

Syllabus – UNV 1100: First Year Seminar

Fridays 11:00 — 11:50

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

UNV 1100 introduces first-year students to the university and encourages students to become engaged members of a learning community. The course asks students to examine the Mansfield University undergraduate experience in the context of a liberal arts curriculum and their own participation in the learning community. UNV 1100 also helps students to identify the means by which they can succeed at the university and to use the available supports and services.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand and articulate the value of a liberal arts education.
- Set personal and academic goals for your university experience.
- Understand what it means to think critically.
- Have a sense of belonging to, and actively participating in, the university learning community.
- Understand the value of diversity and living in a diverse learning community.
- Understand how to access university academic and student life support resources.

COURSE VALUES:

The course encourages engagement and responsibility in first year students in their personal, academic, university (social) and community lives and emphasizes these themes:

- **Personal life - We are all here to grow:** The individual is in charge of his/her life — active in decision-making; takes responsibility for his/her actions and possible consequences; is self-aware.
- **Academic life - We are all here to learn:** The individual internalizes the importance of academic integrity, study skills and preparation, time management and organization.
- **University life - We are all here to enrich and be enriched:** The individual is actively engaged with on- campus activities; recognizes and accepts importance of individual autonomy, in ourselves and others; recognizes the need to be constantly aware of his/her surroundings and potential risk-situations; understanding of the importance (and reality) of diversity.
- **Community life - We are all here to help others:** The individual recognizes and accepts the importance of citizenship, participation in community service, and service to others in need.

COURSE TOPICS:

There are 9 concepts to be covered in this course, developed within 3 primary themes of engagement and responsibility. They are:

I. Transition and understanding: the university learning community— “Welcome to a community of learners.”

What it means to be a student

Identification of the values and goals of your education

II. Self-management and personal skill development — “Welcome to a community of successful learners.”

Knowing yourself

Information awareness/literacy and critical thinking

Success strategies

Identifying and overcoming barriers to success

III. Engagement and developing in a community of citizen-leaders — “Welcome to a community of leaders.”

Citizenship, participation and leadership on campus and in community

Community service, service learning and leadership

Living in a diverse society

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- UNV 1100 First Year Seminar Student Workbook (available at the bookstore)
- Summer Readings (distributed during orientation and available on-line)

HOMEWORK

Yes, there will be homework for this course. Here’s the breakdown of what you are expected to produce this semester in UNV 1100 (and % weight towards your final grade) :

- Weekly online journal entries throughout the semester (25%):
 - Reflections on your personal experiences at MU
 - Topics/questions will be posted online each week to help you get started
- Five out-of-class activities, from a list to be discussed in class (25%). Earn credit for attending by submitting a one-paragraph write-up of the activity and your opinion of it. Categories:
 - Guest and Faculty Lecture series; academic department event
 - Sporting events
 - Campus organization event
 - Cultural & performing arts events
 - Local points of interest & events
- Five short written assignments on topics discussed in class (25%) Includes answers to questions from summer articles, plus four more assignments.
 - One to two pages (double-spaced, times 12 point normal text, 1-inch top & bottom margins, 1.25-inch left and right margins).
 - Guidelines will be posted online and discussed in class
- Service Project connected with “Make a Difference Day” (10% points)
 - 300 – 500 word written commentary on your volunteer work
 - Participation in volunteer work is a mandatory part of this course
 - Talk to me in advance if there are scheduling conflicts
- Class discussion/participation (10%)
- Final Exam (5%)

All assignments will be turned in online using the MU “Blackboard” system (blackboard.mansfield.edu). Assignments that are handwritten or emailed to me WILL NOT be accepted. Late assignments may be docked 5 points (out of 100) for every day late. If you are having technical difficulties, let me know as soon as possible and seek immediate technical assistance.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Depending on the needs and focuses of students, this syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be posted, emailed, and discussed in class. Weekly readings and in-class exercises from the workbook will be announced in class.

Date of class:	Topic:	Assignments Due
August 28	Welcome to college and “The Learning Community!”	Answers to questions on summer readings (Written Assignment 1)
September 1	What it means to be a college student	Journal 1
September 8	Values and Goals in YOUR Education	Journal 2
September 15	Success Strategies I: Time Management and Organization; Stress Management	Journal 3; Outside Activity 1
September 22	Knowing Yourself I: Personal and Social Responsibility; Academic Integrity	Journal 4; Written Assignment 2
September 29	Knowing Yourself II: Drug and Alcohol Awareness; The “Red Zone”	Journal 5
October 6	Information Awareness I: Library Class (meet in library lobby)	Journal 6; Written Assignment 3; Outside Activity 2
October 13	Information Awareness II: Online Resources	Journal 7
October 20	Success Strategies II: Planning Your Education; Advising; Registration Process	Journal 8
October 27	Success Strategies III: Writing Good Papers (critical thinking; research methods; plagiarism and academic integrity)	Journal 9; Outside Activity 3; Community Service
November 3	Living in a Diverse Society	Journal 10; Written Assignment 4
November 10	Involvement in the Campus Community; Campus Organizations and Activities	Journal 11
November 17	Importance of Community Service; Civic Engagement	Journal 12; Outside Activity 4
November 24	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
December 1	Environment - discussion	Journal 13; Written Assignment 5
December 8	Wrap-up; course and instructor evaluation	Journal 14; Outside Activity 5

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is required. Students who miss four or more class periods (unexcused) will receive a failing grade for the course. Two unexcused absences will lower the final grade by one letter grade. Three unexcused absences will lower the final grade by two full letter grades. This course is designed to help you become the best student you can be. Coming to class ON TIME and reading the text (and taking them both seriously) will go a long way toward ensuring your success in school. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late may be sent home and charged with an unexcused absence.

Excused absences include (see student handbook for approval procedures):

- Circumstances beyond your control (illness, death in the family, auto accident, etc)
- Approved University activities (athletic team events, field trips, conference participation/ presentation, musical events, etc.)

Absences that will NOT be excused (examples):

- Sleeping late
- Weekend travel plans
- Job schedule
- Dog ate your homework

If you are in doubt, PLEASE ASK the professor. It can't hurt!

GRADES:

Points for each assignment will be awarded on the basis of completeness, on-time delivery, grammar and spelling, and relevance of your work to the questions asked. Even in your journal entries, I want you to strive for clarity and complete sentences. All assignments will be awarded a grade as either a percentage or letter, based on the following scale (final grades follow the same scale):

A	95 – 100%	(4.0)
A-	90 – 95%	(3.7)
B+	87 – 90%	(3.3)
B	85 – 87 %	(3.0)
B-	80 – 85%	(2.7)
C+	77 – 80%	(2.3)
C	75 – 77%	(2.0)
C-	70 – 75%	(1.7)
D+	67 – 70%	(1.3)
D	65 – 67%	(1.0)
D-	60 – 65%	(0.7)
F	< 60%	(0.0)

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

- LABOR DAY: NO CLASS September 4
- TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 FOLLOWS A MONDAY SCHEDULE
- LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES: September 5
- LAST DAY TO ADD CLASSES: September 6
- FALL BREAK: NO CLASS October 16 and 17
- MIDTERM EXAMS Check your schedules!! (midterm grades due on October 20)
- LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM A CLASS: October 27
- REGISTRATION FOR SPRING SEMESTER BEGINS: October 30
- THANKSGIVING BREAK — NO CLASS: November 22—26
- FINAL EXAMS: December 11— 15