

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

Instructor: Steve Thompson

Office: HKC 162E

Phone: 936.294.3656

Email: sthompson@shsu.edu

Office Hours: By appointment only.

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 maximum of *two absences for Monday/Wednesday classes* will be allowed. After *two*, each absence will result in a half letter grade (5 points) 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) **40%**

Class Participation **40%**

Includes daily quizzes, journaling, 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.

Tests, Midterm, Final **20%**

Service Learning Opportunity: (Sept 24th and 26th)

Each student will volunteer 5 hours of service learning to enhance their involvement in the culture of Sam Houston State and the surrounding community. The service learning project for Fall 2007 will assist Huntsville State Park in the upkeep of their facilities

Weekly Journal Entries: *You will be assigned a weekly journal entry topic. Your entries are always due by 5 p.m. on the Friday of the week they are assigned.* You must write at least one page, double-spaced, to receive credit for each entry. These journal entries are to be your thoughts on the topic assigned. All topics will be given the Monday before the journal entry is due. All entries must be emailed to me at: **sthompson@shsu.edu**

Individual Research Assignments 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 altogether at the end of semester. The paper as the sum of its parts will comprise **40%** of your total grade. You are expected to take each section to The Writing Center on campus for editing with the staff there. The paper must be 5-7 pages in length, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" top and bottom margins and 1 ¼" side margins. For areas where you garner 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 Microsoft Word Document attachment through Blackboard.**

Section One: Myself as a Learner (due by September 29th at 5 p.m.)

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, personality 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 with **each** of those topics. Consider some of the following questions, although your paper is certainly not limited to these 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 can you compensate for learning under a professor with a different teaching style? What is your personality style (Myers-Briggs, Profiles International, etc.)? How does this affect your academic life? How does this influence your studying? What aspects of critical thinking/active learning come easiest for you/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 study for tests? Which testing method is easiest for you? What kind of skills have you developed for taking tests better?

I expect that your answers or examples in answer to these would be concrete and very personalized. For example, at some point in the semester, you will have to show me evidence that you have taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and your results should be attached as an addendum. Also, use examples from your experience beyond SAM 136 and expand it to other classes or academic experiences.

Section Two: Myself as a Future Professional (due by November 3rd at 5 p.m.)

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. In this section, I expect you to incorporate some of the knowledge you have gained about your personality type and learning style as well as the value sort we will do in class to discuss why you have chosen (or are thinking of choosing) a particular path of study. Also, for the potential careers, I expect that you will do some preliminary research on job expectations, salary and education requirements for that field.

Section Three: Myself as a World Citizen (due by December 1st at 5 p.m.)

In this section, you will consider yourself as it pertains to the more social aspects of college life and citizenship in your community as it is broadly defined. In this section of the course, we will talk about service learning, relationships, sexual decision making, alcohol and drug use, stress reduction, nutrition and fitness, diversity, and values. Questions to consider might be: How do your values shape your decision-making around substance use,

sexual decisions and dating? If there are discrepancies, how do you explain them and what does that tell you about changes happening in your understanding 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.

The final compilation of all of the parts of this exploration of self (with revisions) is due the day of your final.

Tests, Midterm and Final Exams: *Tests will be given at random times though the semester. You will have advance notice of these tests to provide you ample time to study. Your final examine will be Thursday, December 13 from 8pm -10-pm. Your tests will consist of short answer, listing, multiple choice, true/false, essay etc. questions. The final will be a comprehensive exam.*

CLASS SCHEDULE

August 20 & 22	Introductions & Goal Setting <i>Step 1: Strategies for Success</i> <i>Letter to yourself.</i> <i>Setting SMART Goals</i>
Aug. 27 th & 29 th	Note Taking, Active Learning, and Reading <i>Step 6: Listening, Note-Taking and Participating</i> <i>Step 7: Reading For Success</i> <i>Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm</i>
September 3	LABOR DAY – No class... have fun... be safe.
Sept. 5	Time Management <i>Step 2: Time Management</i> <i>Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm</i>
Sept. 10 & 12	Personality Styles & Learning Styles <i>Step 4: Engagement with Learning</i> <i>“Po folks” Book Club</i> <i>Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm</i>
Sept. 17 & 19	Academic Integrity, Writing and Speaking <i>Step 5: Communicating</i> <i>Step 11: Page 130-131 Service Learning</i> <i>Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm</i>
Sept. 24 – 26	Service Learning/Volunteer Project: Huntsville State Park
Sept. 28 th	Section I - Exploration of Self: Self as a Learner = Due by 5 p.m.

Oct. 1 & 3	Public Speaking & Test Taking <i>Step 8: Improving Memory</i> <i>Taking Exams and Tests</i> <i>Service Learning Project Discussion</i> <i>“Po Folks” Book Club</i> Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm
Oct 8 & 10	Values and Diversity <i>Step 9: Diversity: Appreciating Differences Among Us</i> <i>Exploring Your Values</i> <i>Diversity Showcase</i> Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm
Oct. 15 & 17	Midterm Exam & Homecoming/SHSU Traditions <i>Step 11: College Life</i>
Oct. 22 & 24	Careers/Career Exploration <i>Step 12: Majors and Careers: Making the Right Choice</i> <i>“Po Folks” Book Club</i> Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm
Oct. 29 & 31	Wellness & Health <i>Step 10: Staying Healthy</i> Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm
Nov. 3rd	Section II - Exploration of Self: Self as a Professional = Due by 5 p.m.
Nov. 5 & 7	Sex, Drugs, Alcohol, Relationships & Rock and Roll <i>Step 10: Revisited</i> <i>Counseling Center</i> Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm
Nov. 12 & 14	Critical Thinking <i>Step 3: Critical Thinking</i> <i>“Po folks” Book Club</i> Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm
Nov. 19	Leadership and Initiative
Nov. 21	Thanksgiving Break – No Class... have fun... eat turkey... watch football.
Nov. 26 & 28	Money Management <i>How not to go broke 101</i> <i>“Po Folks” Book Club</i> Weekly Journal Entry Due By Friday at 5pm
Dec. 1st	Section III - Exploration of Self: Exploration of Self as a World Citizen = Due 5 p.m.
Dec. 3 & 5	Exploration of Self Expo
<i>December 10</i>	<i>STUDY DAY</i>
December 13th	FINAL EXAM: 8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

