



COURSE SYLLABUS

**COH 111.006E
THEORY AND APPLICATION OF LEARNING AND CRITICAL THINKING
FRESHMEN SUCCESS SEMINAR
FALL 2015**

Instructor: Dr. Sharon Kowalsky

Office Location: Ferguson Social Sciences 105

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00, or by appointment

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COURSE INFORMATION

Course Materials:

The following texts are required for this course and available in the bookstore. Please be sure you obtain the correct editions as listed here:

- Carter, Carol, et al, *Keys to Success*. 12th edition (Pearson, 2012) ISBN 9780132541718

Any additional materials will be distributed in class by the professor or made available to students through eCollege.

In addition, students should purchase:

- Academic year day planner

Course Description:

COH 111 prepares students for optimal success at the university and beyond by motivating them to develop skills, knowledge and behaviors that will create confident, self-sufficient learners.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Over the course of the semester:

1. Students will develop their listening, speaking, and writing skills.
2. Students will demonstrate their ability to organize their time and their academic work.
3. Students will acquire the knowledge and apply the necessary skills to successfully navigate university life.
4. Students will demonstrate their understanding of possible careers associated with their degree.

Course Objectives:

This course will prepare History and Political Science majors for success in their chosen majors within the university and beyond. It will address issues related to student success both in the classroom, in the university community, and beyond.

Please note: This syllabus is your contract with me, the professor, for the semester. By enrolling in this class you agree to the policies and requirements set out below and understand that all the requirements must be fulfilled to pass this class. These terms are non-negotiable and will remain in effect for the duration of the semester. If you have any questions about anything in this syllabus, please ask.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance at all class meetings is required. Roll will be taken each class period. Please plan to attend all scheduled class meetings, arrive on time, and remain for the duration of the class. Excessive absences will be reflected negatively in the final grade. Absences for university business or documented illness will be excused. If you need to be absent, please let the professor know, in advance if possible.

Students are responsible for all material covered in our class meetings, regardless of their physical presence in the room. Students are expected to come prepared to engage with and discuss the assigned material, and to present assignments as indicated in the course schedule. This means preparing the assignment before class and bringing the appropriate material with you to class. I expect all students to participate in our class discussions and to contribute their thoughts, ideas, and questions to our collective exploration. Our classroom meetings will be collaborative sessions during which we will explore ideas and issues together. This requires your participation and engagement. I especially encourage you to bring your questions to class. I will create, and expect you to uphold, an intellectual environment in the classroom where we can listen to and consider others' arguments and opinions with an open mind and where we respect viewpoints other than our own. Your participation grade will be based on your engagement in our class discussions and be guided by the following rubric:

- A = Always prepared, frequently participates, rarely absent
- B = Always prepared, participates only when called on, rarely absent
- C = Usually prepared, rarely speaks, rarely absent
- D = Often unprepared, several absences
- F = Usually unprepared, frequent absences

The professor reserves the right to give unannounced pop quizzes or homework assignments. These cannot be made up and will count as part of the participation grade.

Assignments:

Event Reports: Students will write three (3) event reports over the course of the semester. Students will attend a variety of on-campus events and produce critical reports of their experiences at these events that summarize the event attended, evaluate what the student learned from this event, and assess how it contributed to their being a more successful and educated student. These reports must be written in proper language, with proper grammar and syntax, and should express critical and analytical thought. Students should choose to attend one cultural event, one academic event (like a public lecture or talk), and one sports event. Each paper should be 2-3 pages in length, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12pt font or equivalent, with standard margins. It must include the date, time, and place of the event.

Papers are due to the corresponding eCollege dropbox within a week of the event. Students should seek the assistance of the Writing Center.

Degree Plan: Students will prepare a 4-year degree plan based on university requirements that reflects the courses including prerequisites, that are necessary to complete their chosen major and graduate on time. Students will also create a “What if” plan and compare it to their degree plan. Students will need to research university requirements in preparing these plans. Students will also make brief presentations on academic support services provided by the university.

Resume and Career Assignment: Students will prepare a professional resume or CV targeted at their chosen field. Students will need to research their field to know what sort of information and skills need to be included, and may wish to seek the assistance of Career Services. Students will present their findings to the class.

Academic Planning Assignment: Students will obtain a day planner (academic year) and use it to organize their schedule and workload.

Class Notes Assignment: Students will provide a copy of their class notes from a class of their choosing, along with an assessment of those notes that evaluates their strengths and weaknesses. This assignment will be repeated twice over the course of the semester, each time evaluating the notes from a different class.

Global Competence Aptitude Assessment and ePortfolio: As part of the university’s effort to educate students in global awareness and to create good global citizens, students in this course will participate in the Global Scholar Program. Students will attend two orientation sessions, take the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (GCAA) and create an ePortfolio. More details will be provided by the professor and at the Global Scholar orientation.

Grading

Grades will be determined according to the following breakdown:

Class Notes Assignment	10%
Academic Planning Assignment	10%
Resume and Career Assignment	10%
Degree Plan Assignment	10%
Global Scholar Assignment	10%
Event Reports (3)	30%
Other Assignments	10%
Participation	10%

Your grades for written work will be determined based on the following rubric:

- A = Clear and solid evidence of critical thinking and analysis; technically (grammar, syntax, language) clean
- B = Strong evidence of critical thinking and analysis; technically clean with minor errors
- C = Some evidence of critical thinking and analysis; technically clean with errors
- D = Lacking evidence of critical thinking and analysis; poor command of language, grammar, and syntax

The grading scale used for this course is as follows:

90-100 =	A
80-89 =	B
70-79 =	C
60-69 =	D
59 or less =	F

To pass this class, ALL assignments must be turned in. Failure to submit any one assignment will result in a D or F for the course.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS, ACCESS, AND NAVIGATION

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology successfully in this course:

Word Processing:

You will need access to a word processor to prepare written exams and research projects. You should be able to insert footnotes in your papers. Please plan to use MS Word and not any online system, like Google Docs. The formatting does not work correctly.

eCollege:

This course is web-enhanced through eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To access eCollege you will need an internet connection, preferably high speed, and your CWID and password. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, please contact Technology Services at 903-468-6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>. eCollege will be used to send you announcements and reminders, to post grades, and to provide access to course materials (except required readings) such as handouts and assignments. In addition, eCollege will be the primary means for me to communicate with you outside the classroom. Be sure that you can access the email account the university has on record for you. You should get into the habit of checking the eCollege site for this course on a daily basis.

Turnitin:

All written work must be submitted to Turnitin.com. Submissions to Turnitin are made through the dropbox on eCollege. All written work for this course will be turned in through the drop box in eCollege. Please let me know if you have any problems.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with the Instructor:

Students are encouraged to contact the professor for any and all reasons whatsoever. The more you let me know what is going on with you, the better I can help you out when necessary. Beyond the classroom, the best way to get in touch with the professor is through email. I am also available during office hours. Please come to talk to me about any concerns you might have and about any problems or issues that arise during the semester. I can be very understanding but only if I know what is going on with you.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Classroom Behavior

All students are expected to observe basic tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct). During class time, I expect your undivided attention. This means turning off cell phones, pagers, iPods, and other devices, and putting away newspapers and other forms of distraction, for the duration of the class period (exceptions will be allowed for emergencies with advance permission of the professor). Please come to class on time and plan to stay for the entire period. Coming late and/or disrupting the learning environment shows

disrespect for us, your colleagues, and the educational endeavor in which you are engaged. If you must leave early, please let me know at the beginning of class. I can be very understanding of problems that might arise over the course of the semester, but only if I know what is going on with you. I encourage you to come to my office hours, to get to know me, and to keep me informed of any issues you might have that would affect your performance in this class.

Late Assignments

All written assignments due to the eCollege dropbox are due by midnight on the date listed in the Course Schedule below. Other assignments must be turned in during class, as indicated on the syllabus. Late assignments may be accepted only with the advance approval of the professor and may be assessed a penalty of one letter grade per week. If you have a problem with a due date because of a specific emergency, please notify the professor in advance or plan to turn the assignment in early. *I can be very understanding and flexible with you, but only if you come to talk to me in advance.* To pass this class, all assignments must be completed. Any missing assignments at the end of the course will result in an overall course grade of D or F.

Academic Honesty

In all courses, I expect that all work that you do and turn in is your own. It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and myself that no form of plagiarism, cheating, collusion, or any other form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as deliberately taking the words or ideas of someone else and passing them off as your own. Cheating is obtaining unauthorized assistance on any assignment. Collusion is the selling of academic products with the intention that they be submitted to satisfy an academic requirement. Students are expected to uphold and support the highest academic standards at all times. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty will automatically fail the assignment in question, will likely fail the entire course, and will be subject to disciplinary action by the University (See Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]). Further information on the History Department plagiarism policy can be found on the History Department web page. If you are even unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please ask.

Writing Center

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the resources of the Writing Center for assistance with drafting their papers. The Writing Center is a resource for you. They will not write your paper; they will help you improve your writing skills. If you use the Writing Center, please plan ahead. They can only help you if you see them in advance and have time to incorporate their suggestions into the final paper. More information can be found at <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/litlang/CSC/>.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

This schedule will guide you through the semester and indicates when your assignments are due. I will do my best to adhere to this schedule, but I reserve the right to make adjustments to it during the course of the semester as such circumstances arise. Reading assignments are indicated on eCollege for each class meeting.

Because of the professor's schedule, university obligations, and possible meetings that may arise, it may be necessary to cancel class meetings on some days. If that happens, the professor will provide an alternative assignment for the day and notify students in advance. **Please note: we may read only sections of each chapter from the text. The professor will indicate what needs to be read in advance.**

Week 1

August 31: Introduction

September 2: Getting Started

Read: Carter, Chapter 1 (Welcome to College) and Chapter 2 (Goals and Time)

Week 2

September 7: no class, Labor Day

September 9: Global Scholar Program orientation

Meet in Ed South 125 (Computer Lab)

Week 3

September 14: Library orientation (Rosh Hashanah)

Read: Carter, Chapter 3 (Learning How You Learn)

Meet in the library classroom (behind the coffee shop area)

September 16: Global Scholar Program orientation

Meet in Ed South 125 (Computer Lab)

Week 4

September 21: Organizing Time

Read: Carter, Chapter 4 (Critical, Creative, and Practical Thinking)

Due: Academic Planning Assignment

September 23: Library Activity (Yom Kippur)

Week 5

September 28: Critical Thinking

Read: Carter, Chapter 5 (Reading and Information Literacy)

Due: Library Activity Worksheet

September 30: Navigating the University

Due: Presentations on University Academic Services

Week 6

October 5: Note Taking

Read: Carter, Chapter 6 (Listening and Note Taking)

October 7: Planning your college education

Due: Class Notes Assignment #1

Week 7

October 12: Studying
Read: Carter, Chapter 7 (Memory and Studying)
October 14: Degree Plans
Due: Degree Plan Assignment

Week 8
October 19: Testing
Read: Carter, Chapter 8 (Test Taking)
October 21: GPAs

Week 9
October 26: Diversity at the University
Read: Carter, Chapter 9 (Diversity and Communication)
October 28: Professionalism

Week 10
November 2: Stress and Wellness
Read: Carter, Chapter 10 (Wellness and Stress Management)
November 4: Topic TBA
Due: Class Notes Assignment #2

Week 11
November 9: Practical Skills
Read: Carter, Chapter 11 (Managing Money)
November 11: Topic TBA

Week 12
November 16: Careers
Read: Carter, Chapter 12 (Careers and More)
November 18: No class meeting

Week 13
November 23: No class meeting
November 25: Thanksgiving, no class

Week 14
November 30: Student presentations
Due: Resume and Career Assignment
December 2: Student presentations

Week 15
December 7: Catching Up
December 9: Summing Up

We will not meet during final exam week. Please focus your attention on your other classes.