



Class: GBAR 1101

Class Time: Mondays & Wednesdays 1:00 – 1:50 PM

Instructor: Cynthia Gomez

Location: Amy Street Building Room A115

Phone: 830-758-5026

Credit: 1

Location: D124

E-mail: cgutierrez@sulross.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

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.

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

Supplemental Materials: (Provided through SR Blackboard)

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 value intellectual and cultural perspectives within and beyond college.

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.

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Academic Expectations: According to SRSU Undergraduate Academic Regulations, students must:

- A. be regular and punctual in attending classes;
- B. be well prepared for classes;
- C. submit required assignments in a timely manner;
- D. take exams when scheduled;
- E. act in a respectful manner toward other students and the instructor and in a way that does not detract from the learning experience; and
- F. make and keep appointments when necessary to meet with the instructor.

In addition to the above items, students are expected to meet the additional course and behavioral standards as defined in this syllabus.

Academic Integrity: Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. You are 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. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

Academic Writing: Unless specifically noted otherwise, all written work submitted must be in Microsoft WORD™, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, pages numbered, and have 1" margins on all sides. All work submitted should follow *APA Style* for formatting and bibliographical citations. Peer review of written work is an excellent practice and highly encouraged prior to submission of written assignments.

The University does not recommend or endorse any specific AI tools or resources. Students should be aware that many generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) store user input and may use this data to train future models. For this reason, students should never upload or share personal, confidential, or identifiable information—such as names, ID numbers, health data, or assignment submissions containing such details—into any generative AI platform. When using AI tools, students should verify whether the tool complies with student privacy standards as indicated by the University. Faculty may recommend specific tools that better align with institutional data privacy policies, but ultimate responsibility for data protection rests with users. Students are encouraged to use faculty-recommended platforms when engaging in coursework involving generative AI. The University is not liable for any adverse experience or impact when students interact with these tools.

Accommodations for Students: Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the 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 [SRSU's Counseling and Accessibility Services](#)

[Office](#) at 432-837-8203. Office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

Add /Drop Policy: This course will follow the University add/drop policy and timeline.

Assignment Policy: It is expected that assignments will be submitted on or before the specified due date. *Assignments may be submitted after the due date and will be assessed a percentage penalty; submitted within 7 days = 15%; submitted 8-14 days = 30%; submitted 15 days & beyond = 50%.* Incompletes will only be assigned under extreme circumstances. The last day to submit any late/revised assignment is the last regular class day of the semester.

Attendance: Class participants will be treated as mature individuals who have developed a sense of responsibility for their education. As such, you will be held accountable for all material covered in class, despite valid reasons for absence. Attendance will be recorded at each class session. In the case of emergency, students should contact the instructor as soon as possible after the emergency situation has been resolved. Documentation of a “university excused absence” will allow the student to make up missed work, but WILL NOT count towards earned attendance points.

Health-Related Absences: Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and other on-campus events if you are ill. Students who miss class due to illness will be given opportunities to access course materials online. In the event of contagious illness, please do not come to class or to campus to turn in work. Instead notify the instructor by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that accommodations can be made. Please note that documentation (a Doctor’s note) for medical excuses is not required.

Classroom Climate and Respect: It is my intent, as course instructor, that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and beyond the course, and that the multiplicity students bring to this course be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of all students. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of this course are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.

At SRSU, we support learning environments where individual and cultural differences are appreciated, recognized, respected and understood. We shall hold each other accountable to demonstrate diligence in recognizing and respecting differing behaviors, perspectives and worldviews. In addition, in scheduling assignments, I have attempted to avoid conflicts with major religious/cultural holidays. If, however, I have inadvertently scheduled a major deadline that creates a conflict with your religious/cultural observances, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can make other arrangements.

Copyright Notice for Course Materials: U.S. copyright laws protect this syllabus, course presentations, all Blackboard™ materials and any other course materials provided throughout this term. Students enrolled in the course may use materials for their own educational purposes within the Educational Fair Use policy of the U.S. Copyright Office. However, reproducing, selling or otherwise distributing these materials in any manner or medium without written permission of the copyright owner is expressly prohibited.

Electronic video and/or audio recording is not permitted during class/lab unless the student obtains written permission from the instructor. If permission is granted, any distribution of the recording is prohibited.

Course Communication: Communication is a two-way interaction. Students are encouraged to stop by my office during posted office hours to ask questions, check-in or simply say hello. I also encourage you to call (phone number listed on p. 1) or email (also listed on p. 1). During the work week, I will check email multiple times through the day and will commit to responding to your communication within 48 hours. Weekend communication (noon Friday-8:00 AM Monday) will not be answered until Monday mornings after 8:00 AM. I request the same respectful commitment from you.

Course Grading & Assignments

Grading Scale:

Your grade in this class will be determined **by the number of points you earn by the end of the semester**. The point distribution is listed below:

A	895-1000 points
B	795-894 points
C	695-794 points
D	595-694 points
F	Below 595 points

You can track your progress by clicking on the “My Grades” tab in Blackboard. You can also view grading rubrics for each assignment in the “My Grades” tab. If I leave you additional feedback outside of the rubric, you will see a message bubble in the grading center. **PLEASE NOTE: As mentioned above, the grade for this class is based on POINTS, not the average Blackboard gives you.**

Point Distribution:

Attendance & Participation in Class Activities	300 points
Daily Assignments	500 points
Resume	100 points
Final Assignment	100 points
Total	1000 points

Course Calendar

Date	Topic	Preparation
Mon, Aug. 24	Introduction to the FYE Course, Review Syllabus, Course Expectations	Read syllabus
Wed, Aug. 26	Getting to Know Your Campus: Resources & Support Services	Campus Activity
Mon, Aug. 31	Networking 101	Craft a mini pitch of who you are
Wed, Sept. 2	SMART Goal Setting for the Semester	
Mon, Sept. 7	No Class — Labor Day Holiday	
Wed, Sept. 9	Business Communication & Digital Literacy: Email, Blackboard & Research Databases	
Mon, Sept. 14	Building Healthy Habits: Sleep, Nutrition & Exercise in College	
Wed, Sept. 16	Managing Screen Time & Digital Wellness	
Mon, Sept. 21	Business Library & Research Resources (Location: Library)	Library Visit
Wed, Sept. 23	Growth Mindset & Overcoming Setbacks	
Mon, Sept. 28	Planning Your Business Degree Path: Advising, Registration & Career Goals	Reflection on your future
Wed, Sept. 30	Balancing Work, School and Life	
Mon, Oct. 5	Workshop: Note Taking Strategies and Building Study Habits	
Wed, Oct. 7	Office Hours 101: How & Why to Talk to Your Professors	
Mon, Oct. 12	Academic Integrity and Acceptable Use of AI	
Wed, Oct. 14	Building a Professional Online Presence- LinkedIn Profile	Marketing- Isis
Mon, Oct. 19	Networking Etiquette & Elevator Pitches	
Wed, Oct. 21	Test-Taking Strategies & Managing Exam Anxiety	
Mon, Oct. 26	Time & Stress Management for Business Students	Speaker
Wed, Oct. 28	Basic Money Management: Budgeting Apps & Avoiding Debt	PNC Presentation
Mon, Nov. 2	Financial Aid, Scholarships & Business Program Resources	Financial Aid
Wed, Nov. 4	Midterm Check-In: Reflecting on Your Progress	
Mon, Nov. 9	Public Speaking Basics: Building Confidence	
Wed, Nov. 11	Business Presentation Skills	
Mon, Nov. 16	Resume Building & Interviewing Skills for Business Careers	

	<i>Assignment: Cover Letter and Resume — Due: Nov. 23 on BB</i>	
Wed, Nov. 18	Professionalism & Dressing for Success	
Mon, Nov. 23	Understanding Internships & Co-Ops: Getting Started Early	
Wed, Nov. 25	No Class — Thanksgiving Break	
Mon, Nov. 30	Recognizing Your Strengths & Business Career Pathways	
Wed, Dec. 2	Final Class Wrap-Up: Presentation on Your Business Future <i>Assignment: Letter to My Future Self</i>	
Mon, Dec. 7	Final Exam	

Assignments:

The following options are provided for each topic so the instructor may select the assignment(s) that best fit the section, or offer students a choice.

August 24th: Read the syllabus.

August 26th: Getting to Know Your Campus: Resources & Support Services

- Write a short paragraph on which campus resource seems most useful and why.

August 31st: Networking 101: Your 30 Second Intro

- Craft a mini elevator pitch

Structure:

- Who I am
- What I'm studying
- What I want to learn this year
- Where I want to go in my career

September 2nd: SMART Goal Setting for the Semester

- Write three SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) for the semester.

September 7th: No classes

September 9th: Business Communication & Digital Literacy: Email, Blackboard & Research Databases

- Send a professional email to the instructor following business email etiquette guidelines, and post a Blackboard introduction.
- Compare a credible business source (e.g., a trade journal) to a non-credible source and explain the differences.

September 14th: Building Healthy Habits: Sleep, Nutrition & Exercise in College

- Write a summary of your current habits and explain areas for improvement.

September 16th: Managing Screen Time & Digital Wellness

- Track daily screen time for three days using a phone app and reflect on patterns.
- Set a goal on digital-wellness and write a summary about it.

September 21st: Library Visit: Presentation

- Library visit- Guest Speaker Presentation

September 23rd: Growth Mindset & Overcoming Setbacks

- Write a short reflection on a past setback and what you learned from it.

September 28th: Planning Your Business Degree Path: Advising, Registration & Career Goals

- Post-College Business Goals essay outlining an intended concentration and career path.

September 30th: Balancing Work, School & Life

- Create a sample weekly schedule balancing classes, a part-time job, and personal time.

October 5th: Business Note-Taking, Case-Study Analysis & Study Skills

- Read a short business case (e.g., a brief Harvard Business Review case) and write a one-paragraph analysis.

October 7th: Office Hours 101: How & Why to Talk to Your Professors

- Attend one professor's office hours and submit a short reflection on the experience.
- Draft an email requesting an office-hours meeting, following professional email etiquette.

October 12th: Academic Integrity and acceptable use of AI

- Your reflection on the topic

October 14th: Building a Professional Online Presence

- Create or update a LinkedIn profile photo and headline appropriate for a business student.

October 19th: Networking Etiquette & Elevator Pitches

- Draft a polite follow-up message to send after meeting someone at a networking event.

October 21st: Test-Taking Strategies & Managing Exam Anxiety

- Complete a practice study-schedule worksheet for an upcoming exam.
- Try one new test-anxiety-reduction technique (e.g., breathing exercise, practice testing) and reflect on its effectiveness.

October 26th: Time & Stress Management for Business Students

- Write a stress-management reflection journal entry.

October 28th: Basic Money Management: Budgeting Apps & Avoiding Debt

- Build a simple one-month personal budget using a budgeting app or spreadsheet template.

November 2nd: Financial Aid, Scholarships & Other Resources

- Financial Aid Presentation

November 4th: Midterm Check-In: Reflecting on Your Progress

- Revisit your SMART goals from earlier in the semester and write a short progress update.

November 9th: Public Speaking Basics: Building Confidence

- Deliver a one-minute impromptu talk on a familiar topic to a small group of classmates.
- Write a short reflection on a public-speaking fear and one strategy to manage it.

November 11th: Business Presentation Skills

- Deliver a two- to three-minute "pitch" presentation on a business idea or personal professional brand.
- Or create and present a short slide deck on a chosen company or industry.

November 16th: Resume Building & Interviewing Skills for Business Careers

- Draft a business-focused resume and cover letter tailored to an internship or entry-level role.

November 18th: Professionalism & Dressing for Success

- Put together a "business casual" outfit plan for an interview or career fair and explain your choices.

November 23rd: Understanding Internships: Getting Started Early

- Research one internship opportunity related to a business concentration of interest and summarize the requirements.
- Or list three steps a first-year student can take now to prepare for an internship search later.

November 25th: NO CLASSES- HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Recognizing Your Strengths & Business Career Pathways

- Research and present on one business career pathway, including required skills and relevant certifications.

November 30th: Test-Taking Strategies & Managing Exam Anxiety

- Try one new test-anxiety-reduction technique (e.g., breathing exercise, practice testing) and reflect on its effectiveness.

December 2nd : Final Class Wrap Up. Presentation on Your Future

- Students write a letter to themselves one year from now, reflecting on:
 - Where they hope to be academically
 - What business skills they want to develop
 - Challenges they overcame this semester
 - Advice they want to remember

December 7th: Final Class Wrap Up. Presentation on Your Future

Library Information: The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine 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 logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123). 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/texshare

For the SRSUI contact Mike Fernandez, Librarian. Office D129.

Plagiarism: Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. You are strongly encouraged to familiarize yourself and to use the Originality Report feature in Blackboard to determine if you have inadvertently plagiarized or incorrectly cited a source. If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification.

SACSCOC Learning Outcomes (SACSCOC)

1. Students will develop critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.;
2. Students will develop communication skills to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.

Shared Expectations:

You can expect me to:

- Provide learning opportunities that advance your knowledge and development in becoming a successful college student.
- Be available to provide assistance and answer your questions.
- Be fair in my grading and assessment of your work.
- Provide you with timely, constructive feedback on your work.
- Enjoy this class!

I will expect you to:

- Complete all assignments thoroughly, in a timely manner.
- Look at each assignment as an occasion for you to learn, and make the most of every learning opportunity.
- Be honest and submit your own original work.
- Participate in class discussions and activities; this helps you as well as all of your classmates.
- Enjoy this class!

Student Demeanor: Sul Ross State University expects all students to conduct themselves as honest, responsible and law-abiding members of the academic community and to respect the rights of other students, members of the faculty and staff and the public to use, enjoy and participate in the University programs and facilities. For additional information, reference the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

Students are full partners in fostering a classroom environment conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class; students are prohibited from engaging in any form of behavior that detracts from the learning experience of fellow students. Inappropriate behavior will result in a request for the offending student to leave class.

Opposing perspectives are welcomed and encouraged. Nevertheless, class participants are expected to treat one another with the respect and dignity to which all community members are entitled. Nothing less than such democratic behavior will be acceptable. I support an inclusive learning environment where diversity and differently-abled individuals/groups are appreciated, recognized and respected. All SRSU community members will demonstrate diligence in understanding how peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews enhance us all as individuals and as a community.

Hands-on participation is essential for successful completion of this course; therefore, each class member must come prepared, both physically and mentally, to take part in each class activity. Through experiential activities, students will individually and collaboratively solve problems, make decisions, reflect on past and current practices, and engage in dialogue. For this pedagogy to be successful, student participation is critical. Each student enrolled must access course content through Blackboard AND review the assigned materials PRIOR to attending class. Other specific classroom rules will be discussed as appropriate.

General Rules for Classroom:

1. No food will be allowed in the classroom.
2. You may bring a non-alcoholic drink with an appropriate lid to class. This privilege WILL be suspended if abused.
3. SRSU has adopted a Tobacco-Free policy. The University prohibits smoking and use of all tobacco products on all University property. (SRSU APM Policy 2.05)
4. Professionalism, including professional attire when presenting, is expected.
5. Cell phones, tablets, laptops and other devices used for class involvement are encouraged. Audio or video recording during class is prohibited. Use of headphones/earbuds is prohibited unless you have the accompanying documentation for such an accommodation.

Tutoring:

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