

course time: Wednesdays 1:00-1:50

classroom: Reed 125

instructor's e-mail: michael.strausz@tcu.edu

office hours: Tuesdays 1:30pm-2:30pm, Fridays 2:00pm-4:00pm, or by appointment

office: Scharbauer 2007F

peer guide: Ryan Jones

peer guide's email: ryan.c.jones@tcu.edu

Course Description & Overview

This one-hour course provides first-semester students with knowledge and skills to help them successfully transition into the academic community. Students in the course explore fundamental questions and issues of the university experience—the nature and purpose(s) of higher education at TCU, critical thinking, how to study for and reflect upon learning experiences, academic and personal integrity, setting learning goals, learning within a diverse community, self-management, and understanding how to utilize campus resources. A primary feature of the course is the creation of a *FrogFolio*, a dynamic digital platform where students begin to reflect upon, organize, archive, and display their significant curricular and co-curricular learning experiences.

Student Learning Outcomes

Through the different elements of this course, students will:

- Discuss and/or engage in written reflection on core topics related to the college learning experience, including:
 - the purpose(s) of college and TCU's mission
 - goal-setting for both the short and long-term
 - critical thinking, "higher learning," and study skills
 - encountering diverse people and perspectives
 - the importance of academic and personal integrity in a learning community
 - self-management strategies such as time-management and follow-through
 - managing stress and cultivating well-being
 - identifying campus resources
- Explore the purpose of a digital learning portfolio (FrogFolio), and know how to use FrogFolio to display one's identity, knowledge, and skills.
- Select, reflect upon, and make visible important first-semester learning experiences via FrogFolio.
- Utilize a mentoring relationship with an Instructor and Peer Guide for support in the transition to college and in cultivating the habit of reflection as it pertains to their learning experiences.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend each class. Attendance will be taken during each class session. Beginning with the second unexcused absence, 25 points will be deducted from the student's final Reading Quiz grade for each unexcused absence. If you miss a class because of an Official University Absence, a properly documented illness, or a properly documented family/medical emergency, that absence will be considered excused, provided that you

contact the instructor with relevant documentation as soon as you can. Students will be considered absent if they arrive more than 10 minutes late for a session. Because attendance is vital to success in this class, more than 3 unexcused absences will result in the student receiving a failing grade (F) in the course.

Course Elements:

1. Assigned Readings and Other Materials– Students will be assigned a small number of readings and other preparatory materials throughout the semester. These materials are intended to foster reflection and generate class discussion. Students are expected to have read and/or watched assigned materials prior to class and to contribute relevant comments, questions, or insights during class.
2. Goal-setting & Reflection – Students will consider their personal goals for learning and achievement in light of the purposes of a college education generally, and the mission, vision, and values of TCU particularly. Early in the semester, students will generate learning goals for their first year of college.
3. Written Reflections – Students will write two short personal reflections of approximately 500 words in which they respond to compelling ideas from readings and class discussions.
4. Campus Experiences – Students will attend three *campus experiences* during the semester. Instructors will suggest and/or approve experiences that are intended to promote growth, learning, and exposure to the academic community.
5. Attendance and Engaged Participation Students are expected to attend each class and participate actively. Attendance will be taken during each session. See Attendance Policy above.
6. Mentor Meetings – Each student will meet once with the Instructor and once with the Peer Guide for a half-hour session during the semester. The purpose of these half-hour sessions is: 1.) to use the student’s work in FrogFolio as way to reflect upon their learning experiences, and 2.) to establish a mentoring connection with an Instructor and a Peer Guide in order to receive support and guidance during the transition to TCU.
7. Creating a FrogFolio - Students create and begin using an ePortfolio (FrogFolio) in this course. An ePortfolio is an online portfolio that allows students to tell the story of their learning to others through reflection and artifacts. An artifact can be a paper, essay, video/audio file, presentation, project, sketches, etc. Information about how to structure, populate, and navigate FrogFolio can be found in “Video: Intro to TCU Student Template” under the **FrogFolio Information** section of the course portfolio.

Statement of Disability Services at TCU

Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Grades in this course are determined by student performance on the following measures:

MEASURE	EXPECTATIONS & COMPONENTS	TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS
<i>Reading Quizzes</i>	Most class days will begin with a brief quiz on the assigned reading or other assigned preparatory materials for the class. There will be a total of 8 quizzes. Your highest seven quiz grades will be worth 10 points each, and the lowest will be worth 5 points. If you miss a quiz because of an Official University Absence, a properly documented illness, or a properly documented family/medical emergency, you have one week to either visit my office hours or make an appointment with me to make up your quiz. If you wait more than one week to see me after missing a class where a quiz was given, you will receive a grade of zero for the missed quiz. Students who miss classes for reasons other than Official University Absences, properly documented illness, or properly documented family/medical emergency will receive a grade of zero for missed quizzes. <u>Beginning with the second unexcused absence, 25 points will be deducted from the student's final quiz grade for each absence. More than 3 unexcused absences will result in the student receiving a failing grade (F) in the course.</u>	75
<i>Written Reflections</i>	Students will write two short personal reflections (450-500 words each) as noted in the Course Elements section. <u>Each written reflection is worth 50 points.</u> Specific assignments will be distributed later in the semester.	100
<i>Campus Experiences</i>	Instructors will suggest and/or approve <u>3 experiences</u> that are intended to promote growth, learning, and exposure to the academic community. Students receive 25 points for attending each campus experience, as verified by the Instructor. See related handout.	75
<i>Mentor Meetings</i>	Each student will meet with both the Instructor and Peer Guide once during the semester for a mentor meeting. Each mentor meeting is worth up to 50 points. <u>45-50 points:</u> student is prompt, thoughtfully reflects on their learning experiences, and is clearly prepared to show/discuss their FrogFolio. <u>40-44.5 points:</u> student is prompt, generally reflects on their learning experiences, and is generally prepared to show/discuss their FrogFolio with the instructor. <u>35-39.5 points:</u> student lacks initiative or is late, lacks thoughtful reflection on learning experiences, and is missing some components of their FrogFolio. <u>30-34.5 points:</u> student lacks initiative, demonstrates minimal or no thoughtful reflection on learning experiences, and is missing most or all relevant FrogFolio components. <u>0-29.5 points:</u> without explanation, student does not attend meeting	100
<i>FrogFolio</i>	Students will work on their portfolios both within class at designated times throughout the semester and outside class. FrogFolio grades are awarded based on 1.) meeting due dates for the various sections of the portfolio and 2.) meeting or exceeding the various standards of quality as indicated by the FrogFolio assessment rubric. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home/About Me and Resume section is worth 25 points • Personal Learning Goals section is worth 25 points • Classroom Learning section is worth 25 points • Co-Curricular Learning section is worth 25 points • FrogFolio Class Presentation is worth 50 points The final draft of the FrogFolio is due on December 6 at 1pm.	150

500 Available Points in Course

A = 450-500 points | B = 400-449 points | C = 350-399 points | D = 300-349 points | F = Below 300 points or more than 3 absences

Technology Policy

Students wishing to use computers, tablets, or smartphones to take notes in class are requested to use those devices only for class related purposes. I know how tempting it can be to use an electronic device for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Ravelry (the knitting social networking site), games, and other fun distractions, but if I catch a student doing so, that student will no longer be permitted to bring his or her electronic device to class. Remember that your primary responsibility at TCU is to learn. If you don't trust yourself to avoid online distractions, I encourage you to take notes with pen (or pencil!) and paper. Students wishing to make audio or video recordings of classes are required to see me to discuss acceptable use of those recordings and to sign a contract indicating that you will use those recordings responsibly. In the absence of written permission, you are not permitted to make audio or video recordings of classes.

FrogFolio Tips & Resources

A student's FrogFolio is developed over the course of the semester with the help of Instructors, Peer Guides, the FrogFolio Graduate Assistant, e-terns, and additional resources:

1. For technical questions about how to use the portfolio (navigation and software questions), please consult the **FrogFolio Information** section of the course portfolio.
2. eTerns (student coaches) are available to help with technical aspects of FrogFolio creation and are in the FrogFolio Lab on the 1st floor of Rees-Jones Hall (101) Monday-Thursday, 10am-3pm.
3. If you have questions, concerns, comments, etc. about FrogFolio, send an email to frogfolio@tcu.edu.
4. A FrogFolio assessment rubric can be found in the course portfolio. This rubric is helpful for instructors and students alike in determining good portfolio practice.

Extra Credit

There will be no extra credit available in this course.

E-mail Policy

Course-related communications will be sent to your TCU email account. Thus, check your TCU email regularly. "I did not see the email that you sent me" is not an acceptable excuse for failing to complete required course tasks. Also, feel free to email me questions, comments, or suggestions. In general (i.e. unless there are extraordinary circumstances), I will respond to student emails within 24 hours.

Deadlines

Deadlines for assignments are strictly enforced. Unless otherwise noted, an assignment submitted after the deadline will lose 10% of the possible points if it is submitted within 24 hours after the deadline, 20% if it is submitted between 24 and 48 hours after the deadline, 30% if it is submitted between 48 and 72 hours after the deadline, etc. Once grades have been officially submitted for the course, late assignments will no longer be accepted.

Course Materials

You can find all course materials on this class's d2l page

Schedule:

- 23-Aug *Introduction*
No assigned reading.
- 30-Aug *What is college for?*
Cronon, William. 1998. "‘Only Connect’: The Goals of a Liberal Education."
American Scholar 67 (4):65-78
- 6-Sep *Setting goals*
Read and fill out the handout "SMART Goal-setting for Your First Year of College."
- 13-Sep *SuperFrogFolio*
Watch the 8 minute video "Welcome to the TCU Student Template."
- 20-Sep *Time management in college*
Watch the 14 minute TED talk "Inside the Mind of a Master Procrastinator" by Tim Urban
- 27-Sep *Dealing with stress*
Downing, Skip. 2014. *On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life*. 2nd ed. Boston: Wadsworth, pp. 338-345.
Johnson, Matt. 2016. "More Tips for Building a Stress Enhancing Mind Set"
- 4-Oct *Campus resources*
Read the three page campus directory descriptions on D2L.
- 11-Oct *Thinking, learning, studying*
Gardner, John N., and Betsy O. Barefoot. 2015. *Your College Experience: Strategies for Success*. 12th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, pp. 89-101.
- 18-Oct *More thinking, learning, and studying*
Cottrell, Stella. 2005. *Critical Thinking Skills: Developing Effective Analysis and Argument*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 2-16.
- 25-Oct *Integrity in education and beyond*
Downing, Skip. 2014. "Develop Self-Respect." In *On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and In Life*. 2nd ed. Boston: Wadsworth, pp. 305-309.
You must have attended your first campus experience by the beginning of this class
- 1-Nov *Encountering new perspectives*
Strike, Kenneth A. and Pamela A. Moss. 2003. "Tolerance, Diversity, and Hate Speech." In *Ethics and College Student Life: A Case Study Approach*. 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, pp. 32-41.
- 8-Nov *FrogFolio workday*

No assigned reading.

15-Nov *Student presentations of FrogFolios*
No assigned reading.

22-Nov **Thanksgiving Break**

27-Nov *More student presentations of FrogFolios*
No assigned reading.

6-Dec *Wrapping it all up*
No assigned reading.
You must have attended your second and third campus experience by the beginning of this class

Final draft of FrogFolio due at the beginning of class