

Oakes 10: Academic Success
Mondays 1-4pm
Natural Sciences Annex rm 102
Summer Session 2

Instructor: Chesa Caparas
Office hours: by appt
Office: Oakes 316
email: fcaparas@ucsc.edu

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. Four primary tools are essential to our work in this course: analytical reading, self-reflection, response writing, 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:

Text (available from instructor):

Dembo, Myron and Helena Seli. *Motivation and Learning Strategies for College Success*

Other materials you will need:

- Paper and pen for taking notes in class
- Computer/internet access for checking email and writing assignments
- Folder to hold all materials for the final portfolio

Assignments:

Reading

Since our class only meets once a week, you will be assigned several chapters at a time. You must complete the reading and be prepared to discuss it by the beginning of each class period. I recommend setting up a reading schedule so that you don't try to rush through the reading all at once the night before class.

Writing

Each week you will write short academic self-assessment papers that are at least two typed, double-spaced pages long. These papers will ask you to reflect on your own educational experiences, your goals, your learning processes, etc and analyze them in relation to the week's reading. Given that the topic of each weekly paper will be linked to the reading, you should use terms and ideas from the text in your papers.

In-class presentations

Small student groups will present on the readings each week and lead a discussion about the chapter

topics. In your presentation, you should do 3 things with the reading:

- 1) **Summarize:** give a brief recap of the main points of the chapter
- 2) **Analyze:** look closely at the different parts of the chapter to understand how they fit together, then evaluate what works and what doesn't work
- 3) **Synthesize:** connect the ideas in the chapter to other chapters or to real-world experiences

Once you have presented these three things, your group will then lead a discussion based on the reading. This means you should find some way to engage the rest of the class in an activity or discussion that allows them to draw on their own experiences and connect them to the ideas from the text.

Since several groups will be presenting at each class period, I invite groups to work together to develop an activity or lead a discussion that ties together all the assigned chapters for that week.

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 which 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)