

Introduction to Collegiate Studies – Fall, 2007
SAM 136-09 Monday, Wednesday 3-4:20 p.m.

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Text: Gardner, J.N., A.J. Jeweler, and B.O. Barefoot (2007). *Your College Experience: Strategies for Success* (7th Ed.) Boston, MA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Course Description: SAM 136 is designed as an extended freshman orientation course 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).
 - a. Alcohol 101+
 - b. Money Management Seminars
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 MW classes will be allowed. After 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 Assignment)

40%

Class Participation

40%

Includes on-line discussion participation, 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.

Midterm & Final

20%

Assignments are due by 5 p.m. unless otherwise specified in the syllabus or in class. No late assignments will be accepted. Assignment dates and specifications are subject to change per instructor. If there is a change you will be informed in class and on Blackboard. You are responsible for keeping abreast of those changes.

Class Participation: Includes quizzes, in-class assignments, group work, homework, in-class discussion participation, and in-class presentations. It is your responsibility to read the chapters before they are covered in class.

In-class Common Reader Discussion Participation: This year we are introducing a common reader book that everyone in all SAM 136 classes will be reading. The book is called *What Should I Do With My Life?* authored by Po Bronson. I will give you your copy of the book shortly into the semester and explain the intention behind this part of the course. We will then have 3 “book club” days in the semester. Prior to each book club class session, you will be responsible for reading 1/3 of the book for that days’ discussion. Your grade for this section of the class will be based on your participation in that discussion and evidence that you have read the material prior to class. I will give you some general guidance questions to consider as you read. Your participation for this will be equal to the grade percentage assigned for your service learning project.

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. Also, 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. You can find resources to help you cite correctly at either The Writing Center website (http://www.shsu.edu/~wctr/handouts/APA_references.pdf) or the Newton Gresham library website (<http://library.shsu.edu/research/guides/apa.pdf>). Papers received that are not correctly cited, are obviously copied from another place or otherwise suspected of plagiarism will *at minimum* receive no credit for that portion of the paper. If it is corrected by the final draft of the paper, you will not be penalized for that final draft. If you have any questions about how to do this that have not been answered by those resources provided above or our time in class, please feel free to ask me *before turning in your paper* and I would be glad to assist you.

Section One: Myself as a Learner (due by September 28th 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 assessments mentioned 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 Burgeoning Professional (due by Oct. 26th at 5 p.m.)

In this section, you will consider the major you have chosen (or are considering choosing), areas of professional interest, 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, learning style, values assessment, processing of common reader, and interest inventories 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 November 30th 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, money management, 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, substance use? 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? 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? 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 December 7th by 5 p.m.

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. This semester our project will be to help out at The Good Shepherd Mission. This organization provides much needed services for homeless/indigent individuals in Walker County, including a clothes store and nightly evening meals. During your hours, you will be either helping sort donations given to Good Shepherd or helping prepare the evening meal (ideally both). There will be a two week window in which I expect you to complete your *five hours* of service. We will sign up for them in class prior to those weeks. The director of Good Shepherd Mission will come speak with us on the first day of the project to talk about the need in our community and what our responsibility will be. During the week of the project, we will discuss this project on the Monday following for processing of this experience and what you learned about your education through this experience.

Midterm and Final Exam: There will be two exams for the class to celebrate your growing 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) in order to make up the exam.

CLASS SCHEDULE

August 20th & 22nd Introductions, Reading a Textbook & Goal Setting
Chapter 1: Beginning Your College Experience: Setting Off on the Right Foot

Aug. 27th & Aug. 29th Time Management
Class on August 29th will be to attend *Campus to Career* at 3 p.m. in LSC theatre
Chapter 2: Managing Time and Staying Motivated

September 3rd LABOR DAY – No class

Sept. 5th Note Taking & Active Learning
Chapter 6: Listening, Note Taking and Participating in Class

Alcohol Summit for Alcohol Abuse Initiative September 8th & 9th
September 5th is 12th class day, meaning it is the last day to drop without ‘Q’ designation and for full refund.

Sept. 10th & 12th Personality Styles & Learning Styles
Chapter 3: How We Learn

Sept. 17th & 19th Academic Integrity, Research & Writing Part I
Chapter 11: Research and College Libraries

By September 19th, you need to have read the first 19 chapters (through Learning Delta Pride) so we can discuss it in class.

Sept. 24th & 26th Service Learning, Critical Thinking & Writing Part II
Chapter 10: Effective Writing and Speaking

Section I of Exploration of Self DUE by 5 p.m. Sept. 28th.

Oct. 1st & 3rd Public Speaking & Test Taking
Chapter 8: Taking Exams and Tests

Oct. 8th & 10th Midterm & Values
October 10th is the last day to drop classes without F grade. Past this designation, you would need to drop entire class load for the semester only with approval.

Oct. 15th & 17th Diversity & Homecoming/SHSU Traditions
Chapter 9, pages 104-109 Diversity and Exploring Your Values

SHSU Homecoming Week – see Student Services calendar for details of events
(<http://www.shsu.edu/calendar/>)

Oct. 22nd & 24th Careers/Career Exploration
Chapter 12: Majors and Careers: Making the Right Choice
By October 24th you need to complete chapters 20 through 42 (through Trafficking in Extremes) of What Should I Do With My Life? for discussion in class.

Oct. 29th & Oct. 31st Wellness & Health
Chapter 10: Staying Healthy

Section II of your Exploration of Self (Exploration of Self as a Professional) due Oct. 26th by 5 p.m.

Nov. 5th & 7th Relationships
Chapter 9: Relationships, Diversity and Values pages 100-103

Nov. 12th & 16th Sex, Drugs and Alcohol

Nov. 19th Common Reader wrap-up
By November 16th, you need to complete chapters 43 through 57 (through Closing Remarks) of What Should I Do With My Life? for discussion in class.

Nov. 22nd & Nov. 24th Thanksgiving Break – No Class

Nov. 26th & Nov. 28th Money Management
Chapter 1, pages 11-13

Section III of your Exploration of Self (Exploration of self as a World Citizen) due Nov. 30th by 5 p.m.

Dec. 3rd & 5th Exploration of Self Expo

December 8th is STUDY DAY. Final draft of Exploration of Self due by 5 p.m.

Monday, December 12th FINAL EXAM from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
See http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/schedule/fall2007/general.html for full final exam schedule.