

Introduction to Collegiate Studies – Fall, 2007
SAM 136-Section 20 (MWF 11-11:50)
Syllabus

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Office Hours: M-F 9:00 am -5:00 pm by appointment; may drop in if I am available

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 *three absences for MWF classes* will be allowed. After *three absences*, 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 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.	40%
Tests, Midterm, Final	20%

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!

Service Learning Assignment: (Work complete by November 3, Reflection due by .)

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 the Rita B. Huff Animal Shelter. Students will work at the shelter the week of October 29-November 3. A reflection will be written following the guidelines given in class.

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. **Email your journal entry to joellen@shsu.edu.** You must write at least one page, double-spaced, to receive credit for each entry. Each journal should include paragraphs for the introduction, body and conclusion. Any exceptions will be noted on the class schedule and/or in class. Keep all of your entries together in your folder/binder.

Individual Research Assignment and Presentation: FINAL PAPER IS DUE on November 26; PRESENTATION DATE will be assigned in class.

This paper and presentation should focus on your growth as a student as well as a future citizen/professional. This project will also tie in very closely with a specific major you have chosen or are thinking about choosing. The paper should be a minimum of 7 pages in length, typed and double-spaced. Think about how you might utilize Career Services, Counseling Services, the Newton Gresham Library, internet, and any other personal sources you may have. You will be presenting this paper to the class. There should be at least three sections to your paper. Some of the major areas you should cover in the sections include the following:

SECTION 1: My growth as a student

During the first section of this 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 section of the paper, you are expected to write about what you have learned about yourself with each of these topics. Consider some of the following questions to assist you in developing this section (however, you are not limited to these questions only):

1. What are your short term and long term goals? What would happen if you change them? How will you know when you have met them?
2. What methods do you employ to manage your time? How is that working for you? What challenges do you face in managing your time?
3. What is your dominant learning style? How can you compensate for learning under a professor with a different teaching style?
4. What is your personality style (Myers-Briggs, Profiles International, etc)? How does this affect your academic life? How does this influence your studying?
5. What aspects of critical thinking/active learning come easiest for you or 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?

SECTION 2: My growth as a future professional

In this section, you will consider the major you have chosen (or are considering choosing), areas of interest professionally, and at least two career paths you could take. I expect you to incorporate some of the knowledge you have gained about your personality type and learning style 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 conduct research on job expectations, salary and education requirements for that field. You must also reference at least one chapter of the Po Bronson book, *What should I do with my life?* (you may mention more than one chapter if you choose) and describe how you hope to attain similar goals or avoid similar mistakes in your career path as the person in the chapter.

SECTION 3: My growth as a world citizen

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. Consider some of the following questions to assist you in developing this section (however, you are not limited to these questions only):

1. How do your values shape your decision making around substance use, sexual decision making 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?
2. What does it mean to be a person of integrity (academically and personally)?
3. What are the reasons behind the decisions you currently making about your relationships, sexual relationships, substance use?
4. How do you choose to care for yourself physically/mentally/spiritually? What activities might you add or subtract to better maintain balance in your emotional/physical/spiritual being?
5. How does your understanding or lack of understanding of individuals from different cultures than yours influence how you participate as a citizen at SHSU / Huntsville / Texas / United States?
6. 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?

Bibliography required (Minimum of 5 references – only 2 can be internet; must follow MLA Guidelines)

FINAL PAPER IS DUE on November 26; PRESENTATION DATE will be assigned in class.

Presentation will be 5-7 minutes in length, and should utilize charts, posters, Powerpoint, or some other visual aid.

Midterm and Final Exams:

Midterm: Friday, October 12, 2007

May consist of short answer, listing, multiple choice, true/false, essay questions

Final: Wednesday, December 12, 2007 11:00am-1:00 pm

May consist of short answer, listing, multiple choice, true/false, essay questions. The final will be comprehensive.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: August 20, 22, 24

Step 1 Introductions & Syllabus/Strategies for Success

Journal # 1: *Why are you in college? Why did you pick SHSU? Why are you in SAM 136? What are your semester goals?*

WEEK 2: August 27, 29, 31

Step 1 Academic Honesty/Money Management

Journal # 2: *Has there been a point in your life when you were worried about money? Are you a spender or a saver?*

WEEK 3: September 3 (HOLIDAY), 5, 7

Step 2 Time Management

Journal # 3: *What is your schedule? What did you NOT get accomplished last week? Analyze your time mgmt skills and ways you can improve.*

WEEK 4: September 10, 12, 14

Step 4 Engagement with Learning/MBTI Interpretation

IRA #1: **Deadline for taking the MBTI is Sept 11; deadline for emailing your type is 5pm on Sept 14**

WEEK 5: September 17, 19, 21

Steps 3 and 6 Critical Thinking/Listening/Note Taking

Quiz #1 Quiz on Steps 1, 2 and 4

Journal #4: *Have you ever used a particular note-taking system in the past? Which system do you think you would most likely use this first year?*

WEEK 6: September 24, 26, 28

Steps 7-8 Reading Strategies/Improving Memory

Journal #5: *Discuss your favorite book. When did you read it? What makes it special? Who is your favorite character and why?*

WEEK 7: October 1, 3, 5

Step 8 Test Taking

Quiz #2 Quiz on Steps 3, 6, and 7

Journal #6: *When is the last time you did really well on a test? How did you prepare? When is the last time you did poorly on a test? How would you prepare differently? How do you feel your learning style helps or hinders in preparing for tests?*

WEEK 8: October 8, 10, 12

Step 5 Writing and Speaking

IRA #2: **Turn in outline and thesis statement for research paper by Fri., Oct. 12**

MIDTERM EXAM – will cover Steps 1-4, and 6-8

WEEK 9: October 15, 17, 19

Research and College Libraries

WEEK 10: October 22, 24, 26

Step 12 Majors and Careers

IRA # 3: Note cards and works cited (bibliography) due on Friday, Nov. 2

WEEK 11: October 29, 31, November 2

Step 11 Getting Involved on Campus and in the Community
SERVICE LEARNING HOURS AT RITA B. HUFF

Quiz #3 Quiz on Steps 5 and 12

Journal #7: *Do you feel like a part of the University Community? What activities are you involved in? What would you like to try/join that you haven't?*

WEEK 12: November 5, 7, 9

Step 9 Values and Diversity

Journal #8: *Reflection on Service Learning Hours (Rita B. Huff)*

WEEK 13: November 12, 14, 16

Steps 9-10 Relationships/Staying Healthy

IRA #4: Rough draft stamped by Writing Center due on November 12

Journal #9: *Tell me about your experience on Alcohol 101+*

WEEK 14: November 19, 21(HOLIDAY), 23 (HOLIDAY)

Reality check regarding research paper and presentation

Quiz #4 Quiz on Steps 9-11

WEEK 15: November 26, 28, 30

Individual Presentations

IRA #5: Individual Research Assignment – final paper due on Monday, November 26.

WEEK 16: December 3, 5, 7 (STUDY DAY)

Individual Presentations/Wrap-up

Journal #10: *How would you persuade new students to take SAM 136? What are the benefits of the course?*

FINAL EXAM IS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2007 at 11:00 am