

# First Year Experience Syllabus

Alisa Morrison  
885-2388

[Amorrison@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:Amorrison@trcc.commnet.edu)

[www.geocities.com/alisa.morrison/home](http://www.geocities.com/alisa.morrison/home)

## **Three Rivers Community College**

7 Mahan Drive  
Norwich, CT 06360

Office Hours and Location:  
Thames Campus Room 203a  
574 New London Turnpike  
Norwich, CT 06360  
Monday/Wednesday 12:00-1:30  
Tuesday 2:00-3:00  
By appointment

**FALL 2007**

## Course Description

The content of this course is designed to help you make a smooth transition to college. Information on how to succeed in college in terms of studying, balancing family and job responsibilities with new college demands, planning for the future, and just knowing "the ropes" will be provided. You can expect regular reading and writing assignments along with classroom discussion as you investigate how to be successful in this new environment.

## Course Objectives

Students should seek to achieve the following objectives:

- ❖ To make a positive transition into college life
- ❖ To learn and develop skills that enhance studying, coping, planning, and critical thinking
- ❖ To develop a support network
- ❖ To improve attitudes toward the teaching/learning process and toward teachers and learners involved in that process
- ❖ To learn about and use the resources of the institution such as the library, the student services area, the computer labs, etc.
- ❖ To feel more confident about writing, reading and speaking in an academic setting
- ❖ To develop personal career and academic goals and to minimize the factors of life that obstructs the attainment of these goals
- ❖ To become aware of attitudes towards tolerance and acceptance of diverse communities as reflected in the microcosm of the Three Rivers' community.
- ❖ To understand the value of active participation in a community through attendance at TRCC functions
- ❖ To discover what a great place Three Rivers Community College is and to know that in this setting, you can develop to your fullest potential.

## Disabilities Statement

If you have a hidden or visible disability, which may require classroom or test-taking modification, please see your instructor as soon as possible. If you have not already done so, please be sure to notify Chris Scarborough, Learning Disabilities Specialist (892-5791).

## Evaluation Criteria

The First Year Experience course demands active involvement in learning experiences accompanied by reading and writing activities that synthesize those experiences. The nature of its content requires critical thinking skills to be learned, developed, and applied. Therefore the following criteria will be considered in evaluating your performance:

- a. class participation
- b. In-class assignments/quizzes and other assignments
- c. two examinations
- d. Group Presentation
- e. journal entries/notebook/portfolio
- f. Team Project

Explanation of Criteria

- a. Class Participation

Students should be prepared to participate in every class. Absence from class prohibits you from taking part, and absences prevent you from gaining credit for in-class activities. This includes come into class prepared with, at the least, paper and writing implement. (Experience shows that students who miss more than four daytime or two evening classes often end up failing the course.)

- b. Weekly writing assignments and other assignments

Writing assignments are designed to provide opportunities for exploration of ideas or for confirmation of understanding. It is to your benefit to complete all assignments on time. Late assignments will not be tolerated

- c. Two examinations

One exam will be composed of multiple choice, short answers, true false, and essay questions. The other may be in a different format. They are designed to monitor students' progress and

understanding of the underlying principles of college success. They are also intended to be opportunities for practice in test taking. Students who do not complete a final examination will not pass the course. Exams cannot be made up unless arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the time of the exam.

d. Group Presentation

You will be required to take part in the presentation of one chapter from the text. The group will be assigned on the first day of class. On your assigned day, you MUST be present and prepared to present your assignment.

e. Notebook / portfolio

Students should plan to keep all materials and assignments in a three-ring binder. Each page is to be dated. In effect, this becomes a portfolio of all that is accomplished in a semester. You will refer to this notebook even after this class has ended. You may be asked to submit selected pieces of your work for research purposes.

f. Team Project

The Class will be assigned a Team Project to be worked on as a group.

## Grade Computation

The following is a general breakdown of the final grade:

Attendance/class participation	20%
Assignments, written and other	20%
Two examinations	20%
Group Presentation	10%
Team Project	15%
Notebook/portfolio/Journals	15%

## Grading System

Students may earn the following grades:

A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F

Numerical Components

A	94-100	C	73-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0-59

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's works or ideas in your writing. It is often known as copying word for word. However, even paraphrasing without acknowledgement or using the ideas of your peers garnered from class discussion or a study group is considered plagiarism. Whether it is conscious or unconscious, plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Your writing for this course, and any other course at TRCC, is expected to be original, the product of your own thinking. A student who is determined to have plagiarized will receive an F on the assignment and may fail the course.

## **Instructional Materials**

Required: *Coping with College*

Required: Three Rivers CC Catalog and Student Handbook (Student Development Office)

Required: A three ring binder. Hole puncher, a stapler, & dividers for binder are recommended

Required: Student ID card - keep with you so that you can log onto a computer when necessary.

Required: A 3½" data disk

Recommended: A time management tool of some kind

## **Phones and Beepers**

Students are notified that cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class or in the Learning Resource Center only if they are turned off or turned to a silent mode. Under no circumstances are phones to be answered in class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require that a student be available by phone or beeper, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement. If this policy is repeatedly ignored, the student will either be dismissed from the class for the remainder of the class period or will be asked to place the phone on the front desk until class is over.

## **Prerequisites**

Satisfactory reading placement test scores and completion of the ESL K060 and K061 courses (if appropriate) are the only prerequisites for this course.

Probable Topics for IDS K105 The First Year Experience

Academic Information

Expectations: Student and Teacher

Participation in the College Community

Value of Education

Learning Styles

Teaching Styles

College Policies

College Resources

The Library

The Computer Lab

Student Services

The Career Center

Academic Skills

Listening

Lecture Note-taking

Textbook Reading and Note-taking

Annotating

Mapping

Study methods

Differences for disciplines (Math, Social Science, Science, Humanities)

Summarizing

Modes of Academic Thinking

Taking Exams

Oral Communication

Writing

College Life Management Skills

Critical Thinking

Time Management

Appreciating Diversity

Problem Solving

Stress Management

Alcohol and Drugs

Finances

Nutrition

Career and Education Planning

Linking Education with Life

Value Clarification

Goal Setting

Career Exploration

## **College Withdrawal Policy**

Students may withdraw from a class, in writing at the Registrar's Office, for any reason until the end of the 10th week of classes. From the 11th week through the end of the 13th week, a student may withdraw with the signature of the instructor or advisor. Check the college catalog for specific dates. Formal withdrawal eliminates receiving an F for the course.

## Attendance Policy

Since participation, in-class writings, and in-class activities determine a part of each student's grade, each student is urged to attend all classes and to participate in all class discussions. Gratuitous cutting is strongly discouraged. Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class. You are expected to be prompt. Lateness will not be tolerated. If students continue to be late, the door will be locked at the start of class and students will not be allowed to enter.

Further, many of the skills learned in First Year Experience cannot be acquired just by reading a text. For example, there will be several guest speakers, and I will be taking you to the computer lab and to the library for hands-on learning. There will be class debates and discussions where critical thinking and argumentative skills will be refined. Group projects and activities will be accomplished during class. Further, there will be oral reports, PowerPoint presentations, and assignments where students will bring in interesting and informative material that will serve as a basis for discussion and test material. If you miss a class, it is YOUR responsibility to find out what was covered during your absence and what was assigned for homework.

If you are absent on a day that homework is due, mail or email it to me at Three Rivers. The address is on the cover page of this syllabus. The envelope must be postmarked by the due date of the paper. Late homework is not accepted. If you are absent for an exam, notify me ahead of time. I will make arrangements for makeups; which must be taken within one week; however, there will be a ten point deduction.

## Classroom Policy

I have only two rules: *Responsibility & Respect*

I respect you and expect respect from you.

Being a mature college student entails responsibility. This means you are responsible for yourself, your education, your assignments, your behavior, your attitude, your timeliness, your contributions to the classroom atmosphere.

Responsible students are generally:

**Prompt:** They avoid coming to class late. The class starting time is not a "suggested" started time. Stragglers distract from opening lectures.

**Attentive:** They pay close attention to their classmates while they are speaking. They are objective, open-minded, and tolerant of ideas, especially those that seem opposed to their own point of view. Federal Express was considered a dumb idea when presented as a business project in a college class.

**Prepared:** They are prepared for active discussions. Reading and homework assignments are essential background for in-class assignments and discussions. We must recognize that a thoughtful question is at least as valuable as a conclusive response.

**Supportive:** People are sensitive and anxious about oral and written communication. Encouragement and expressions of appreciation play an important role in teamwork. Strive to find the strengths in your classmates' work. Also, suggestions for improvement are always welcome and improve everyone's creativity and critical thinking skills.

**Contributors to a positive classroom atmosphere:** Every assignment provides us with an opportunity for discussion. The quality of discussion depends on you. If you listen carefully, find something of value, and respond enthusiastically, you will help make the class an enjoyable and rewarding experience for everyone. Don't talk while classmates are talking or this will negatively affect your class participation/ contribution grade.

## **Writing Help from the Tutoring Center**

Live and electronic assistance are available through the Writing Center. While the Center closes at 5:00 daily, students can get help from the Center after hours by sending their draft papers either as MS Word attachments or by cutting and pasting them into regular e-mails and submitting to:

[TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu)

Students should type "WC draft submission" in the topic line and include name, Banner ID number, a description of the assignment, and specific concerns about the paper. A tutor will respond usually within 24 hours!

Also, Jon Brammer, Writing Center Coordinator, can be reached at 860-892-5769 or [Jbrammer@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:Jbrammer@trcc.commnet.edu)

The professor reserves the right to revise syllabus