

CREATING A FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE SEMINAR
AT BALL STATE UNIVERSITY: THE CARDINAL EXPERIENCE

A CREATIVE PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

Title: Creating a First Year Experience Seminar at Ball State University:

The Cardinal Experience

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The purpose of this project was to create a First Year Experience seminar course for students during their first semester of their freshman year at Ball State University. The goal of this project was to improve induction and transition programs for first year students and increase retention rates into the second year of school. This creative project was developed to help first year students at Ball State University successfully transition into the university and receive the appropriate amount of academic and social support from peers, faculty, and staff so that higher retention and success rates can be achieved. First year students at the university experience many new challenges and obstacles when adjusting to life at Ball State University and being away from home for the first time. By requiring students to enroll in a First Year Experience (FYE) seminar course during the first semester of their first year, the university creates an academic and social transition experience to continue students' adjustment period throughout their first semester.

This course is a part of each matriculating student's required credits, and is used to educate students about campus life, resources on campus, life skills to help them be successful in college, and connect them with their peers through a similar experience. This FYE seminar

course provides students with extra academic and social experience to encourage a healthy and positive connection with the campus culture and climate. Students will receive course credit, build stronger relationships with professors, staff, and peers, and receive academic and social support throughout their first semester to improve student retention rates and graduation success.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE.....	1
ABSTRACT.....	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	4
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	6
Statement of Purpose.....	8
Significance of Study.....	8
Scope and Limitations.....	9
Definition.....	9
Organization of the Paper.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	11
Summary of the Project.....	11
First Year Student Transition into Higher Education.....	12
Factors for First Year Student Retention and Success	14
First Year Experience Induction.....	16
Summary.....	20
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	21
Statement of Purpose.....	21
Methodology.....	21
Design of the Project.....	22
Summary.....	25

CHAPTER FOUR: CREATING A FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE SEMINAR AT BALL STATE

UNIVERSITY: THE CARDINAL EXPERIENCE.....	26
Project Summary.....	26
Recommended Timeline of First Year Experience Seminar.....	28
First Year Experience Seminar: The Cardinal Experience Syllabus.....	32
First Year Experience Seminar: The Cardinal Experience Facilitators	
Schedule and Guide	40
REFERENCES.....	57

CHAPTER ONE

CREATING A FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE SEMINAR AT BALL STATE UNIVERSITY: THE CARDINAL EXPERIENCE

The first year at a higher education institution can be a stressful and overwhelming experience for students. Students are leaving the comfort of their high school, home, family, and friends for the first time. These students are asked to quickly adjust to new behaviors, norms, and beliefs present at their chosen institution. This process often introduces a new set of challenges for incoming students and affects their adjustment to the institution. When students leave their families for the first time and begin to adapt to campus life, they need to pass through three stages in order to successfully transition to their new campus culture and climate: separation, transition, and incorporation. These stages, adapted by Vincent Tinto (1988), reflect the developmental process college students experience when leaving their high school and home environments and begin transitioning to the college environment. Once arriving at a higher education institution, three factors identified as influential to the college experiences are the individual's peer circle, family support and background, and academic and social involvement on campus (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006; Schrader & Brown, 2008). These factors, in correlation with Tinto's stages, play a large role in the students' retention rate and persistence to graduation.

Higher education institutions are placing more of their focus on matriculating students and how they can help to support and retain them through their first semester and academic year. Institutions are creating more resources and opening more support networks to provide students with the needed physical and emotional support to be successful and persist through graduation. First year transition programs have become a critical component of student success (Habley,

Bloom, & Robbins, 2012). The most common types of induction programs are new student orientation, Learning Communities, and First Year Seminars. In order to be successful and persist to graduation, individuals need adequate academic and social support from their institutions (Astin, 1993; Tinto, 1988). These programs help students to transition in more successful and positive ways and have proven to increase retention rates throughout their first year and into their second school year. When schools use one or more of these transition programs for first year students, they are increasing the student's connection and commitment to the university.

A transition program being introduced at higher education institutions today is First Year Experience (FYE) courses. FYE courses are designed to help students continue to transition in a positive way to their new surroundings, adjust to new behaviors and norms, and learn how to be successful in their classes throughout their first semester on campus. FYE courses have educational and social components that provide matriculating students with a supportive environment to create connections with their peers and learn how to be successful in their first semester of school. These programs include lessons on campus programs, resources provided to students, and life skills to help prepare them for their new life in college. These courses begin after the students' first experience with induction programs, most often orientation programs. FYE programs begin the first day of fall classes and continue throughout the first semester. This is an extended form of transition programming. FYE courses allow for students to explore campus with their peers and create stronger connections with faculty and campus personnel. It helps to provide students with the needed tools to have a positive college experience. By providing an FYE course to matriculating students through a required curriculum, the institution is creating a strong support network to adequately immerse students in their new environment.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project was to create a First Year Experience seminar course for students during their first semester of their freshman year at Ball State University. The goal of this project was to improve induction and transition programs for first year students and increase retention rates into the second year of school.

Significance of Study

This creative project was developed to help first year students at Ball State University successfully transition into the university and receive the appropriate amount of academic and social support from peers, faculty, and staff so that higher retention and success rates can be achieved. First year students at the university experience many new challenges and obstacles when adjusting to life at Ball State University and being away from home for the first time. By requiring students to enroll in a First Year Seminar (FYE) seminar course during the first semester of their first year, the university creates an academic and social transition experience to continue students' adjustment period throughout their first semester. This course is a part of each matriculating student's required credits, and is used to educate students about campus life, resources on campus, life skills to help them be successful in college, and connect them with their peers through a similar experience. Students first year at a higher education institution can be a difficult and overwhelming transition and adjustment. This FYE seminar course provides the student with an extra academic and social component to encourage a healthy and positive connection with the campus culture and climate. As a result students will receive course credit, build stronger relationships with professors, staff, and peers, and receive academic and social support throughout their first semester to improve student retention rates and graduation success.

Scope and Limitations

First Year Experience seminars were created to help matriculating students transition into the university and develop a positive relationship with the university to increase retention rates and student success. This course is required for all matriculating students, with two classes held each week throughout their first semester of their freshman year. These FYE seminars have been created specifically for Ball State University students and the academic and social environments on that campus.

A limitation to building a FYE seminar course was there is no First Year Experience office on this campus or university personnel with the sole responsibility to support this program and the students of this program. Ball State University currently has a Freshman Connections Coordinator that organizes, implements, and supports the Freshman Common Reader program and speaker series. The coordinator encourages all matriculates to read the current year's common reader selection and prepare an essay before the start of the school year. There is a designated staff member on campus in charge of Freshman Connections. The staff member is a faculty member, department chair, and head of Freshman Connections. For an FYE seminar and a successful extended transition program to grow and excel there would need to be more office support and staff working to support the program and students within these courses.

Definitions

Matriculate: A term used to describe students, specifically freshman, at Ball State University who are attending the university for their first semester during their first year.

First Year Experience (FYE) seminar: A term used to describe a required 100 level course for matriculating students that incorporates transition programming, activities with peers,

introductions to campus programs and resources, and group discussion incorporating the Freshman Common Reader within the course.

Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized in four chapters. The first chapter introduces the topic and provides the statement of purpose, significance of the study, scope and limitations of this study, and organization of the paper. The second chapter reviews the existing literature related to first year student transitions into the university, factors for first year students retention and success rate, and induction programs. Chapter three consists of a description of the methodology used throughout the creation of a First Year Experience seminar course for matriculate students at Ball State University throughout the fall semester of their first academic year. Chapter four covers the details about how the First Year Experience seminar course will be implemented on Ball State University's campus and an example of the courses curriculum.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Summary of the Project

First Year Experience (FYE) courses at higher education institutions have been successful at increasing student development and retention rates during students' first year to their second year. The FYE course proposed in this project incorporates inside and outside of the classroom academic and social experiences guided by a faculty member or campus staff and an assigned student peer mentor. This 100 level course for Ball State University works with the Freshman Connections Coordinator on campus to apply the common reader and writing experience requirements for matriculates. The freshman common reader is incorporated within class discussions and assignments. This course meets two times during the week for 75 minutes throughout the first semester for matriculates, focusing on life skills, campus services, and resources offered to students, and ways to get involved on campus. The seminar facilitator sets up classroom visits throughout the course for students to meet faculty and staff on campus that will be important for their transition into the university and persistence to graduation. By visiting the offices and attending university-sponsored programs as part of the class curriculum, students will become more actively involved and connected to their campus community and knowledgeable about resources to help them be successful. This First Year Experience seminar focuses on the students' transition from high school to Ball State University and the common issues and obstacles faced. This course is tailored to Ball State's students to help them transition successfully to the university and through their first year to their second.

First Year Students Transition into Higher Education

Transitioning into a new environment can be challenging for anyone, but a high school student transitioning into a higher education institution brings on a whole new set of challenges and obstacles in order to adapt successfully and persist to graduation.

The new student in college is a novice in an unfamiliar social organization and is therefore confronted with the values, norms, and role structures of a new social system and various subsystems. Such an experience involves desocialization (pressures to unlearn certain past values, attitudes, and behavior patterns) as well as socialization (pressures to learn the new culture and participate in the new social structure). (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969, p. 89)

Students transitioning to higher education institutions bring with them behaviors and patterns previously developed that can make adapting to their new higher education institution a challenge. The students may spend their last year of high school or summer months preparing themselves for their new environment through talking with peers, reading books, or shopping for needed school items, but upon arrival they experience a disconnect between their past patterns and behaviors and the university's climate and culture.

Students who leave their families for the first time and enter into a new environment at a university often travel through three specific stages in order to adapt properly and develop new behaviors and norms that align with their new environment. These stages allow them to be more successful in their first year and persist through their second year. Gennep (1960) identified stages that individuals will experience as they pass from one community to another. The three stages are separation, transition, and incorporation. He believed his ideas and stages could be applied to other situations when involving movement of a person or a group from one place or

community to another. These rites of passage stages were later adapted by Vincent Tinto (1988) to reflect the developmental process college students experience when leaving their high school and home environments and transitioning to college environments with new norms, behaviors, and cultures.

Students entering the separation stage must start to disconnect with their high school friends, social behaviors, and family norms so they can successfully begin to enter into their new environment. The separation stage is often stressful to first year students and can cause some students to withdraw from their chosen university. Once at the university, students must begin to learn new behaviors, norms, and adapt to new living environments, while continuing to separate from past behaviors and patterns. During this period, school induction programs can be a positive platform to help guide students through stressful separations in supportive and positive environments. The students' past experiences often have not prepared them for what they will experience at higher education institutions. Induction programs can help to introduce students to positive learning experiences that benefit their personal development and growth on campus. In the last stage, incorporation, students need to begin to fully immerse themselves in the campus culture, climate, and community while further developing and exploring their new identity as college students. In this final stage the possibility of graduating increases.

Similarly, matriculating students' experiences can be considered through the I-E-O (inputs, environment, outputs) model, which helps to understand how college affects students (Astin, 1993). Through the I-E-O model, students enter college with a set of norms, values, beliefs, abilities, and behaviors. In order to adapt to the new environments, students must learn new norms, values, and beliefs through their classes, peers, staff, faculty, and campus culture. When students are able to adapt to a new environment, they begin to accept and change their past

behaviors, academic standards, expectations, and norms, leading to a positive experience and a higher graduation success rate. In order to be successful and persist to graduation, individuals need adequate academic and social support from the institution. (Astin, 1993; Tinto, 1988).

Factors for First Year Student Retention and Success

A common concern that institutions share is the retention rate and success of their enrolled students throughout their first year. At four-year institutions, 38% of the students who leave the institution will leave during their first year and a significant amount of those students who leave during their first year, leave during the first semester. Based off of what did or did not happen to the student during their first year, 29% of students will leave in their second year (Tinto, 2012). Four conditions that are important for students to experience at their institution to have a more successful college experiences are expectation, support, assessment and feedback, and involvement.

The first condition is expectations (Tinto, 2012). The students' academic and social success depends greatly on the expectations they set for themselves as well as the high expectations of their professors. If the faculty and staff are not setting high expectations in their classroom, the students will not achieve the academic and social challenges ahead of them. The second condition, which is critical in the first year of college, is academic and social support from faculty and staff. During the first year of college when a high amount of first year students struggle, institutions have more influence to intervene and help them to change their behavior and create successful habits. If students are challenged to set high expectations inside the classroom by faculty and staff, they will learn to take those expectations to their activities and personal developments outside the classroom. The more an authority figure like a professor is able to build a positive experience around working hard inside the classroom, the more likely it

will transition and help to develop new behaviors, norms, and patterns to be successful in the students first year.

A third condition, which builds on setting expectations and having a support system, is receiving assessment and feedback (Tinto, 2012). During the first year at an institution, students have entered a new environment and the academic and social changes can be difficult to adjust to. Students arrive at institutions with previous behaviors, habits, and attitudes and must learn through their new support systems appropriate and successful traits for the new environment. If there is no feedback or guidance from the institution, students may struggle with adapting their previous behaviors into their new setting to achieve academic success. Lastly, if students are socially and academically engaged with faculty, staff, and peers, their success rate in college increases. These four conditions together can help lead to greater student involvement at the university through educational and social activities and increase first year students' commitments to persist to graduation.

Along with the four conditions listed above, three factors identified as influential to the college experiences are the individual's peer circle, family support and background, and academic and social involvement on campus (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006; Schrader & Brown, 2008). Inside and outside the classroom experiences and learning opportunities are equally important to the students' academic and social achievements and retention rates. The beliefs, values, and relationships that students entered the university with helps to shape how they respond to the new campus climate and culture and forms how they will adapt to the institution. "Students benefit in many ways from out-of-class experiences, ranging from gains in critical thinking to relational and organizational skills" (Kuh, 1995, p.150). "All aspects of campus life

contribute to an effective transition to college life and build a firm foundation for student success” (Habley, Bloom, & Robbins, 2012).

First Year Experience Induction

First Year Experience (FYE) programs can be found at 95% of four-year institutions (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006). First year programs have been implemented in a variety of ways at colleges around the country to address the needs of student retention and success rate for first year students. Students’ transitions from high school to college can be difficult and stressful. Students potentially are not as prepared for the new academic standards, campus environment, and social expectations of their higher education institution (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006; Schrader & Brown, 2008) based on their prior experiences in high school or career before enrollment. The purpose of FYE programming is to help guide new students through their first year in the university to increase academic performance and persistence. Students face many challenges during their first semester and need more support and structure to adjust to their new surroundings and expectations.

First year transition programs have become a critical component of student success (Habley et al., 2012). Successful transition into a university and working to resolve issues surrounding transition correlates with almost every major college student outcome. Those major outcomes include “academic outcomes (persistence, academic self-efficacy, and career development, for example) and developmental outcomes (such as a sense of personal identity, social competence, and relationship satisfaction” (Renn & Reason, 2013, p. 66). These programs help to introduce students to their new environments by integrating them socially with peers, staff, and faculty. They provide opportunities for participants to learn needed academic and life skills to be successful at the institution (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006; Habley et al., 2012). FYE

programs help students have more meaningful interactions with staff, peers, and faculty in and outside of the classroom, creating a more positive campus culture, student experience, and commitment to the university. Studies have also shown FYE programs to help students have a more positive academic and social outlook on themselves (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006). Those who participate in these programs tend to become more involved in co-curricular activities and are more likely to achieve a higher grade point average (GPA) than those who do not participate in transition programs.

Types of Induction Programs

First year induction programs can be created and implemented in a variety of ways. Successful programs focus on the needs of their students and create programs tailored to their institution and student body. In order to create effective programs, schools must focus on FYE being a continuous learning program rather than an event (Pascarella, Terenzino, & Wolfle, 1986). In order for FYE programs to be more effective, institutions need to be intentional on how they work to enhance students' integration into campus through the duration of the first year rather than a few concentrated events. The most common types of induction programs are summer orientation, Learning Communities, and First Year Seminars. When schools use one or more of these transition programs for their first year students they are increasing the students' connection and commitment to the university.

Orientation for first year students is typically held in the summer months leading up to the first day of school or during the week before the school year begins. New student orientation programs can vary in length from half-day programs to two to three day overnight programs (Pascarella, Terenzini, & Wolfle, 1986; Renn & Reason, 2013). New student orientations provide opportunities to introduce students to the campus and the administrative policies, to

connect the students to organizations, activities, and services offered on campus, and to allow students to meet faculty, staff, and peers before they arrive on campus for the school year. The main purpose of orientation is to help students start their college experience in a positive way by learning how to succeed academically and socially. Institutions are able to accomplish this goal through the introduction of policies and procedures allowing connections to be made prior to the start of the year between students and providing the student and family the needed support to transition smoothly into the college. These common goals help to facilitate the students' successful integration into the campus culture and assist the students with social adjustments by providing them the opportunity to begin to make connections prior to the first day of class.

Learning Communities can take place in a variety of settings, using several different factors. "A learning community in higher education is a group of individuals who share common interests, emotions, values, and beliefs and are actively engaged in learning together and from each other" (Habley et al., 2012, p. 321). These Learning Communities connect a small group of students together, on average 20 students, and enroll them in two or three of the same academic courses. These communities can be arranged in several ways, inside the classroom, in on-campus housing, in online forums, and in the surrounding community. In coordinating with the shared courses the groups participate together in meetings, service-learning opportunities, and co-curricular activities outside the classroom based around the academic curriculum. Involvement in Learning Communities can help create stronger social connections among peers and faculty, increase student academic performance, and help students have stronger institutional commitment to persist to graduation (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

The First Year Experience seminar's main goal is "to enhance the quality of the first year experience and contribute to student success across the domains of learning, satisfaction and

retention” (Jamelske, 2008, p. 378). These programs are designed to help first year students transition positively into the institution through small group interactions with peers and faculty through academic curriculum and social interactions. First Year Experience seminars combine curricular and extra curricular activities with the course academic requirements. FYE seminar courses typically have a class size of no more than 20 students and depending on the institutions is offered for credit or as an elective (Jamelske, 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). A faculty member, student affairs professional, or campus administrator can teach these courses with an assigned student peer mentor, often a volunteer position, to help facilitate the life skills and extracurricular piece (Habley et al., 2012). Based on the class size, interactions, and course content, the university attempts to create a course designed for students coming from high school classroom environments with previous behaviors and norms. These seminars help students’ to adjust to new academic rigors and learn new patterns and behaviors to be successful and have a higher class retention rate from their first to second year. “Evidence indicates that FYS [First Year Seminar] participation has statistically significant and substantial, positive effects on a student’s successful transition to college” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, p. 403). Student participation in these types of programs have shown an increase in students sense of community on campus, commitment to the institution, and an increase on their GPA because of this interactive and intentional first year experience programming (Renn & Reason, 2013).

Summary

Matriculating students who are experiencing a higher education environment for the first time face many challenges and obstacles leaving their normal environment with already developed behaviors, attitudes, and patterns. When students' arrive at their chosen institutions they are guided into a new environment with its own beliefs, norms, and values. The transition

from high school to a higher education institution is a significant life experience. During a students' first year, and especially their first semester at school, without proper resources and support like induction programs including Learning Communities, new student orientation, and First Year Seminars, their GPA and retention rate would greatly decrease. The development and implementation of a variety of First Year Experience (FYE) programs on a college campus has helped to retain students and increase academic performance. These programs are able to produce positive results by providing needed academic and emotional support, connecting students with their peers and faculty, and helping to develop their commitment to the university. A common goal these programs share is the universities' commitment to providing intentional programming to help the matriculating student positively transition into the university and build a strong connection to the institution to persist through graduation. These programs are a necessity on a college campus for first year students to properly adjust and grow professionally, academically, and personally.

CHAPTER THREE

CREATING A FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE SEMINAR AT BALL STATE UNIVERSITY: THE CARDINAL EXPERIENCE

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project was to create a First Year Experience seminar course for students during their first semester of the freshman year at Ball State University. The goal of this project was to improve induction and transition programs for first year students and increase retention rates into the second year of school.

Methodology

A literature review was conducted to gain a better understanding of matriculates and how they transition into higher education, retention and success factors, and induction programs such as orientation, learning communities, and first year seminars. The literature review was based on journal articles and books by student development theorists and authors who had experience with first year students' development, transition, and successful programs to encourage persistence. Next, to gain a better understanding of programs offered, the Ball State University's website and Freshman Connections program were examined to evaluate what first year experience programs were already in existence and their success rates. The University of South Carolina's website was also examined to learn about successful learning objectives and goals of FYE programs across the country. The website was also used to evaluate resources available for faculty and students in First Year Experience Seminar courses. Last, a meeting was scheduled with a first year academic advisor on Ball State's campus who currently teaches two courses for first year students, one course each semester. Each course is five weeks long. The fall course focuses on

support services on campus and integrates students with campus life. There are three sections of this course and enrollment is capped at twenty students. The spring course focuses on second semester first year students that are on academic probation and need additional support on campus. There is one section of this course. Both courses have voluntary enrollment. This meeting allowed for further exploration into what support services and resources are already offered on Ball State's campus, their success rates, and improvement strategies for future course implementation.

Design of the Project

A First Year Experience Seminar course was created for matriculates at Ball State University. The FYE Seminar was designed to help students' transition into their first year of college successfully and increase retention from their first year through their second. The program was designed to create a safe space for the matriculating students to come together with a group of their peers in an academic and social setting. The matriculates will learn how to be a successful student on Ball State's campus and how to create a positive college experience. This seminar provides students with an opportunity to learn about the campus, resources the university has to offer, and how the student can tap into those resources and support systems to have a successful first year. This seminar incorporates student learning about on-campus offices, university personnel, and programs around campus to enhance their learning experience throughout classroom environments. This course is designed to connect matriculates with peers and faculty to enhance their perception of the university, build positive personal relationships, encourage involvement around campus, and enhance their learning environment.

This First Year Experience Seminar course will occur in the fall and in the spring each academic school year. It is a 16-week, three credit hour course, held two days a week for 75

minutes. The course will highlight a specific theme and an on-campus office every week. Each week the class will learn about an office on-campus to allow the students to gain more knowledge of resources available; and the next class period will be used for discussions of the prior office presentation, class presentations on the week's theme, and team building activities. The freshman class enrollment numbers at Ball State University are on average 3,600 students an academic year. This seminar enrolls 100 students or less in each section. There will be 36 sections of this course taught by student affairs faculty and campus staff. Students must enroll in one FYE seminar course first semester of their freshman year at Ball State University. This course will be taught based on a common syllabus and course materials. The individual sections and designated faculty can incorporate their own ideas into the course content, but will be required to follow the weekly class schedule and themes. This seminar will also incorporate Ball State University's first year common reader into the course content. The seminars will have the common reader of that current year as the required text for the course. It will be offered during the fall and spring semester for students who enroll at the University after the fall semester. This course is a continuation of induction programs Ball State asks its students to participate in during the summer.

This semester long course will be divided by individual weeks. Each week a new theme will be represented and tied into the office that was selected to be highlighted, class discussion, and group activity. The offices or departments that will be incorporated into this seminar's lessons are: Career Center, Counseling Center, Academic Advising, Learning Center, Health and Wellness Center, Recreation Center, Financial Aid, Freshman Connections, Campus Safety, and the Office of Student Life. The themes that will be incorporated into the semester course are: campus introduction, involvement, Freshman Connections, service, safety and alcohol

awareness, health and wellness, study skills and learning styles, finances, career and professionalism, time management, research, building a better you, and Advising. This seminar course will also include a week of final exam preparation prior to the end of the semester and two weeks incorporating the first year common reader, its connection to the student, and the author's visit. The final course project will be group presentations on how they will make the most of their time at Ball State University.

Throughout the seminar, in correlation to each week's theme, the students will be asked to participate in outside of the classroom events such as Late Nite, University Program Board events, Homecoming, Welcome Week, student organization meetings, a Ball State home sporting event, and visits to the offices they are learning about each week. The student will be asked to participate and complete an assignment based on their experience at each event. The purpose of this is to allow the student to experience the campus culture and climate based on a hands on learning style, by encouraging and requiring their participation in activities across campus.

This seminar has been structured to look similar among all of the 36 sections of the seminar occurring on Ball State's campus. The selected facilitators of this seminar will be expected to represent the course to the best of their abilities using pre determined guidelines, expectations, and grading scales. This course will have a common syllabus. However, the class days where a campus office is not being highlighted, the facilitator is free to present the material detailed in the syllabus in any manner they choose. It is recommend that the facilitator be creative in their presentations of the material from week to week. It is important to discuss the topics and class recommendations discussed in the syllabus but highly encouraged to tailor the lesson to the facilitators teaching style.

Summary

This First Year Experience Seminar is designed to enhance a matriculating students transition into Ball State University and in their overall college experience. This course has been created for the benefit of incoming first year students. This seminars main purpose is to provide the students an interactive and hands on introductory course to the Ball State campus. This seminar provides students an opportunity to build strong relationships with their classmates, professor, and university personnel. This First Year Seminar's overall purpose is to allow the students coming from high school an extra support system to use as a resource to start their higher education career on a positive path. The major desired outcome of this seminar includes an increase in student retention and success rates from their first year to the second.

CHAPTER FOUR

CREATING A FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE SEMINAR AT BALL STATE UNIVERSITY: THE CARDINAL EXPERIENCE

Project Summary

First Year Experience (FYE) courses at higher education institutions have been successful at increasing student development and retention rates during as a student completes their first year and continues to their second year. This FYE course incorporates inside and outside of the classroom academic and social experiences guided by a faculty member or campus staff and an assigned student peer mentor. This 100 level course for Ball State University works with the Freshman Connections Coordinator on campus to apply the common reader and writing experience requirements for matriculates. The freshman common reader is incorporated within class discussions and assignments. This course meets two times during the week for 75 minutes throughout a matriculate student's first semester at Ball State, focusing on life skills, campus services, resources offered to students, and ways to get involved on campus. The seminar facilitator sets up classroom visits throughout the course for students to meet faculty and staff on campus that will be important for their transition into the university and persistence to graduation. By learning about the offices and attending university-sponsored programs as part of the class curriculum, students will become more actively involved and connected to their campus community and knowledgeable about resources to help them be successful. This First Year Experience seminar focuses on the students' transition from high school to Ball State University and the common issues and obstacles faced. This course is tailored to Ball State's students to help them transition successfully to the university and through their first year to their second.

The project contains the following items:

- Recommended timeline of the First Year Experience seminar, page 28.
- First Year Experience Seminar: the Cardinal Experience, Seminar Syllabus, page 32.
- The Cardinal Experience Facilitators Schedule and Guide, page 40.

Recommended Timeline of First Year Experience Seminar

Fall Semester

August

Week One- Theme: Introduction to campus and classmates

Week Two- Theme: The Freshman Common Reader
No office highlight this week. Class discussion and incorporation of the books theme into classroom lecture and small group facilitation

September

Week Three- Theme of the week is involvement
Office highlight from the Office of Student Life

Week Four- Theme of the week is the Freshman Common Reader
No office highlight this week. Class trip to the Common Reader's author presentation on campus.

Week Five- Theme of the week is research
Office highlight from the Library

Week Six- Theme: Learning styles and Study skills
Office highlight from the Learning Center

October

Week Seven- Theme of the week is safety and alcohol awareness
Office highlight from the Campus Safety Office

Week Eight- Theme of the week is health and wellness
Office highlight from the Health Center

Week Nine- Theme of the week is career and professionalism
Office highlight from the Career Center

Week Ten- Theme of the week is build a better you
Office highlight form the Counseling Center

Week Eleven- Theme of the week building an academic plan
Office highlight from the First Year Academic Advising Center

NovemberWeek Twelve-

Theme of the week is finances

Office highlight from Financial Aid

Week Thirteen-

Theme of the week is community building and service

Office highlight from Student Voluntary Services

Week Fourteen-

Theme of the week is stress and relaxation

Office highlight from the Campus Recreation Center

Week Fifteen-

Theme of the week is study skills and finals preparation

No office highlight this week. Class time to work on course final project

DecemberWeek Sixteen-

Theme of the week is how you will make the most out of your time at BSU?

No office highlight this week. Final project presentations

Winter Break!

Recommended Timeline of First Year Experience Seminar

Spring Semester

January:

- Week One- Theme of the week is introduction to campus and classmates
- Week Two- Theme of the week is the Freshman Common Reader
No office highlight this week. Class discussion and incorporation of books theme into classroom lecture and small group facilitation
- Week Three- Theme of the week is involvement
Office highlight from the Office of Student Life
- Week Four- Theme of the week is the Freshman Common Reader
No office highlight this week. Class discussion and incorporation of the books theme into classroom lecture and small group facilitation

February:

- Week Five- Theme of the week is research
Office highlight from the Library
- Week Six- Theme of the week is learning styles and study skills
Office highlight from the Learning Center
- Week Seven- Theme of the week is safety and alcohol awareness
Office highlight from the Campus Safety Office
- Week Eight- Theme of the week is health and wellness
Office highlight from: Health Center

March:

- Week Nine- Theme of the week is career and professionalism
Office highlight from the Career Center

Spring Break!

- Week Ten- Theme of the week is build a Better You
Office highlight form the Counseling Center
- Week Eleven- Theme of the week is building an academic plan
Office highlight from the First Year Academic Advising Center

April:Week Twelve-

Theme of the week is finances

Office highlight from the Financial Aid

Week Thirteen-

Theme of the week is community building and service

Office highlight from Student Voluntary Services

Week Fourteen-

Theme of the week is stress and relaxation

Office highlight from the Campus Recreation Center

Week Fifteen-

Theme of the week is study skills and finals preparation

No office highlight this week. Class time to work on course final project

May:Week Sixteen-

Theme of the week is how you will make the most out of your time at BSU?

No office highlight this week. Final project presentations

Summer Break!

First Year Experience Seminar: The Cardinal Experience Syllabus

Instructor:**Office:****Office Phone:**

Office Hours: By appointment by calling 765-285-XXXX.

Email: XXXXXX@bsu.edu

Purpose of the Course

FYE Seminar is designed to help you adjust to college life and establish skills that will assist you in being successful at Ball State University. The purpose of this course is to help engage you in curricular and co-curricular activities to help you positively transition into campus life. This seminar will allow you to build relationships between your classmates and campus staff to support you and help encourage academic growth. This is a semester long course and will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the semester.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Become aware of resources offered to you on campus through classroom discussions and presentations from on-campus offices at Ball State University.
2. Build relationships with peers, faculty, and staff on-campus to help encourage academic growth and provide support through out your time at Ball State.
3. Help you build important academic, personal, and social skills needed to be successful while at Ball State and in your future professionally and personally.
4. Provide an opportunity for you to explore extra curricular activities and learn about student organizations to encourage campus involvement and interaction with your fellow peers.
5. Aid positively in your transition at Ball State University through class discussions, peer and staff interaction, classroom assignments, and group projects.

Attendance

Your attendance and participation is an important part of this seminar experience. You are allowed two unexcused absence and one excused. Additional absences will result in lost attendance and participation points regardless of the reason for missing class. It is your responsibility to contact me or a classmate to obtain missed notes and assignments from any class missed. If you miss class you are still required to turn in any assignment due prior to the beginning of class. Attendance will be taken during different class times through out the semester. Any classes missed after the allotted number of days will result in 5 points off the final grade for each class period missed.

Participation

There is to be no texting, playing on your phone or computer, talking to classmates, sleeping, or being disruptive in any way during class. Phones must be on silent or off and put away once class starts. No computers are allowed during class unless otherwise noted by the instructor for that class period.

Late Work

Assignments must be turned in by the beginning of the class period it is scheduled due. No late work will be accepted unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances. If there are extreme circumstances, please contact me as soon as possible. **All assignments need to be completed and turned in on time!**

Diversity Statement

Ball State University is committed to fostering and promoting a healthy learning community. All students will be treated with respect, tolerance, and equality regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender, age, or economic status. If, for any reason, the student feels discriminated against in the classroom based on these differences, they should contact their professor or the department chair. The Ball State University community believes in the strength of diversity and recognizes the important of appreciating equality.

Students with Disabilities

If any course adaptations or accommodations are needed due to a disability, or if special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated are needed please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss necessary accommodations. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities and documentation of a disability must be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu or <http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/DSD/about.aspx>

Required Textbook

The only text required for this course is the Freshman Common Reader received during summer orientation sessions. You will not need to purchase another book for this class. We will build our classroom discussions and assignments around the themes of this book.

Grading

Grades can be viewed on Blackboard throughout the course of the semester. I will do my best to keep your grades updated in a timely manner.

- 45 Points- Blackboard Reflection Posts and Peer Feedback Posts (3 in total, 15 points each)
- 10 Points- Student Organization Meeting Participation
- 10 Points- Academic Goals
- 10 Points- In class budget assignment
- 50 Points- Participation in on-campus programs (5 events in total)
- 10 Points- Library Tour Certificate
- 10 Points- Career Center Visit
- 10 Points- First Year Academic Advising Center Visit
- 20 Points- Community Service Hour
- 50 Points- Final Group Video Presentations
- 10 Points- Attendance

TOTAL POINTS- 235

I will provide you with more details on each assignment, as it gets closer to the due date so you will know what to expect from each assignment. If you would like to get a head start on any assignment, please make sure to email me or set up an appointment during specified office hours. All reflection papers must be typed, double-spaced, one-inch margin, MLA format, and 12 pt. Times New Roman font.

Assignments to be uploaded on Blackboard:

Blackboard Reflection Posts and Peer Feedback Posts

- The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on the discussion that took place in class among your peers specifically about the theme of the week and the office being highlighted. Please be thoughtful in your reflection and provide an insight about what you learned from the lesson.

Student Organization Meeting Participation

- Visit the student organization directory and select three organizations you are interested in joining. Post your choices and reasons for interest on the Blackboard discussion group. Your post must be 300-500 words. Select one organization and attend their meeting, take a picture of yourself at the meeting and create a one-page outline of what was discussed. Upload picture and outline to Blackboard.

Academic Goals

- Upload to Blackboard 5-10 academic focused goals you have for yourself this year and steps you plan to achieve them. They can be in paragraph form or a bulleted list.

Participation in On-Campus Programs and Reflection

- During the semester of the course each student must attend five on-campus programs. You must take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload picture and paper to Blackboard. The paper should be reflective of your experience at the event. Include the event name and why you selected the particular event. Reflect on how you felt while you were there, what you observed, would you attend again, and what you learned.
- Example of acceptable programs you can attend (but not limited to):
 - Welcome Week activities.
 - Home sporting event.
 - Homecoming week activities.
 - University Program Board event.
 - Late Nite program.
 - Residence hall program.
 - Campus speaker.
 - Student organization event (example: St. Jude's Up Till Dawn fundraiser).
- You can select any five events, but they cannot be the same kind of event. You must attend five different types of programs. For example you cannot attend three football games and two Late Nites. You must participate in a variety of campus programs to receive full credit.
- If you have any questions about what programs are acceptable please follow up with your instructor.

Community Service Hour

- Find a volunteer project in the community or on campus. You must volunteer for one-hour minimum. Take pictures of the event and you working at the event and write a one-page reflection on your experience and what you learned. Upload to Blackboard by last class period of the semester.
- Questions to consider while volunteering and writing reflection paper:
 - Why did you select the organization or event you did? What was the event? What did you do while at the event? How did you feel volunteering? What did you observe? Would you volunteer at this event or for this organization again? Why or why not?

Final Group Video Presentations

- The theme of the video will be “how will you make the most out of your time at BSU?” You will be split up into groups of a maximum of ten students. You will be tasked to create a five-minute video that represents each group member and how they plan to make the most out of their time at Ball State. You can be as creative as you would like to demonstrate the theme of the video. Keep the group video presentations appropriate and positive. Use what you have learned in class to inspire the direction of this video. All members must be involved in creating the video. It will be played during the last two class sessions of the semester. Upload video to Blackboard by Monday at 8am on the last week of the semester.

Assignments are due at the beginning of the next class meeting unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

Course Outline

Week

Theme/ Office Highlight/ Assignment

Week One

Theme of the week is introduction to campus and classmates

No office highlight this week

Assignment: Review syllabus, familiarize with Blackboard and post an introduction about yourself and why you chose Ball State on the group discussion page.

Use this week to attend one campus welcome week program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 3 by the beginning of class period.

Week Two

Theme of the week is the Freshman Common Reader

No office highlight this week

Assignment: On Blackboard write a 500-700 word reaction one of the Common Reader's themes discussed during class, post on the discussion board; react to one other peers post, 300-500 words each. Due next Tuesday by the beginning of class time.

Week Three

Theme of the week is involvement

Office highlight from the Office of Student Life

Assignment: Visit the Student Organization directory and select three organizations you are interested in joining. Post your choices and reasons for interest on the Blackboard discussion group. Select one organization and attend their meeting, take a picture of yourself at the meeting and create an outline of what was discussed. Upload picture and outline to Blackboard. Due next Thursday by the beginning of class time.

Week Four**Theme of the week is the Freshman Common Reader**

No office highlight this week

Assignment: Go to the Common Reader's author presentation.

Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 5 by the beginning of class time.

Week Five**Theme of the week is research**

Office highlight from the Library

Assignment: Go to Library and participate in their picture scavenger hunt. Have a library staff member sign completion certificate. Turn in certificate by the beginning of class time on Thursday.

Week Six**Theme of the week is learning styles and study skills**

Office highlight from the Learning Center

Assignment: On the Blackboard discussion group, post about a new technique you learned in class and how you can adapt that to improve upon your current study skills, 500-700 words. Reflect on one other peers post about a different technique they discussed, 300-500 words. Due by next Tuesday by the beginning of class time.

Week Seven**Theme of the week is safety and alcohol awareness**

Office highlight from the Campus Safety Office

Assignment: Post on the Blackboard discussion group steps you can take to be more safe and aware of your surroundings on campus, 500-700 words. Reflect on one other peers post, 300-500 words. Due Thursday by the beginning of class time.

Week Eight**Theme of the week is health and wellness**

Office highlight from the Health Center

Assignment: Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 9 by the beginning of class time.

Week Nine**Theme of the week is career and professionalism**

Office highlight from the Career Center

Assignment: Visit the career center and take a picture in front of the office. Upload picture to Blackboard. Due Thursday by the beginning of class time.

Week Ten**Theme of the week is build a better you**

Office highlight from the Counseling Center

Assignment: Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 11 by the beginning of class time.

Week Eleven**Theme of the week is building an academic plan**

Office highlight from the First Year Academic Advising Center

Assignment: Upload to Blackboard 5-10 academic focused goals you have for yourself this year and steps you plan to achieve them. Visit the First Year Academic Advising Center and take a picture in front of the office. Upload the picture to Blackboard. Due Thursday by the beginning of class time.

- Week Twelve** **Theme of the week is finances**
Office highlight from Financial Aid
Assignment: Create a budget for the spring semester based off the student profile given. To be worked on during class, turn in at end of period.
- Week Thirteen** **Theme of the week is community building and service**
Office highlight from Student Voluntary Services
Assignment: Begin to search for volunteer projects in the community or on campus. Must volunteer for one-hour minimum. Take pictures of the event and write a one-page reflection on your experience and what you learned. Upload to Blackboard by last class period of the semester.
- Week Fourteen** **Theme of the week is stress and relaxation**
Office highlight from the Campus Recreation Center
Assignment: Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 15 at the beginning of class time.
- Week Fifteen** **Theme of the week is study skills and final group video project preparation**
No office highlight this week
Assignment: Use class time to work on course group final project. Bring any materials needed to complete project.
- Week Sixteen** **Video Presentations: How you will make the most out of your time at BSU?**
No office highlight this week
Final video project presentations begin, order has been pre selected. Have video submitted on Blackboard by this Monday at 8am.
First Year Experience Seminar; The Cardinal Experience

Facilitators Schedule and Guide

Course Reminders

- This is a mandatory course for all incoming freshman at Ball State University. This course is held in the fall and spring semester. The fall course has 36 sections to accommodate the incoming class. The spring semester section numbers will vary based on the number of students who transfer to Ball State University after the fall semester.
- In order to make sure each student is receiving the same information, a common course syllabus has been created for all sections. As a facilitator of this course we ask that you use the guidelines, suggested course content, assignments, and themes below to build your course for the semester. We encourage each instructor to teach the course and facilitate lessons and activities in a variety of learning styles and media use. Each section can reflect the instructor's own teaching style.
- In order to maintain consistency in each section, the course assignments will be the same through all sections. The weekly assignments have been assigned to specific weeks. The points for each assignment and the total points for the course have been predetermined and listed below.
- It is at the discretion of the individual instructor to take attendance. We ask that you take attendance at least ten times through out the course of the semester. The students are expected to attend class, but if needed there is a built in attendance policy that we expect you as the facilitator to uphold.

Course Outline:**Week One****Theme of the week is introduction to campus and classmates**

No office highlight this week

Assignment: Review syllabus, familiarize with Blackboard and post an introduction about yourself and why you chose Ball State on the group discussion page. Due Thursday at the beginning of class time.

Use this week to attend one campus welcome week program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 3 by the beginning of class time.

Suggested Class Content:

- Use the first week to help students build peer relationships in the classroom.
- Use this time to talk about different campus buildings, traditions of campus, and what the town of Muncie offers.
- Prepare ‘get to know you’ icebreakers for class. Keep in mind you have a maximum of a 100 students in your classroom. You may need to break the class into sections of the room to do some of the planned icebreakers. Make sure to walk around the room and engage with each group through out the icebreakers.
- Go over the syllabus in detail and explain each assignment.
- Pull up Blackboard on screen in front of classroom and walk the class through the Blackboard site and how to use it for classroom assignments.

Week Two**Theme of the week is the Freshman Common Reader**

No office representative this week

Assignment: On Blackboard write a 500-700 word reaction post to one of the Common Reader's themes discussed during class on the discussion board, react to one other peers post, 300-500 words each. Due next Tuesday by the beginning of class time.

Suggested Class Content:

- Over the summer students will read the Freshman Common Reader passed out to them during their summer orientation. The students were asked to write a paper based on the themes of this book before they began their first semester at Ball State. They should have a good understanding of the book, if not, this is a time to remind them to read or re-read the book. You will be focusing on this book for two weeks of this seminar. Use this week to discuss the first half of the book and the next half for later in the semester when the author comes to visit campus.
- Create discussion questions and process answers with class.
 - Suggested: Split the classroom up into smaller groups and assign different discussion topics or questions to each group. Allow group time to discuss topics and develop answers. Select a representative from each group and have them share with the class what the group discussed.
- Use a portion of Thursday's class to have the students reflect, discuss and process how the themes of the Common Reader relates to them personally. Also facilitate discussion on how students can grow and be a stronger version of themselves because of what they learned from this book.

Week Three **Theme of the week is involvement**

Office highlight from the Office of Student Life

Assignment: Visit the Student Organization directory and select three organizations you are interested in joining. Post your choices and why you are interested on the Blackboard discussion group. Select one organization and attend their meeting, take a picture of yourself at the meeting and an outline of what was discussed. Upload picture and outline to Blackboard. Due by next Tuesday before the end of class.

Suggested Class Content:

Tuesday:

- Today you will be highlighting the Office of Student Life in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Office of Student Life, the resources it has to offer students, the support staff, and how they can get involved on campus more.
 - The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - The importance of getting involved in college.
 - Introduce Student Affairs theorist into discussion.
 - Different opportunities the campus has for students to get involved.
 - How students go about getting involved on campus.
 - The importance of taking on leadership roles on campus.
 - How the students involvement now will help for their future professional career after college.
- Ask students who have already attended a student organization meeting to share their experience with the class.

Week Four**Theme of the week is the Freshman Common Reader**

No office highlight this week

Go to Common Reader's author presentation on-campus

Assignment: Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 5 by the beginning of class time.

Schedule Change this week!

- There will only be one class this week. The Freshman Common Reader Author is scheduled to visit on this Thursday. Remind students the week before to meet at the presentation.
- You are expected to take attendance of the students who attend this event. It is suggested that you pick a general location outside the hall where the presenter is speaking. Ask your class to meet you at a designated time. Take attendance and then find an area in the auditorium where you can all sit together as a group.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Use class time to discuss the second half of the book you did not discuss during the second week of class.
- Create discussion questions and process answers with class.
 - Suggested: Split the classroom up into smaller groups and assign different discussion topics or questions to each group. Allow group time to discuss topic and develop an answer. Select a representative from each group and share what the group discussed.
- Save time at the end of the class period to have the class brainstorm questions they would like to ask the author during the Q&A session of the presentation. Encourage them to ask a question.

Week Five**Theme of the week is research**

Office highlight form the Library

Assignment: Go to Library and participate in their picture scavenger hunt.

Have a library staff member sign completion certificate. Turn in certificate

Thursday by the beginning of the class period.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will be highlighting the library. The library was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the library, the resources it has to offer students, the support staff, how to search for books and research documents, and how to use search engines.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - How to research for class assignments. Give the class different example topics and have them write a step-by-step guide to how they would go about researching the topic, where they would look for information, and how the library could help.
 - Have students brainstorm how they plan to use the library now that they know what it has to offer them. Please allow time for some students to share.

Reminder:

Thursday's class can end 30 minutes early to allow for students to go to the library and begin their scavenger hunt.

Week Six **Theme of the week is learning styles and study skills**

Office highlight from the Learning Center

Assignment: On the Blackboard discussion group post about a new technique you learned in class and how you can adapt that to improve upon your current study skills, 500-700 words. Reflect on one other peers post about a different technique they discussed, 300-500 words.

Suggested Class Content:

Tuesday:

- Today you will be highlighting the Learning Center in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Learning Center, the resources it has to offer students, the support staff, the skills they can build from visiting the Learning Center, and the academic support it provides students.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - Study skill tips and techniques and time management.
 - Effective ways to study vs. ineffective ways to study.
 - How to use campus resources, faculty, staff, and peers to help your succeed academically.
 - Discuss the difference between classes and studying in high school and how to use their schedule now to their advantage and being productive with class work.
 - How to prioritize their schedule, class assignments, work, and activities.
 - The importance of asking for help when needed. Highlight positive outcomes of asking for help with examples.
 - Describe academic probation and what that means for students. Discuss the importance of seeking help when needed before reaching a critical point.

Week Seven**Theme of the week is safety and alcohol awareness**

Office highlight from the Campus Safety Office

Assignment: Post in the Blackboard discussion group steps you can take to be more safe and aware of your surroundings on campus, 500-700 words. Reflect on one other peers post, 300-500 words. Due Thursday by the beginning of class time.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will highlight the Campus Safety Office. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Campus Safety Office, the resources it has to offer students and the officers. This office highlight will also discuss safety tips on campus, how to more responsible on the weekends while out, the difference between Muncie police and Ball State's police staff, and the consequences for their actions.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

Use this class period to focus on:

- Safety on campus and in the town.
- Steps to take to be safe in your residence hall, walking to and from class, while out on the weekends, etc.
- The illusion of safety that being on a campus brings - (Example: locking your doors in the hall when not there, not leaving your belongings alone while you run an errand).
- Introduce different faculty roles and support staff positions across campus and how they can be used as a resource their in cases of emergency (make sure to include Resident Assistant, Graduate Assistant, Office of Student Rights and Community Standards, Hall Director, Student Affairs staff, faculty, police).

Week Eight**Theme of the week is health and wellness**

Office highlight from the Health Center

Assignment: Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 9 by the beginning of class time.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will be highlighting the Health Center in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Health Center, the resources it has to offer students, the support staff, and student insurance and what it covers.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - How to stay healthy while on-campus.
 - Building and maintaining a healthy lifestyle while on campus (examples of topics are eating habits, drinking habits, sleep schedule, working out, stress).
 - Myths about the “Freshman 15.”
 - The importance of sleep and sticking to a schedule.
 - Washing your hands.

Reminder:

- At the end of class assign the groups for the end of the year video presentation. The groups can be split up in any way that you chose. It is recommended that they are in groups of five students and that each group’s video is four-five minutes long. The videos will be shown in class week sixteen. The order will be selected at random so the videos must be turned in Monday of week 16 at 8:00 am.

Week Nine**Theme of the week is career and professionalism**

Office highlight from the Career Center

Assignment: Visit the career center and take a picture in front of the office. Upload picture to Blackboard.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will be highlighting the Career Center in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Career Center, the resources it has to offer students, and campus employment. It will also highlight the office's support staff, the professional skills students can build from visiting the Career Center, and the academic support it provides students.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - Professionalism;
 - In the classroom, emails, speaking to professionals on campus.
 - What your dress can say about you.
 - Manners.
 - The dangers of social media and your future (discuss this topic and how posting pictures and status can affect campus and future professional jobs. Stress that once you post something online it is there forever).
 - Texting "lingo" and when it should and should not be used.
 - Timeliness.
 - Representing yourself the way you would like others to see you.

Week Ten**Theme of the week is build a better you**

Office highlight from the Counseling Center

Assignment: Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 11 by the beginning of class.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will be highlighting the Counseling Center in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Counseling Center, the resources and support services it has to offer students and the support staff. It will also highlight the skills students can build from visiting the Counseling Center and how it can help them professional and personally, the important of asking for help and not being afraid to talk with a professional, and confidentiality.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - Building a better you, learning how to highlight your strengths and improve upon your weaknesses.
 - During this class you are encouraged to have the students take a personality test. Examples of test options to use are Meyers-Briggs assessment and the True Colors personality evaluations. Ask the students to participate in taking the assessment and then go over what they mean after they have taken them. You can have the students separate into their personality type (depending on what assessment you used) and form a group. Ask the groups to get together in the area of the classroom assigned and discuss how they feel about the evaluation and how they think they can use this information.

Week Eleven**Theme of the week is building an academic plan**

Office highlight from the First Year Academic Advising Center

Assignment: Upload to Blackboard 5-10 academic focused goals you have for yourself this year and steps you plan to take to achieve them.

Visit the First Year Academic Advising Center and take a picture in front of the office. Upload the picture to Blackboard. Due next Tuesday by the end of the class period.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will be highlighting the First Year Academic Advising Center in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the First Year Academic Advising Center, the resources it has to offer students, the support staff, the skills they can build from visiting the First Year Academic Advising Center, and the academic support it provides students.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a power point instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - The importance of making appointments each semester to see your academic advisor
 - Being responsible-for looking through the course catalog, knowing how many credits and classes needed, to begin planning ahead.
 - Creating academic goals each semester for yourself
 - Ask the class to make a list of their academic goals for the year, what kind of student they would like to be, and what study skills they would like to implement or improve upon. Ask students to share some of their goals.
- Class can end fifteen to twenty minutes early for students to go find the First Year Academic Advising Center and take a picture in front of it for their homework assignment.

Week Twelve **Theme of the week is finances**

Office highlight from Financial Aid

Assignment: Create a budget for the spring semester based off student profile given. To be worked on during class, turn in at end of period.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will be highlighting the Financial Aid Office in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Financial Aid Office, the resources it has to offer students, and the office support staff. It will also highlight when to file a FASA, the difference between loans and financial aid, how to budget your school finances each year, the four-year plan for students, and what going on academic probation can mean for your financial aid status.
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a power point instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - Being smart about your spending habits at school (Going out to eat, going out on the weekends, shopping).
 - How to live on a budget while at school.
 - Ways to be financially conscious with your money.
 - How to prioritize what you need vs. what you want.
 - Split the class up into groups and pass out student scenarios. Have each group build a budget for the semester based off the student scenario they received. Have a representative from each group share the budget they made and why.
 - At the end have students pick up new budget scenario that they will use to complete their homework assignment.

Week Thirteen Theme of the week is community building and service

Office highlight from Student Voluntary Services

Assignment: Begin to search for volunteer projects in the community or on campus. Must volunteer for one-hour minimum. Take pictures of the event and write a one-page reflection on your experience and what you learned. Upload to Blackboard by the last class period of the semester.

Suggested Class Content:

Tuesday:

- Today you will be highlighting the Student Voluntary Services in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Student Voluntary Services, the resources it has to offer students, and the office support staff. It will also highlight the skills students can build from and volunteering with the office and in the community, and how volunteering in the community and on campus can help build a strong resume and build important skills needed to succeed in the future
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a power point instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - Making a difference on your campus and local community.
 - The positive impact volunteering can have on others as well as yourself.
 - The professional and social skills you can build through volunteering.
 - The relationships and networking that can be developed and built while working with non profits and with local events.
 - Highlighting your volunteer experience on resumes and in interviews.
 - Take class time to discuss the assignment due by the end of semester that requires students to volunteer for an hour at a campus event or in the local community. Brainstorm a list of possible places to volunteer and how to contact the organization.

Week Fourteen Theme of the week is stress and relaxation

Office highlight from the Campus Recreation Center

Assignment: Use this week to attend one campus program. Take a picture of yourself at the event and write a one-page summary on your experience. Upload paper to Blackboard by Thursday of Week 15 by the beginning of class time.

Suggested Class Content:**Tuesday:**

- Today you will be highlighting the Campus Recreation Center in class. The office was asked to create a video that could be shown in class or a PowerPoint presentation the facilitator could present. This video or PowerPoint presentation will be used to help the students learn about the Campus Recreation Center, the resources, equipment, classes, and activities it has to offer students, the support staff, and support services it has to get fit and stay healthy!
- The office that is being represented will prepare this presentation. You do not need to prepare something for this class time. If they send a PowerPoint instead of a video, please familiarize yourself with the PowerPoint prior to the seminar.

Thursday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - The importance of integrating exercise into your weekly routine.
 - How to deal with stressful situations in an appropriate manner and turn them into more manageable and positive situations.
 - Stress and relaxation techniques.
 - Simple fitness and healthy eating tips for a college student.
 - Select one or two group activities the class can go in small groups or as a larger group to demonstrate different activities they can use to relax during stressful time periods. Debrief after each activity.

Week Fifteen **Theme of the week is study skills and final group video project preparation**

No office highlight this week

Assignment: Use class time to work on course group final project. Bring any materials needed to complete project.

Suggested Class Content:

Tuesday:

- Use this class period to focus on:
 - Reviewing study skill tips learned at the beginning of the semester and how they can prioritize their finals schedule and manage their time to study for each exam. Take the first thirty minutes of the class period and go over helpful tips and reminders to prepare and encourage them for their first finals week at Ball State.
 - For the last part of the class, break the class up into their video project group assigned during week eight. Use the remaining class time to work on-projects. Students may be excused to film their project in alternative locations.

Thursday:

- This class period is for the students to work in their groups on their final video presentations. They must come to class. Make any final announcements needed. Remind them of the final project due date and the volunteer hour they will need to complete and document by the end of the semester. After all announcements, class can be dismissed to work on their final project.

Week Sixteen **Theme of the week is how you will make the most out of your time at BSU?**

No office highlight this week

Final video project presentations begin, order has been pre-selected. Have video submitted on Blackboard by this Monday at 8 am.

Suggested Class Content:

Tuesday and Thursday:

- Both days are to be used for final group video presentations. It is recommended you show ten student videos the first day, which are approximately fifty minutes and the second day you show the remainder of the videos. In order to receive full credit all members of the student group must be present both days of the presentations. Attendance should be taken both days.

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