

Introduction to Collegiate Studies – Fall, 2007
SAM 136-12 (Monday & Wednesday, 4:30 – 5:50 p.m.) Syllabus

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Texts: Gardner, J.N., A.J. Jeweler, and B.O. Barefoot (2008). Step by step to college and career success (2nd Ed.) Boston, MA: Thomson Wadsworth Publishing.

Bronson, Po (2003). What should I do with my life? The true story of people who answered the ultimate question. New York, NY: Random House.

Course Description: SAM 136 is designed to increase student success at college. The overall goal of the course is to facilitate a smooth transition to college life by engaging the student in a structured curriculum of academic and life skills enhancement. To accomplish this goal, the content of the class includes: locating and utilizing campus resources, goal setting and time management skills, writing skills, test preparation and taking skills, critical thinking skills, career and major/minor exploration, cultural diversity issues, personal health and well-being strategies, money management, and leadership/civic service training.

Learning Objectives:

1. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions).
2. Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing.
3. Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values.
4. Acquiring skills in working with others as a member or a team.
5. Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop basic study skills (e.g. reading, writing, note taking, and test taking).
2. Enhance critical thinking/problem solving.
3. Develop effective oral and written communication skills.
4. Locate and utilize university resources (e.g. career services, library, SAM Center, student services, etc.).
5. Enhance leadership, service learning, and civic responsibility skills/values.
6. Initiate career exploration and major/minor area of study exploration.
7. Become sensitive to and value different cultures and respect diversity.
8. Develop life skills (e.g. health/stress, nutrition, relationships/sex, alcohol/drugs, and money management).
9. Enhance effective group dynamics through course activities.

Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives 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 which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Classroom Rules of Conduct: Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Cellular telephones and pagers must be turned off before class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

Visitors in the Classroom: Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

Attendance, Tardiness, and Early Exit Policy: Attending class, arriving for class on time, and remaining in class until the end of the class period are fundamental to academic success. Arriving on time for class and remaining in class until the end of the class period show respect for your instructor, your fellow classmates, and/or any guest speakers. Because of its importance, a combination of 2 tardies and/or early exiting will be counted as 1 absence for the class. A student will be considered as tardy if he or she arrives greater than **five minutes late**. A student will be considered as exiting early if she or he leaves prior to the conclusion of the class period. A *maximum* of **two** absences for MW classes will be allowed. After two absences, **each** absence will result in a half letter grade drop in the student's final letter grade. Students who miss class because of official University business will be given the opportunity to make up for missed work without penalty. However, students must inform the instructor prior to the absence.

Absences on religious holy days: University policy states that a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day must be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. Student must be excused to travel for observance of a religious holy day. A student who wishes to be excused for a religious holy day must present the instructor with a written statement describing the holy day(s) and the travel involved. The instructor should provide the student with a written description of the deadline for the completion of missed exams or assignments.

University ADA Policy: Sam Houston State University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This university will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with Services for Students with Disabilities in the Counseling Center and to contact faculty members in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations.

Grading Scale:

90-100	A	Excellent Work
80-89	B	Good Work
70-79	C	Acceptable Work
60-69	D	Not Acceptable Work
Below 60	F	Failing Work

Assignments/Grades:

Written (Individual Research Assignments and Reaction Papers)	40%
Class Participation	40%
Includes online discussion, in-class assignments, group work, homework, in-class discussion participation, in-class presentations, service learning and attendance. It is your responsibility to read the chapters before they are covered in class.	
Mid-Term & Final	20%

Assignments are due by 5 p.m. unless otherwise specified in the syllabus or in class. No late assignments will be accepted.

Class Participation: Includes online discussions, quizzes, in-class assignments, group work, homework, in-class discussion participation, in-class presentations, and attendance. It is your responsibility to read the chapters before they are covered in class. Having unfacilitated side-discussions and being prompted to stop talking will reduce your grade. If this behavior continues, you will receive a warning. If the behavior continues, you will be directed to leave class and will not receive credit for attending class on that day.

Online Discussion: As a class you will participate in an online discussion of the common reader book (What should I do with my life?). As the instructor, I will post the questions on Discussion Board, of Blackboard, for you to reply to the question directly and to one another's responses. Although this is an online activity, it is still your academic/professional work and you are expected to use full sentences, no IM/text message abbreviations, and appropriate language as you would in a class discussion. You will be graded on the quantity and quality of your contribution to the discussion. To receive credit, you will need to: follow the Discussion Board Rules; respond to the question with at least a 250 word response; and respond to two other people's response. Further instruction will be provided regarding the due dates.

Service Learning/Volunteer Project: One section of this class deals with you as a developing citizen of not only this university but also the surrounding community. As a class, our project will be to volunteer support services for Rita B. Huff Humane Society. This organization is located adjacent to campus, just behind the new baseball stadium (corner to Bearkat Village apartments). Within the week of November 11th, you will be expected to spend 5 hours, either consecutively or spread throughout the week, serving the facility. In the first few weeks of class, you will sign up for time during that week to serve. There is space for up to four students to serve at a time for each scheduled hour. You will return a signed and dated document noting your service. After the project, you will turn in a reaction paper responding to your experience and what you learned about your education through this experience.

Service Learning Reaction Paper: (due by November 20th at 5 p.m. At least 2 pages of text excluding the Title Page or Works Cited Page) After completing that service project at Rita B. Huff Humane Society, you will be assigned a paper to respond to your experience. You will be given questions to answer and a format to follow to help in organizing your paper. **The paper must be submitted as a MSWord or WordPerfect attachment through email.**

Individual Research Work: Your major paper this semester is an Exploration of Self. This project will include many of the assignments we will do in class or for homework. The paper will be due in three sections each graded at various points in the semester, with the final paper due in its entirety at the end of semester. The cumulative paper will comprise **40%** of your total grade. You are **required** to take each section to The Writing Center on campus for editing with the staff there and this action will be *half of your grade per paper*. The total paper must be at least 7 pages in length, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" top and bottom margins and 1 ¼" side margins. As you gather more information from outside sources (internet resources, library resources), I expect that you will cite your sources correctly in APA format. **The paper must be submitted as a MSWord or WordPerfect attachment through email.** Your work may be screened through Turnitin.com.

Section One: Myself as a Learner (**due by September 28th at 5 p.m.** At least 2 pages of text excluding the Title Page or Works Cited Page) In this section, you will explore the aspects of yourself as a learner. During the first section of the class, we will be learning about goal setting, time management, learning styles, active learning, critical thinking, academic integrity and study skills. Therefore in this part of the paper, you will be expected to write about what you have learned about yourself in **each** of those topics. Consider some of the following questions. What are your short-term and long-term goals? How did you develop them? What would happen to change them? How will you know when you have met them? What methods do you employ to manage your time? How is that working for you? What challenges do you face in managing your time? What is your dominant learning style? How does this affect your academic life? How does this influence your studying? What aspects of critical thinking/active learning come easiest for you and make the most intuitive sense? What aspects are harder for you to grasp? What can you do to strengthen your weaker aspects of critical thinking skills? Which note-taking method works best for you? How have you used the notes you have taken to enhance your preparation for tests?

Which testing method is easiest for you? What kind of skills have you developed for maximizing your test taking ability?

I expect that your answers or examples to be concrete and very personalized. Also, feel free to use examples from your experience beyond SAM 136 and include other classes or academic experiences.

Section Two: Myself as a Becoming Professional (due by October 26th at 5 p.m. At least 2 pages of text excluding the Title Page or Works Cited Page) In this section, you will consider the major you have chosen (or are considering choosing), areas of interest professional, and at least two potential career paths you could take. I expect you to incorporate some of the knowledge you have gained from the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, Strong Interest Inventory and Values Sort regarding your personality type, interests, work values, skills in discussing why you have chosen (or are thinking of choosing) a particular path of study. I also expect that you will do research on job expectations, salary, and education requirements for your chosen field/profession.

Section Three: Myself as a World Citizen (due by November 30th at 5 p.m. At least 2 pages of text excluding the Title Page or Works Cited Page) In this section, consider yourself pertaining more to the social aspects of college life and citizenship in your community. We will talk about service learning, relationships, sexual decision making, alcohol and drug use, stress reduction, nutrition and fitness, diversity, and personal values. Questions to consider might be: How do your values shape your decision-making regarding substance use, sexual decisions, and dating? If you feel pulled in different directions, explain those tensions and what does that tell you about changes happening in the evolution of your own values? What does it mean to be a person of integrity (academically & personally)? What are the reasons behind the decisions you are currently making about your relationships, sexual relationships, and substance use? How do you choose to care for yourself physically/mentally/emotionally/spiritually? What activities might you add or subtract to better maintain balance in your physical/mental/emotional/spiritual being? How does your understanding or lack of understanding of individuals from different cultures than yours influence how you participate as a citizen in SHSU/Huntsville/Texas/United States/World? How does service serve to broaden your understanding of the community you live in? What does that understanding do to change or influence your personal values? What does this mean about your future activity within your community?

Again, do not limit yourself just to answering these questions but evaluate the topic as a whole, giving personalized, concrete answers for yourself. For example, you may include a campus group that you have explored as a possible means of getting connected or reducing your stress or enhancing your personal/spiritual life.

EOS Total and Class Summary Page: (due by December 13th at 8 p.m. At least 2 pages of text excluding the Title Page or Works Cited Page) This section is a compilation of all previous sections, turned in as one paper, and an additional summary page. Any corrections recommended by the Writing Center or your instructor should have been made. The additional class summary page should speak to your experience in this class. Be sure to comment on three things you learned in this class, three aspects of the course you liked, and three recommendations for changing the course.

Mid-Term and Final Exam: There will be two exams for the class to test your knowledge. If you miss an exam, you must have some form of official documentation regarding the reason for your absence (e.g. doctor's note, death certificate).

CLASS SCHEDULE *(subject to change)*

August 20 th & 22 nd	Introductions & Campus Involvement <i>Chapter 1: Beginning Your College Experience</i> <i>Chapter 11: Getting Involved</i>
Aug. 27 th & 29 th	Time Management, Goal Setting, & Critical Thinking <i>Chapter 1: Beginning Your College Experience</i> <i>Chapter 2: Time Management</i> <i>Chapter 3: Thinking Critically</i>
September 3 rd	Labor Day – No class
Sept. 5 th	Learning Styles <i>Chapter 4: Maximizing your learning success.</i>
Sept. 10 th & 12 th	Listening, Note-Taking, Participating & Using the Library for Research <i>Chapter 6: Listening, Note-taking, and Participating in Class</i>
Sept. 17 th & 19 th	Effective Writing & Writing Center <i>Chapter 5: Communicating Clearly (writing section)</i>
Sept. 24 th & 26 th	Test Taking Skills, Reading Skills, & Reading Center <i>Chapter 8: Taking exams and Tests</i> <i>Chapter 7: Reading for Success</i>
Sept. 28th	Section I - Exploration of Self: Myself as a learner = Due by 5 p.m.
Oct. 1 st & 3 rd	Sam Center Degree Plans, & Advising <i>Chapter 12: Making the Right Choice for your Major and Career</i>
Oct. 8th & 10th	Midterm Exam & Homecoming/SHSU Traditions <i>Day Planner: History & Traditions to Know (pgs. 3-10)</i> SHSU Homecoming Week
<i>October 10th is the last day to drop classes without WF grade.</i>	
Oct. 15 th & 17 th	Careers Exploration, Career Decision Making, & Career Services <i>Myers Briggs Type Indicator, Strong Interest Inventory, Values Sort</i>
Oct. 22 nd & 24 th	Money Management & Financial Aid <i>Chapter 1: Managing Your Finances and Controlling Your Debt</i> <i>23rd Ultimate Money Skills Seminar LSC Theatre 11 and 6 pm</i>
Oct. 29 th & 31 st	Wellness & HKC
Nov. 2nd	Section II - Exploration of Self: Myself as a becoming professional = Due by 5 p.m.
Nov. 5 th & 7 th	Stress Management & Drugs and Alcohol <i>Chapter 10: Staying Healthy</i>
Nov 11 – 16	Service Learning Project – Rita B. Huff Humane Society

Nov. 12 th & 14 th	Service Learning & Sexual Health <i>Chapter 11: Reaping the Benefits of Service Learning</i> <i>Chapter 10: Staying Healthy- Promoting Your Sexual Health</i>
Nov. 19 th	Relationships <i>Chapter 9: Relationships</i>
Nov. 20th	Service Learning Reaction Paper = Due by 5 p.m.
Nov. 21 st	Thanksgiving Break – No Class
Nov. 26 th & 28 th	Diversity & Public Speaking <i>Chapter 9: Diversity & Values</i> <i>Chapter 5: Communicating Clearly (public speaking)</i>
November 30th	Section III - Exploration of Self: Myself as a world citizen = Due 5 p.m.
Dec. 3 rd & 5 th	Exploration of Self Expo EOS Presentations
December 13	EOS Total Paper & Class Summary Page = due by 8 p.m.
December 13th	Final Exam at 8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.