

Introduction to Collegiate Studies – Fall, 2007
SAM 136-21 (MOWEFR 11:00-11:50) Syllabus

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Office Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri., 12:00-2:00 pm

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.

Bonson, 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 TTh classes or three absences for MWF classes* will be allowed. After *two or 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 **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%**

Assignments will be accepted up to two days late with a 25% penalty before the assignment is graded.

Service Learning Opportunity: Due - November 19, 2007

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 be determined by the class as a class project.

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. Each journal should include paragraphs for the introduction, body and conclusion. Any exceptions will be noted on the class schedule and/or in class. You will receive a journal folder upon the return of your first entry. Keep all assignments in this folder and turn in the folder with the next assignment.

Individual Research Assignments: *Due dates will vary throughout the semester, see class schedule*

Choosing a major and career is one of the most important things a student will do during their time in college. This research paper is to help you make a “game plan” for your chosen career. We will go through the career planning process as a result of this paper. The paper needs to be at least 7 pages in length and have a presentation accompany it. All of the assignments pertaining to the paper/project throughout the semester (topic selection, notes, outlines, avoiding plagiarism, etc.) will add up to 40 % of your semester grade.

Tests, Midterm and Final Exams:

You will be tested on the topics discussed in class and from the readings in our textbook. Each test will consist of a variety of questioning methods (true/false, multiple choice, short answer, matching, essay).

Midterm exam: October 10, 2007

Final exam: December 12, 2007 (11:00-1:00)

SAM 136 021 Tentative Schedule

Week of:	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Aug. 20-24	Intro to class What does it mean to be a college student?	Gardner Step 1 Getting off to the right start	Academic Honesty
Aug. 27-31	Gardner Step 2 Time management	Gardner Step 6 Listening, note-taking, and participating in class	Continue Listening, note-taking, and participating in class
Sept. 3-7	NO CLASS	Gardner Step 7 Reading for success	Continue reading for success
Sept. 10-14	Gardner Step 4 Learning Style *Academic Coach Due*	What does my Academic Coach report mean?	Gardner Step 4 Engagement in learning
Sept. 17-21	Gardner Step 8 Taking exams and tests	SHSU Academic Resources	Service Learning Project
Sept. 24-28	Gardner Step 3 Critical Thinking What is research?	Learning how to research	Gardner Step 5 Writing and communicating clearly
Oct. 1-5	Common college pitfalls and how to avoid them	Gardner Step 10 Staying Healthy	Continue staying healthy
Oct. 8-12	Review for midterm	Midterm Exam	Service Learning Project
Oct. 15-19	Gardner Step 11 Experiencing college life to the fullest	SHSU History and Traditions	Campus scavenger hunt
Oct. 22-26	Gardner Step 9 Relationships, diversity and values	Healthy relationships	Research Day
Oct. 29-Nov. 2	Alcohol Abuse Initiative	Campus safety and safety walk	Service Learning Project
Nov. 5-9	Money management	Stress management	TBA
Nov. 12-16	TBA	TBA	TBA
Nov. 19-23	Navigating the transition home for the holidays *Service Learning paper due*	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Nov. 26-30	Presentations for research paper	Presentations for research paper	Presentations for research paper
Dec. 3-7	Semester Wrap-up	Review for final exam	NO CLASS
Dec. 10-14	NO CLASS	Final Exam 11:00-1:00	NO CLASS