

Introduction to Collegiate Studies – Fall, 2007
SAM 136-72 Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 – 4:50 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.

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%**

A deduction of 5 pts per day will be made on all late assignments.

Service Learning Opportunity: (to be announced)

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 democracy project in registering SHSU students to vote.

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 and must be emailed to be at pepper@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 Assignments:

The paper/project 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. Topics and details will be provided at a later date.

Tests, Midterm and Final Exams:

Consists of short answer, listing, multiple choice, true/false, essay etc. questions. The final will be a comprehensive exam. Dates and further information will be provided at a later date.

SAMPLE CLASS SCHEDULE

*****Please emphasize practical application and skill mastery as you plan your classes and assignments. Is there another class they can practice note-taking in? Could they attend a school function to learn about diversity? Can they practice Wally's reading tips in their history book? Additionally, which chapters are relevant to your research paper/project? We want every thing we do in SAM 136 to benefit and help the students in their other classes and school activities.**

(Instructors can design their own class schedule.)

Ideas for practical application of chapter lessons

Chapter 1 - Strategies for Success

Goal setting – Establish specific long-term and short –term goals and make a practical “contract” of how they will conduct themselves in class this semester (either SAM 136 or others) to accomplish those goals. Bring it out periodically when they need motivation.

Chapter 2 – Time Management

Calendar/planner/to-do list for the semester for all of their classes

Plan of action for major paper or project for one class (introduce schedule for SAM 136 project?)

Chapter 3 – How we learn

Evidence of taking MBTI/Strong through Career Services or Counseling Center

Evaluate teaching style of one professor compared to student's learning style

Chapter 4 – Engagement with learning

Have groups divided by their learning style present 5 minutes of active learning activity on theme

Interview with a professor (one page – perhaps provide sample questions)

Chapter 5 – Critical thinking

Have students produce one critical thinking activity for class after reviewing types of critical thinking (opinion page from newspaper, mind benders, puzzles, etc.)

Present “mind maps” for class to work on

Note cards for research paper or project – practice putting facts in their own words and recognizing/citing ideas of others

Chapter 6 – Listening, Note Taking, & Participating

Have them watch the national news and take notes –discuss the challenges and myths of note-taking

Notes from another class demonstrating use of principles taught

Participation points for questions prepared from class notes

Introduce “One Minute Paper” concept and practice in class

Chapter 7 – Reading to Remember

Show me a chapter from a textbook (SAM 136 or other) with evidence of using SQ3R or Wally's tips (notes in margins, answering chapter ?s)

Chapter 8 – Taking Exams

Devise study guide using memory techniques (maybe consider moving to right before midterm), then surprise them and let them use their study guide on the test.

Chapter 9 – Improving Memory

5 minute quiz on content of class

Mnemonic device or memory aids used to study for another class

Creative memory techniques (exaggeration, color, size, pictures, etc.)

Chapter 10 – Effective Writing/Speaking

Bring in paper from another class or outline/rough draft for SAM 136

Visit the writing center

Define thesis statement for paper concept

Revise paper from another class

5 minute speech about concept from another class/teach a concept

Chapter 11 – Research

Consider teaching this chapter throughout the semester by adding sections to chapters that contribute to your paper topic or project

Visit Library

Practice citation/ prepare bibliography

Chapter 12- Careers and Majors

Visit career center

Add to paper/project on career exploration as it applies to specific students

Chapter 13 – Relationships

Attend Sex Signals

Have counseling center speak

Conflict resolution role play participation in class

Write portion of paper/ project

Chapter 14 – Diversity

Attend MISS activity

Bring in something about student's culture to display

Chapter 15 – Values

Value Clarification

Apply to previous sections on goals, relationships, careers, etc. – Are your values consistent?

Chapter 16 – Stay Healthy

Have health center come talk

Stress management coping plan

Diet plan for nutrition section

Plan for how to change at least one aspect of wellness

Alcohol 101

Money Management

Devise budget

Analyze how personality will affect spending habits (for paper/project?)