

COVER SHEET
for
Proposed Course in the University Studies Program

New X Revised _____

Course Number: UI-100 Title First Year Seminar Credit Hours: 3.0

University Studies Perspective(s): _____ Course Proposer(s): D. Haskell, J. Cooper

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University Studies Category(ies): _____

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Date(s) approved by Department(s): 02/09/99

Date(s) approved by College Council(s): _____

Date approved by University Studies Council: 09/09/99

Date Rec'd in Univ. St. Office _____

CHECKLIST FOR UNIVERSITY STUDIES OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE	Course Component Addresses Objective				Emphasis on Objective		
	Content	Teaching Strategies	Student Assignments	Evaluation of Student Performance	Significant	Considerable	Some
1. Locate and Gather Information	X	X	X	X	X		
2. Critical Thinking	X	X	X	X	X		
3. Communication	X	X	X	X	X		
4. Understand and Relate Human Experiences	X	[[[[
5. Various Cultures and Interrelationships	X	[	WILL	[	[	WILL	[
6. Breadth and Diversity	X	[	VARY	[	[	VARY	[
7. Valuing	X	[	ACCORDING	[	[	ACCORDING	[
8. Aesthetic Responses	X	[	TO	[	[	TO	[
9. Responsible Function in Natural, Social and Political Environments	X	[	THEME	[	[	THEME	[

Course Approval Document

University Studies Program

Southeast Missouri State University

Course Syllabus

Title of Course: First Year Seminar

Course Number: UI 100
New Course

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours of Course:

A skills-centered seminar which introduces students to the University Studies program and the value of liberal education while addressing one of a variety of themes. See Advising and Enrollment booklet for themes. Required of all students entering the university with 23 or fewer credit hours. (University Studies course) (3)

II. Prerequisites:

none

III. Purposes or Objectives of the Course:

1. To introduce students to the concept and value of liberal education.
(University Studies Objectives 1, 2, 6,7,9)
2. To introduce students to the University Studies program goals and structure.
(University Studies Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
3. To develop student skills in locating and gathering information.
(University Studies Objective 1)
4. To develop student skills in critical thinking.
(University Studies Objective 2)
5. To develop student skills in oral and written communication.
(University Studies Objective 3)

IV. Expectations of Students:

Students are expected to participate in all class activities and complete all assignments and examinations.

V. Course Outline:

An explanatory note concerning UI 100 Themes:

As specified in the course description, each section of UI 100 will address an announced theme which will provide an intellectual context for students to explore while accomplishing the goals of the course. We define the term as follows:

A theme for UI 100 is an interdisciplinary topic or body of knowledge which students approach for the purpose of developing their skills in acquiring information, thinking critically about facts and arguments, and expressing their ideas in spoken and written form. "Interdisciplinarity" is defined as incorporating subject matter and instructional approaches representing two different University Studies program perspectives (e.g. Major Civilizations and Literary Expression, but not Major Civilizations and Political Systems).

All sections of UI 100 will have interdisciplinary themes. While some themes may be designed to address needs of specific student groups (e.g. majors in a certain degree program), no student should be required to enroll in a specific theme as a curricular component of his or her degree.

We invite proposals of both single-section themes (designed and taught by an individual) and multi-section themes (designed and taught by colleagues who share an interest in the chosen interdisciplinary topic). See attached document on themes.

This course will incorporate subject matter based upon the selected theme while addressing general course goals in an integrated fashion. Descriptions of the various themes will be published annually in the Advising and Enrollment booklet for first year students. Detailed syllabi for individual theme sections will be distributed to students by their instructors, with copies held and reviewed by the School of University Studies. The following course outline for the theme "Authority and Rebellion" is provided as a sample which represents the theme approach of the course.

Course Outline: UI 100 theme: Authority and Rebellion

proposed by: Jennie Cooper

note: While class hours devoted to various elements of the course are listed in a sequence below, this does not mean that the hours devoted to theme subject matter (items A, B, C, D, and E) and academic or intellectual skills (items F, G, and H) take place in isolation during separate weeks. Instruction devoted to skills is integrated simultaneously with the exploration of theme content

- A. Liberal Education:
its meaning, value, tradition and future explored within the context of the individual's pursuit of higher education and achievement of personal goals within an authoritarian structure 3 hours
- B. University Studies:
its philosophy, objectives, program structure, and integration with major degree programs 3 hours
- C. Social Conformity:
investigation of examples and case studies in which individual freedoms are curtailed by cultural and social norms, issues of self-reliance, group loyalty, and ostracism in various settings 6 hours
- D. Conformity with Governmental Authority:
investigation of civil disobedience, coercion of citizens by governmental authorities and laws, political rebellion 6 hours
- E. Non-conformity as Individual Choice:
investigation of the rebel's values, critical analysis of options, risks, and compromises 6 hours
- F. Inquiry Skills:
instruction and practice with forming research questions, accessing, evaluating, and using source information according to standard academic practice 6 hours
- G. Critical Thinking Skills:
instruction and practice concerning logical reasoning, issue analysis, exploration of values and assumptions, validity and fallacy, use of statistics, testimony, and evidence, and systematic critique of arguments 9 hours
- H. Oral and Written Communication Skills:
instruction and practice in developing effective collaborative discussion skills, formal oral presentation techniques, and the process, structure, and style appropriate for academic writing 6 hours

VI. Textbooks and other recommended materials:

1. M. Neil Browne and Stuart M. Keeley. *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking*. Prentice Hall. Fifth edition. 1998. (required: textbook service)
2. anthology or other text determined by instructor to investigate the theme (required. purchased at book store)
3. Larry J. Easley. *Southeast Computing*. (published locally by the university and purchased at book store as a recommended, not required, text)

VII. Basis for Student Evaluation:

- | | percentage of semester grade |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Liberal Education goal
Students will demonstrate in a graded written or oral presentation (exam, report, or paper) that they understand the meaning and value of a liberal education. | 10% - 20% |
| 2. University Studies Program goal
Students will demonstrate in a graded written or oral presentation (exam, report, or paper) that they understand the structure, goals, and requirements of the University Studies Program and its integration with other components of their degree programs. | 10% -20% |
| 3. Locate and Gather Information goal
Students will demonstrate proficiency in all aspects of the School of University Studies "Minimal Computer Skills" document (adopted 11/07/97) and the Kent Library document, "Core Competencies in Information Literacy" (currently being designed). | 10% -20% |
| 4. Critical Thinking goal
In addition to other measurements of critical thinking on quizzes, exercises, and examinations, students will submit a "critical thinking mini-portfolio" consisting of (1) a "critique and rebuttal argument," (2) the formal expository or persuasive paper listed under written expression, and (3) a self-reflective essay in which the student describes his or her developing skills as a critical thinker. | 20% -50% |
| 5. Effective Communication Skills goal
(Oral Expression) Students will perform at least one graded oral report or presentation (3 to 10 minutes) which incorporates a research component, and they will participate effectively in small-group and whole-group class discussions. | 10% -20% |
| (Written Expression) Students will write at least one formal expository or persuasive paper (3 to 5 pages) which includes documented research sources, and they will write at least two other short (1 to 3 pages), informal graded papers. | 20% -30% |

VIII. Justification for Inclusion in the University Studies Program

A. Demonstrate the ability to locate and gather information.

Emphasis: Significant

- 1. Content:** This course will include skill-building activities and instruction in the use of both traditional library resources, including SADIE, and information technology resources, including the internet. A significant portion (more than ten per cent) of instructional time will be devoted to the development of such academic skills as posing effective inquiry strategies, accessing information, and evaluating the validity and usefulness of source materials.
- 2. Teaching Strategies:** Instructors will collaborate with Kent Library reference department staff in conducting meaningful tours of the library and structuring library-based research projects. Instruction will also be provided in the use of the Kent Library internet home page, other University home pages, and a various other computer-based research instruments.
- 3. Student Assignments:** Students will complete a variety of exercises which demonstrate their minimal competency with information technology and library research. They will also conduct research in preparation of academic papers and oral presentations.
- 4. Evaluation of Student Performance:** In addition to having their formal papers and oral presentations assessed, in part, on the basis of how well they found and used reference materials, students will perform assignments or complete examinations demonstrating that they have developed both technological skills (the Minimal Computer Skills checklist) and library research skills (Kent Library Core Competencies checklist). Assessment of research skills will constitute ten to twenty percent of the semester grade.

B. Demonstrate capabilities for critical thinking, reasoning, and analyzing.

Emphasis: Significant

- 1. Content:** Critical thinking, reasoning, and analysis are a major concern of this course. Students will learn how to use basic thinking skills (acquisition of knowledge, analysis, synthesis, an evaluation of ideas and arguments) as they engage in various problem-solving activities related to liberal education and to the theme which they are investigating. The critical thinking textbook provides a focus for inquiry concerning issues such as the use of evidence and statistics, fallacies of reasoning, value conflicts, assumptions, and the construction of valid lines of thought.
- 2. Teaching Strategies:** The content will be taught through analytical reading and discussion, problem solving and critical thinking exercises, and formal and informal written and oral projects. The dominant instructional method will be based on learner activities, not lecture. Instructional methods emphasizing intellectual skills associated with particular academic disciplines, student creativity, and experiential learning will vary according to the theme.

3. Student Assignments: Students will perform a variety of critical thinking and problem solving exercises, including practice in analyzing flawed written arguments. They will employ critical thinking skills in developing research-based written and oral reports, which will be evaluated, in part, on the basis of the clarity and logical validity of their arguments.

4. Evaluation of Student Performance: In addition to other measurements of critical thinking on quizzes, exercises, and examinations, students will submit a “critical thinking mini portfolio” consisting of (1) a “critique and rebuttal argument, (2) a three-to-five page formal expository or persuasive paper which cites resource materials, and (3) a self-reflective essay in which the student describes his or her developing skills as a critical thinker. Critical thinking projects will account for twenty to fifty per cent of the semester grade.

C. Demonstrate effective communication skills.

Emphasis: Significant

1. Content: This objective will be achieved through content that deals directly with communication skills. Regardless of theme topic, all students will engage in active learning which concentrates on the ability to comprehend and evaluate oral and written discourse, as well as the ability to speak and write effectively in various forms ranging from small group discussion to the preparation of documented academic papers.

2. Teaching Strategies: In addition to providing explicit skill-based instruction on subjects such how to analyze written texts and how to participate in collaborative discussion groups, instructors will direct and assist students in preparing formal and informal writings and oral presentations. Instructors will reinforce effective written and oral communication by providing analytical, evaluative comments and critiques in response to student performances, as well as by referring students to the Writing Center.

3. Student Assignments: Students will write at least one formal expository or persuasive paper (3 to 5 pages) which includes documented research sources, and they will also write at least two other short (1 to 3 page) informal graded papers. Students will perform at least one graded oral report or presentation (3 to 10 minutes) which incorporates a research component, and they will participate effectively in weekly small-group and whole-group discussions.

4. Evaluation of Student Performance: Grades on formal papers and oral presentations will be based upon explicit evaluation criteria (analytical scoring rubric) known in advance by students. Not including essay examinations, various written and oral projects will constitute at least thirty percent of the semester grade.

D. Demonstrate an understanding of human experiences and the ability to relate them to the present.

Emphasis: At least some. Will vary according to theme.

1. **Content:** Minimally, this objective will be presented, discussed, and analyzed as a valuable skill in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.
2. **Teaching Strategies:** Will vary according to theme.
3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
4. **Evaluation of Student Performance:** Minimally, student understanding of this objective will be assessed by means of the exam, report, or paper (constituting ten to twenty percent of the semester grade) which all students are required to complete in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

E. Demonstrate an understanding of various cultures and their interrelationships.

Emphasis: At least some. Will vary according to theme.

1. **Content:** Minimally, this objective will be presented, discussed, and analyzed as a valuable skill in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.
2. **Teaching Strategies:** Will vary according to theme.
3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
4. **Evaluation of Student Performance:** Minimally, student understanding of this objective will be assessed by means of the exam, report, or paper (constituting ten to twenty percent of the semester grade) which all students are required to complete in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

F. Demonstrate the ability to integrate the breadth and diversity of knowledge and experience.

Emphasis: At least some. Will vary according to theme.

1. **Content:** Minimally, this objective will be presented, discussed, and analyzed as a valuable skill in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

2. **Teaching Strategies:** Will vary according to theme.
3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
4. **Evaluation of Student Performance:** Minimally, student understanding of this objective will be assessed by means of the exam, report, or paper (constituting ten to twenty percent of the semester grade) which all students are required to complete in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

G. Demonstrate the ability to make informed, intelligent value decisions.

Emphasis: At least some. Will vary according to theme.

1. **Content:** Minimally, this objective will be presented, discussed, and analyzed as a valuable skill in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.
2. **Teaching Strategies:** Will vary according to theme.
3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
4. **Evaluation of Student Performance:** Minimally, student understanding of this objective will be assessed by means of the exam, report, or paper (constituting ten to twenty percent of the semester grade) which all students are required to complete in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

H. Demonstrate the ability to make informed, sensitive aesthetic responses.

Emphasis: At least some. Will vary according to theme.

1. **Content:** Minimally, this objective will be presented, discussed, and analyzed as a valuable skill in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.
2. **Teaching Strategies:** Will vary according to theme.
3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
4. **Evaluation of Student Performance:** Minimally, student understanding of this objective will be assessed by means of the exam, report, or paper (constituting ten to twenty percent of the semester grade) which all students are required to complete in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

F. Demonstrate the ability to integrate the breadth and diversity of knowledge and experience.

Emphasis: At least some. Will vary according to theme.

1. **Content:** Minimally, this objective will be presented, discussed, and analyzed as a valuable skill in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.
2. **Teaching Strategies:** Will vary according to theme.
3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
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3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
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3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
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3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
4. **Evaluation of Student Performance:** Minimally, student understanding of this objective will be assessed by means of the exam, report, or paper (constituting ten to twenty percent of the semester grade) which all students are required to complete in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

I. Demonstrate the ability to function responsibly in one's natural, social, and political environment.

Emphasis: At least some. Will vary according to theme.

1. **Content:** Minimally, this objective will be presented, discussed, and analyzed as a valuable skill in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.
2. **Teaching Strategies:** Will vary according to theme.
3. **Student Assignments:** Will vary according to theme.
4. **Evaluation of Student Performance:** Minimally, student understanding of this objective will be assessed by means of the exam, report, or paper (constituting ten to twenty percent of the semester grade) which all students are required to complete in the segment of the course devoted to the study of the University Studies program.

IX. Background:

Instructors of this course should hold a graduate degree in any academic discipline. They should possess expertise in research methods, active learning, critical thinking, and communication skills, as well as some specific academic interest in the subject matter of the theme which they teach.

X. Class size:

Maximum class size for this course should be twenty-five. The course requires a strong element of individualized instruction and skill-building in the areas of research, critical thinking, and communication. The lecture method, which might be effective in larger classes, is rarely employed in this course. Small group discussion methodology and the presentation of oral reports necessitate a fairly small learning community.