

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to improve your academic success by helping you understand yourself as a student and understand the requirements of your university courses. Five primary tools are essential to our work in this course: self-reflection, critical reading, response writing, presentation, and in-class discussion.

Your ideas, experiences, and reflections are a vital part of this discussion-based class. Please be sure you read and respond to the assigned material before class meetings and be prepared to engage with the ideas presented and with your peers. If you come to class unprepared, it essentially like being absent, since you cannot fully engage with the material, nor can you adequately participate in discussion.

Overall, remember that success is a function of your willingness to engage with this material. You will get as much out of this class as you put into it, so really reflect on the choices that brought you here and what you are hoping to get out of your time here.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Readings and Handouts:

All readings and handouts are available on ecommons (You will need internet access for these materials.)

Other materials you will need:

Paper and pen for taking notes in class

Folder to hold all materials for the final portfolio

Assignments:

Assignments will introduce you to a range of tasks that you will be asked to do in other courses throughout your time in the university. The grading will break down as follows:

Attendance and participation: 25%

Written homework (essays, etc): 40%

Presentations: 25%

Resource Center Visit: 10%

Reading and writing

Since our class only meets once a week, you may be assigned several assignments between class periods. This will include reading articles and/or handouts related to the week's topic and writing short academic papers in which you assess yourself as a student. You must complete all assignments by the beginning of the class period in which they are due.

In-class presentations

Small student groups will present on selected readings pertaining to current challenges in education. Each group is responsible for teaching the material from their reading to the rest of the class and then leading a short discussion. The group presentation should do the following 3 things:

- 1) **Summarize:** explain what your reading was about, including the author's main points

- and some supporting examples that help support those points
- 2) **Analyze:** explain why this particular reading is important for understanding academic success
 - 3) **Synthesize:** connect the reading to other concepts from class and/or to your own personal experience in education

I will give more detailed instructions for this assignment as we get further along in the term.

Final Exam Study Guide

After you have taught the material from your assigned reading, you will need to develop a study guide for the rest of the class as if you were going to give them a final exam. Again, I will give more detailed instructions for this assignment as we get further along in the course.

Resource Center Visit

There are a number of resource centers on campus to support you academically, socially, and emotionally. During the term you will need to visit at least one of the campus resource centers listed below. It must be a center that you have not used before. The goal is to familiarize yourself with at least one of these resources to determine how it might be helpful to you. After your visit, you should write up a one-page reflection of what you learned about the center's offerings and how it might help you in the future.

List of Resource Centers:

*Please note that most of these have reduced hours during the summer so you will need to check the website or call them to determine when you can visit.

Career Center, <http://careers.ucsc.edu/>, can advise you on popular career paths for your major and help you prepare for graduate school applications, job searches, interviews, internships, etc.

Learning Support Services, <http://www2.ucsc.edu/lss/>, provides services such as tutoring and Modified Supplemental Instruction (MSI), to help students excel

Counseling and Psychological Services, <http://caps.ucsc.edu/>, provides individual and group counseling to meet the mental health needs of students, such as alcohol and recovery, eating awareness, and stress management meetings

Academic Excellence (ACE), <http://ace.ucsc.edu/>, helps STEM students from diverse backgrounds understand the material from large lecture classes

Engaging Education (e2), <http://www.engagingeducation.org/>, a student-initiated outreach and retention center (from website)

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), eop.ucsc.edu/, offers academic and personal support designed to improve retention and academic success for first-generation, low-income, or educationally disadvantaged students (from website)

| Date | Assignments |
|-------------|--|
| Monday 7/25 | First day of class Introductions In-class writing |
| Monday 8/1 | <i>Read:</i> Dweck, “Brainology” <i>Write:</i> Your educational narrative |
| Monday 8/8 | <i>Read:</i> Assigned group articles (Be sure to annotate!) <i>Write:</i> Group work challenges, personal goals, time management |
| Monday 8/15 | <i>In-class presentations on articles</i> (Be sure to take notes in class!) |
| Monday 8/22 | <i>Write:</i> Final self-reflection Resource Center Visit write-up Final exam study guide Potluck Party in class! |