on BB</i>	Login and Check out BB
Sept. 17	Library visit	
Sept. 24	Planning Your Collegiate Journey (advising, registration, degree planning) <i>Assignment: Your Post-College Goals essay Due: Sept.30 on BB</i>	Reflection on your future
Oct. 1	Workshop: Counseling (Location: Marshall Auditorium) <i>Attendance Proof due: Oct. 3</i>	
Oct. 8	Student organizations and Sul Ross traditions	
Oct. 15	Note-taking, Writing, Study skills	
Oct.22	Time and Stress Management	
Oct. 29	Financial/budget management	
Nov. 5	Financial Aid and Services	
Nov. 12	Resume preparing and interviewing skills <i>Assignment: Cover Letter and Resume Due: Nov. 18 on BB</i>	
Nov. 19	How to do presentations in class	
Nov. 26	<i>No Class! Thanksgiving Holiday!</i>	
Dec. 3	Recognizing Your Strengths Looking to the Future (McNair Scholar's Program)	
Dec. 5 12:30	Class Wrap up Session <i>Assignment: Presentation in Class on your future plans to make the most of your Sul Ross experience.</i> 12:30-2:30 PM	