

Thriving as a First Generation Student Signature Course

Course:	GS 1181	Instructor:	Dr. Flor Leos Madero
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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will address effective strategies that can support students during the cultural, social, and academic transition challenges.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- **Book** - The First Generation College Experience By Amy Baldwin (ISBN 13:978-0-13-707123-4)
- **Flash/Jump Drive** - for PowerPoint presentations and other electronic documents.
- **Blackboard** - I will post my notes and handouts, as well as your grades, for you on Blackboard. Please make sure you have access to Blackboard and are comfortable navigating it. I would strongly recommend you print off each class day's notes *before* coming to class.
- **Angelo State E-mail** - You should have access to your Angelo State E-mail account. You are responsible for reading and, if necessary, responding to e-mails from me. I send e-mails through Blackboard to the class regarding homework, exams, etc. It is your responsibility to regularly check both Blackboard and your Angelo State e-mail account.

ASSIGNMENTS

We will explore the various contexts of higher education and effective communication through the following assignments. Additional instructions (including the length of presentations, required visual aids, outlines to turn in, etc.) will be provided to you throughout the course of the semester. If you fail to turn in materials on the assigned day, you will receive a ZERO.

- **Chapter Reviews:** I believe that reflecting over smaller amounts of material more frequently provides the best opportunity for student progress. You will be assigned 3 chapters throughout the course of the semester, each worth 100 points for a total of **300 points**. Your assignment will include summarizing and reflecting on the material covered on those chapters.
- **Article Reviews:** Using research skills gained in class, you will find an article related to college adjustment, summarize it and share it with your peers. **100 points**.
- **Campus Services Presentation:** For this assignment you will learn to gather information, organize, clarify, refine, and deliver an informative message regarding a campus service/office. This assignment is worth a total of **200 points** (100 for the presentation and 100 for peer evaluations).
- **Campus Activity:** The goal of this assignment is to give students an opportunity to interact with leading members of our faculty—scholars, scientists, and civic leaders who are nationally renowned. Freshman Seminar students will be required to attend one campus activity. Students will attend and be responsible for producing a written document reflecting on the speaker's presentation/event. **100 points**
- **Personal Narrative:** Students will reflect on personal college experiences via narratives which may be

shared in class. **100 points**

- **Professor Meeting:** Students will be expected to meet twice outside the class with the professor/TA individually or in a group session. The goal of this assignment is to better connect with the faculty and with other students. **100 points (2 @ 50 points each)**
- **Participation Points:** In class, you are expected to participate in discussion, oral/written critiques of presentations, and other activities. I may also ask you to complete additional written work, video viewings, and other related exercises outside of class. No make-ups will be granted for participation activities. Participation is worth a total of **100 points**.

GRADING

Grades are determined on a straight percentage scale based on the number of points earned out of a **maximum of 1,000 points**. There is a curve built into the grades. **There will be no further rounding or curving of grades.** Final grades are calculated as follows:

Assignment	Maximum Points Possible	Weight	My Points
Chapter Reviews (3 @ 100 each)	300 points	30%	
Article Review	100 points	10%	
Campus Services Presentation	200 points	20%	
Campus Event	100 points	10%	
Personal Narrative	100 points	10%	
Professor/TA Meeting	100 points	10%	
Participation	100 points	10%	
TOTAL COURSE POINTS	1,000 points	100%	

GRADING
A= 1,000 - 900
B= 899 - 800
C= 799 - 700
D= 699 - 600
F = 599 and below

Discussion of Graded Assignments: Success in this course requires thoughtful self-evaluation of your performance. A student wishing to contest a grade **must** present me with a **typed** (either e-mail or paper), well thought out case regarding the evaluation **within one week of having received the evaluation** of the assignment in question. The argument must be related to the assignment as presented, and based on how it compares with the criteria for the assignment (not how it compares with someone else's work or how it will affect a student's GPA). Once the student has submitted his or her argument to me, I will respond in writing within 7 days. Then we may meet face-to-face to view the speech in question, and discuss ways to improve future papers/presentations.

As stated in Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure (OP 10.03 Student Grade Grievances), a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the **final** grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see Operating Procedure 10.03 at http://www.angelo.edu/opmanual/docs/Section_10_Academic_Policies-Students/OP_10.03_Grade_Grievance.doc.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance is required. Much of what you will learn will be through experimentation as well as observation. Given this, attendance as well as participation, (exercises and discussions) becomes an essential

part of a learning community. Consequently, grades and classroom attendance are closely related. You are expected to attend every class period. A roll sheet will be passed around each day during the first ten minutes of class. It is your responsibility to sign in (**being present but not signing the roll is the same as being absent**). The following policy will be enforced in this class:

- (1) Your **FIRST** unexcused absence is without penalty. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the information that was covered from Blackboard, your textbook and from one of your classmates.
- (2) Your **SECOND** absence will lower your final course average by 50 points (half of a letter grade). For example, if you have 900 points, you will be reduced to 850 points.
- (3) Each subsequent unexcused absence will lower your final course average by 50 points.
- (4) An unexcused tardy (ten minutes late or more) is considered an absence.

Absences on Exam and/or Presentation Days: Please note that an unexcused absences on presentation days will result in a zero (0) being recorded for your grade. You must give your presentation on the day it is scheduled. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Excused Absences: You will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the University, provided you give me written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event. For all other absences to be considered excused, **official documentation** must be submitted to me verifying the reason for your absence.

A student wishing to observe a religious holy day must notify me in writing at least 14 days prior to the classes scheduled on dates the student will be absent. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, notice should be given on the first day of the semester.

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. Angelo State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Dean of Student Life and Student Services at 325-942-2191. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Assignments turned in after class on the due date are considered late. Late assignments are not accepted. In addition, the tentative course schedule does not allow flexibility in rescheduling presentations. Don't miss class on a day you are scheduled to present. Unexcused absences on presentation or exam days will earn a grade of zero; no make-ups will be granted. If you miss an in-class activity for participation points, you will earn a zero for that assignment (unless you have a University excused absence).

Readings must be completed on the day they are assigned on the course schedule. Be sure to read the book and take notes while reading. Lectures are intended to *complement* (not duplicate) that information.

Written Work (presentation preparation, essay assignments, etc.) must be **typed** or you will receive a grade of zero (0). Since peer evaluations are due at the end of class they may be hand written. Any assignments completed in class as part of class participation may also be hand written.

Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced.

Classroom Civility: People and ideas must be treated with respect which includes avoiding disruptive behavior. ***Please remember to turn off all cell phones, music or other noisy devices before entering the classroom each day. Needless to say, they are highly disruptive during lectures and presentations. Distracting behavior during presentations (i.e., sleeping, working on homework/laptops, checking cell phones, or talking) may result in a reduction of points on your own grade. On presentation days, please arrive early and, if you are late, please wait outside until the first presentation is completed.

Freedom of Expression: Each student is strongly encouraged to participate in class. In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical thinking, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. These differences enhance the learning experience and create an atmosphere where students and instructors alike will be encouraged to think and learn. On sensitive and volatile topics, students may sometimes disagree not only with each other but also with me. However, it is possible to disagree without being disrespectful—sneering, name-calling, questioning motives, and representing positions unfairly aren't good ways to disagree, even if in everyday life and in politics they are sometimes effective. It is expected that faculty and students will respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions.

Academic Integrity: University standards regulating academic integrity (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, etc.) are strictly enforced. Infractions may result in a zero for the assignment or a failing grade in the course.

Plagiarism is a serious offense in this course. Using the words and ideas of others is borrowing something from those individuals. It is always necessary to identify the original source of supporting information; you must cite the source of any material, quoted or paraphrased, used in your presentation. The absence of this documentation constitutes *plagiarism* – a serious academic and professional offense. Proper documentation requires a bibliography of any outside texts you have consulted including both traditional sources and on-line sources.

Merely restating another individual's ideas in different words does not make the ideas yours. ALL assignments and presentations are to be your original work. If you are caught being dishonest, you will be given an "F" for the assignment and/or the course depending on the severity of the offense.

Please understand I do not tolerate plagiarism and will fail you for it, even if your plagiarism is unintentional. These standards may seem subtle, so feel free to ask if you have questions or concerns. Please see full Honor Code Policy at http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf

ACADEMIC GOALS

The Core Curriculum Committee has defined core student learning outcomes for GS 1181 as Information Literacy (CT1 or CT2) and Communication (CM1 and CM2).

Critical Thinking (CT)

- (CT1) Gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue
- (CT2) Develop and demonstrate a logical position (i.e. perspective, thesis, hypothesis) that acknowledges ambiguities or contradictions

Communication Skills (CM)

- (CM1) Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written communication
- (CM2) Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective oral communication
- (CM3) Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective visual communication

Thriving as a First Generation Student
Fall 2018

Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced.

Readings must be completed **for the day they are assigned** on the course schedule. Be sure to read the book and take notes while reading; lectures are intended to *complement* (not duplicate) that information.

WEEK	DATE	ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 1	Mon Aug 2	Intro to course and syllabus
	Wed Aug 2	Ch. 1 – You First Ch. 2 – Your College
WEEK 2	Mon Sep 2	Holiday
	Wed Sep 4	What are narratives?
WEEK 3	Mon Sep 9	Library Day
	Wed Sep 11	Guest Speaker
WEEK 4	Mon Sep 16	Ch. 4 – Time & Energy Ch. 5 – Learning, Memory & Thinking
	Wed Sep 18	Ch. 6 – Reading Ch. 7 – Listening & Note Taking
WEEK 5	Mon Sep 23	Ch. 8 – Writing, Research & Presenting
	Wed Sep 25	Ch. 9 – Studying & Tests
WEEK 6	Mon Sep 30	Ch. 10 – Stress & Health Ch. 11 – Next Semester
	Wed Oct 2	Ch. 3 – Relationships Ch. 12 – A Career & A Life
WEEK 7	Mon Oct 7	Student’s Choice
	Wed Oct 9	“If I knew then...” Panel Discussion
WEEK 8	Mon Oct 14	Student Presentations
	Wed Oct 16	Student Presentations