**Ramapo College of New Jersey**

**First Year Seminar**

**Communication at its Best**

Common Course Description

Designed for first-time, full-time, first-year students, First-Year Seminar (FYS) provides a comprehensive introduction to college-level learning. Seminar courses are developed around an academic theme or topic that is based on one of Ramapo College’s academic pillars. First-Year students will have the opportunity to select a seminar that best suits their interests while learning about Ramapo’s academic foundation. The First-Year Seminar course helps students in their transition from high school to college life, both in and out of the classroom. The common learning outcomes of FYS are: critical and creative thinking, college-level writing, oral communication, information literacy, and technological competency. FYS classes are small to emphasize open discussion and experiential learning within the context of the theme of the seminar course. Peer facilitators play an essential role in each FYS class ensuring that first-year students have guidance from a more experienced student. FYS is also the home of the Ramapo Summer Reading Program; all first-year students read the same book and discuss and write about it in their seminars. FYS encourages new students to participate in a community of learners to strengthen their critical thinking skills, and to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Course Description

This course will focus on improving your verbal, non verbal, and written communication skills. You will take part in different types of communication experiences which are designed to develop your understanding and use of interpersonal communication. You will learn how to effectively express yourself using oral communication and writing through reading and thinking. Part of our class work will include discussions, and I’m very interested in what you’ll have to say. Please plan on being an avid participant. Remember that quite often, there is more than one way to look at a situation.

Objectives

We will learn what communication is, how it works as a process, and different forms of it. Many of the everyday things we take for granted can actually be explained by understanding what it means to “communicate.” We will also explore how to make decisions more effectively and work well in small groups.

Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes

In this course, students will learn how to locate necessary information via an Information Literacy Session and a research paper. They will be able to speak effectively in order to deliver a message that is easy to identify, vivid, and memorable, their language will be appropriate for the subject and audience, and the message will be delivered via oral communication in an engaging manner during an individual oral presentation. Students will use technology to communicate in an oral presentation, and manage information during an Information Literacy Session. They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the intersections of issues that affect diverse communities in their local, national, and/or global context in a research paper. They will learn how to practice reflective intrapersonal skills and participate in diverse communities on local, national, and/or global levels through the Peer Curriculum.

Requirements

You will be responsible for all readings, homework, projects, papers, exams, and other in class assignments. Your work must be typed, using the APA format.

Evaluations

A grade will be given for each assignment, project, presentation, homework, and exam. Homework and other assignments (including summer reading essays) are worth 25% of your final grade, a rhetorical criticism paper including a presentation is worth 25% of your grade, exams are worth another 25%, and your final is worth the remaining 25%. Class participation, or lack of it, may enhance or lower your final grade.

## Peer Facilitators

As an added resource for first-year students, each section of First-Year Seminar (FYS) will have one or two peer facilitators.  These upper-level students will attend FYS classes and act as student leaders modeling engaged participation in this seminar.  They will serve as discussion leaders on issues that pertain to your personal and social development and they will facilitate weekly discussions. Your peer facilitator will be your mentor and will be available to you to provide guidance on navigating the different personal and social hurdles that you may encounter in your first year at Ramapo.

Our peer facilitators are:

Joanie Dagle [JDaigle@ramapo.edu](mailto:JDaigle@ramapo.edu) (609) 513 8054

Tatum Stout [TStout@ramapo.edu](mailto:TStout@ramapo.edu) (732) 312 8819

First-Year Academic Advising

As part of the Ramapo College Academic Advisement Plan, each first year student is assigned an academic advisor from the Center for Student Success. During the Fall semester, each first year student has a mandatory advisement meeting with his/her assigned advisor to select Spring 2019

courses and develop a personalized academic plan. You can see whom your academic advisor is through the CONNECT software system. If you have any questions regarding Academic Advisement please call (201) 684-7441 or email: success@ramapo.edu

General Education Program Course

This course fulfills the First-Year Seminar category of the general education curriculum at Ramapo College.Common to all First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses, you will develop critical thinking skills that are basic to college level study, regardless of your area of interest. You will be reading, writing, and

participating in thoughtful group discussions with the aim of developing the skills of a scholar. You will learn to support your arguments using a foundation of knowledge and facts rather than simply using personal opinions and experiences. This course the interdisciplinary studies category. We will work on various activities in class while studying different forms of communication and how this process works.

Attendance Policy

Students should attend all classes. If you miss three classes, your final grade will be lowered by ten points. Missing four classes will result in an automatic failure. Punctuality is also important. Two lates are equivalent to an absence (for example, 2 lates=1 absence, 4 lates=2 absences, 6 lates=3 absences, which is an automatic failure for the course). Leaving early follows the same guidelines. College policy states that students must notify faculty within the first three weeks of the semester if they anticipate missing any classes due to religious observance.

## Makeup Policy

There will be no makeups, so please make sure you come to class on the day of an exam, and hand in your assignments on their due dates. I will not accept late work. If for some reason you cannot be in class on the day an assignment is due, make sure I get it anyway either before or on that day. Assignments are due at the BEGINNING of class, so if you plan on submitting one without coming to class, the time it is delivered (fax, e-mail, etc.) MUST be no later than the time our class begins. Give it to a classmate, fax it, e-mail it, send it by messenger…it doesn’t matter how you do it, just get it to me. If you e-mail your attached assignment to me, remember that it needs to be time stamped NO LATER than the start time of our class. If you miss a class, remember to contact a classmate, or me, to find out what you missed, and what is due the next time we meet. Keep in mind that WORK CANNOT BE MADE UP. If you are absent on the day an assignment is due, and you did not submit it, you will receive a zero for it. If you are not in class on a day that we have class, you are considered ABSENT. Please remember that there is no such thing as an “excused absence.” Even with a note, you were obviously absent. Please schedule your appointments, court appearances, and meetings with your advisor AROUND class, not INSTEAD of it. Contact a classmate or me for any assignments if you miss class. Your absence is not an excuse for not having completed work the next time we meet.

Conduct

Students are expected to communicate respectfully at all times, both verbally and non-verbally. Slang and colloquial jargon are not elements of effective speaking. Any form of disrespect to a classmate, faculty/staff member, or me, will not be tolerated. Also, hats, hoods, Bluetooth devices/ear buds/headphones are to be removed upon entering the classroom. Misconduct will result in removal from and/or failure for the course.

## Academic Integrity

If you plagiarize, the penalties can become quite severe, and I become very unhappy. You’re here for an education, so don’t cheat yourself out of one. Make sure you read Ramapo College’s Academic Integrity Policy in the college catalog. If you are caught plagiarizing, and chances are good that I will figure it out, the result will be an automatic failure for the course, which will go on record with the university. Violators will be sent to the Provost.

All members of the community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors.  Since violations of academic integrity erode community confidence and undermine the pursuit of truth and knowledge at the College, academic dishonesty must be avoided.

#### **Procedure/**Responsibilities

The Office of the Provost has responsibility for the oversight and enforcement of the Academic Integrity Policy and for making the policy an institutional priority.  The Office of the Provost is also responsible for publishing the policy and for educating both faculty and students about the policy.

Faculty members play a crucial role in the Academic Integrity Policy. They are responsible for educating their students about the importance of academic integrity and for communicating to students their expectations with respect to academic integrity in course work. They are also urged to report alleged violations of the policy to the Vice Provost. Students have the responsibility to understand the Academic Integrity Policy and to comply with the policy in their academic work.

#### Criteria

There are four (4) broad forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Cheating

Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents his or her mastery of material on a test or other academic exercise.  Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

-copying from another student’s work

-allowing another student to copy his/her work

-using unauthorized materials such as a textbook, notebook, or electronic devices during an examination

-using specifically prepared materials, such as notes written on clothing or other unauthorized notes, formula lists, etc., during an examination

-collaborating with another person during an examination by giving or receiving information without authorization from the instructor

-taking a test for another person or asking or allowing another to take the student’s own test

1. Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a person represents someone else’s words, ideas, phrases, sentences, or data as one’s own work.  When a student submits work that includes such material, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific footnote or endnote references; additionally, verbatim statements must be acknowledged through quotation marks.  To avoid a charge of plagiarism, a student should be sure to include an acknowledgment of indebtedness:

-whenever he or she quotes another person’s words directly

-whenever he or she uses another person’s ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they have been completely paraphrased in one’s own words

-whenever he or she allows another individual to contribute to the work in some significant fashion (for instance, through editing or sharing of ideas)

-whenever he or she uses facts, statistics, or other illustrative material taken from a source, unless the information is common knowledge

Examples of standard citation formats can be found on the George T. Potter Library Website: Citation Manuals and Style Guides.

1. **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct includes the alteration of grades, involvement in the acquisition or distribution of unadministered tests, and the unauthorized submission of student work in more than one class.  Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

-changing, altering, falsifying, or being the accessory to the changing, altering, or falsifying of a grade report or form, transcript, or other academic record, or entering any computer system or College office or building for that purpose

-stealing, buying, selling, giving way, or otherwise obtaining all or part of any unadministered test or paper or entering any computer system or College office or building for the purpose of obtaining an unadministered test

-submitting written work (in whole or in significant part) to fulfill the requirements of more than one course without the explicit permission of both instructors

-disregarding policies governing the use of human subjects or animals in research

-sabotaging another student’s work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment

-knowingly facilitating a violation of the academic integrity policy by another person.

1. **Fabrication**

Fabrication refers to the deliberate use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.

Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to:

-citing information not taken from the source indicated

-citing of sources in a “works cited” that were not used in that project

-altering, stealing, and/or falsifying research data used in research reports, theses, or dissertations

-submitting as one’s own any academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, including the use of another’s identity

-falsifying information or signatures on registration, withdrawal, or other academic forms and records

Reporting Violations

To ensure due process, any member of the Ramapo community who is aware of violations of the College's academic integrity policy is expected to report the incident to the Office of the Provost.

Faculty members who choose to resolve the matter themselves are urged also to report the incident to the Office of the Provost, since the incident may be a repeat offense, or there may be a subsequent grade appeal.

More details on Ramapo College’s academic integrity policy can be found here: <http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog-2014-2015/academic-policies/>

Electronic Medium

Cell phones and other medium are to be turned OFF (not on “vibrate”) when entering the classroom. If your device makes noise, or you are texting or reading text messages, your final grade will be lowered by ten points for each instance. If I see your cell phone out, you will place it on my desk until the end of class. If our classroom doesn’t have a clock, you may want to wear a watch if you need to check the time. Your phone/iPad/iPod should be out of sight during class. The same policy applies to laptops. Lids should remain closed. Notes and assignments should be written with a pen and paper.

## Instructor’s Material

Hacker, D., & Sommers, N. (2020). *Rules for writers* with 2020 APA

update.Boston, MA:Bedford/St. Martin’s.

Seiler, W. J. and Beall, M. L. (2019). *Communication: Making Connections.*

11th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Grann*,* D. (2018). *Killers of the flower moon: The Osage murders and the*

*birth of the FBI*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.

\*\*\*Please bring your textbook, notebook, and pen with you to each class.

Class Meetings

Our class will meet in the A building on Mondays and Thursdays in room 107 from 4:10-5:50pm throughout the Fall 2022 semester.

Students with disabilities

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a documented disability, please let me know. I will also need a copy of the documentation.

## Contacting me

This is not difficult to do. If you need to speak to me privately, I am usually available before and after class. You are also welcome to e-mail me. The address is: [SDinerst@ramapo.edu](mailto:SDinerst@ramapo.edu). In accordance with College policy, I will use your Ramapo College email address (@ramapo.edu) to communicate with you about all course-related matters.

Additional Information

Prerequisites/corequisites: None

Office and mailbox location: B 122, hours by appointment

Here is a link to Ramapo College’s Policies:

https://www.ramapo.edu/fa/arc/college-wide-policies-courses/

**Course Calendar**

9/1 course introduction

essay topic and discussion based on summer reading

9/5 LABOR DAY (school is closed)



9/8 ch 1

9/12 ch 2

APA formatting

9/15 Library session (meet in the classroom and we will go together)

9/19 FYS presentation

9/22 typed draft of first essay is due

peer editing

ch 3

9/26 ESSAY DUE

ch 4

9/29 TEST

second essay topic is given based on summer reading

10/3 FYS presentation

10/6 ch 5

10/10 typed draft of second essay is due

peer editing

10/13 independent work opportunity

10/17 ESSAY DUE

10/20 ch 6

10/24 review

10/27 TEST

10/31 Happy Halloween!!!



ch 13

FYS Presentation

11/3 ch 14

11/7 ch 15

11/10 ch 16

review

11/14 \*\*\*RHETORICAL CRITICISM IS DUE FOR EVERYONE\*\*\*

presentations begin

FYS Presentation

11/17 cont. presentations

11/21 cont. presentations

review

11/24 HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

(school is closed)

11/28 independent work opportunity

11/30 TEST

12/1 review

12/5 course wrap up

12/8 final meeting

\*\*\*additional assignments will be incorporated into this outline

\*\*\*info is subject to change

\*\*\*please contact a classmate, or me, if you are absent to inquire about what we covered in class, and what is due for our next meeting