Course Syllabus – Fall 2019

Version 1.3

Course: ACAD 1340-07 Freshman Seminar *It's not Easy Being Green*

Instructor Information

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Course Overview

Catalog Description: Required for first-time, full-time freshmen. First Year Seminar explores a specific topic while helping students develop foundational skills for academic and personal success, including critical thinking, effective written and oral communication. Students will engage and reflect on complex issues, research open-ended questions, and work closely with classmates on creative projects.

Seminar Topic: It's not Easy Being Green

Go green! Save the planet! We hear a lot about making "environmentally friendly" choices, but what does that really mean? In the real world, choices are trade-offs, we gain one thing and lose something else. Solar power is clean, but expensive and unreliable, while nuclear power is cheap and reliable, but creates hazardous waste. In this seminar we will examine the trade space of real world environmental issues in order to look beyond "feel good" environmentalism and think critically about the pros and cons of our options. Topics will include energy, transportation, recycling, and many others.

First Year Seminar Program Goals:

- The development of a network of relationships that prepares students for academic and personal success emphasizing a life of leadership and service
- Provide students the opportunity to explore relevant issues that include diverse ideas. These issues might include current events, poverty vs. privilege, global citizenship, world religions, and diverse political perspectives.
- Provide students time and guidance to reflect deeply and intentionally about the roles and purposes of their education at McMurry. Which include
    - the importance of a liberal arts education and the rationale of the general-education requirements
    - their personal motivations and goals for learning
    - proper study habits and skills needed for success at the university level
- Using intentional reflection as a method of helping students in their journey to self-authorship
- An introduction to McMurry University's history, traditions and Core Values and how it relates to civic engagement and service.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate improvement in their proficiency in the following areas: reading, writing, informed discussion and research.
- Students will improve their ability to see multiple sides of issues; identify solutions to complex problems; evaluate the quality of opinions and facts.
- Students will analyze a problem into its relevant/irrelevant and/or valid/invalid component elements.
- Students will combine relevant elements through imaginative insight to reach a conclusion
- Students will demonstrate understanding of the processes for discerning patterns of relationships

Course Materials and Resources:

Required Course Materials and Resources:

- Junkyard Planet by Adam Minter
- Thorium: Energy Cheaper than Coal by Robert Hargraves
- There is No Planet B by Mike Berners-Lee
- Tablet PC (when instructed)

Course Policies:

Attendance: Attendance in this class is critical to success and demonstrates openness to learning. This is a discussion-based course; therefore, students must be on time and prepared to engage in active learning. This means homework is complete and assignments are prompt. After two absences, the instructor reserves the right academically drop a student. Lack of successful completion of this course means re-taking it in the spring. Excused absences must be cleared before class with a phone call or email.

Excused absences include illness, death in the family, and participation in an official school event. No make-up work is allowed for unexcused absences. Students with excused absences are responsible for finding out what happened in class (Moodle or a fellow classmate), and completing any assignments by the next class meeting.

Attendance and participation at required student activities is mandatory and count as part of the class attendance record and final grade.

Grade Determination:

Attendance/Participation	15%
Reflection/Writing Assignments	35%
Research Project	35%
Other Assignments	15%
TOTAL	100%

Late Work: Students may submit assignments late only when such rescheduling is made necessary by official University business or extraordinary personal circumstances. All requests to submit assignments late must be made before the assignment is due; requests made after the fact will be denied and the student will receive a zero on the assignment.

+/- Grade System:

Grade Range	*Letter Grade*	*Grade Range*	*Letter Grade*
92 or better	A	72-75	C
89-91	A-	69-71	C-
86-88	B+	66-68	D+
82-85	B	59-65	D
79-81	B-	56-58	D-
76-78	C+	55 or below	F

I will provide you with early graded feedback regarding your performance in this course. You will receive a during-term grade for this course by the 5th week of classes and after midterm. You can access your grades though MyMcM or Moodle. If your during-term grade is below a C-, you will receive a message from the Mindset for Success Office regarding your academic underperformance in this course. This email will contain information about several resources that will help you in this course.

Special Needs: McMurry University abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which stipulates that no otherwise qualified student shall be denied the benefits of an education "solely by reason of a handicap". If you have a documented disability that may impact your performance in this class and for which you may be requesting accommodation, you must be registered with and provide documentation of your disability to the Accessibility and Accommodations Office, located in the southeast wing of President Hall. Arrangements will be made for students needing special accommodations.

Tentative Schedule*:

*** Please refer to Moodle for the most up to date reading schedule, assignments, and due dates.**

Column1	Class Discussion	Readings	Assignments
Week 0 Aug 22&23	Course title discussion Introduction/Syllabus	Research Abilene Recycling Introduction Making Soup (JP), Grubbing	Course mission statement
Week 1 Aug 27&29	Discussion Exercise Abilene Recycling	 Honey, Barley The Intercontinental, The Backhaul	Submit found articles with analysis
Week 2 Sept 3&5	No class – report to Dr. Keith's office as scheduled	Check out a library book – Bring it to meeting	Individual meetings with FYA (week 2-3)
Week 3 Sept 10&12	No class – report to Dr. Keith's office as scheduled		Individual meetings with FYA (week 2-3)
Week 4 Sept 17&19	Discussion Exercise Introduce Group Research Project	Plastic Land The Reincarnation Department The Golden Ingot	Reflection Exercise
Week 5 Sept 24&226	Discussion Exercise Peer Review	Ashes to Ashes, Junk to Junk, Afterward Forward, Introduction (T:ECTC)	Reflection Exercise Early Grades
Week 6 Oct 1&3	Discussion Exercise Advising Discussion	Energy and Civilization Unsustainable World	Reflection Exercise
Week 7 Oct 8&10	Discussion Exercise	Energy Sources (through Natural Gas) Energy Sources (from Wind to end)	Group Research Project
Week 8 Oct 15&17	Discussion Exercise Peer Reviews of Literature Reviews	Tuesday - Mohammed Al Samawi Talk Liquid Fluoride Thorium Reactor (through Denatured MS Reactor)	Reflection Exercise
Week 9 Oct 22&24	Discussion Exercise	(Pebble bed through LFTR development tasks) Liquid Fluoride Thorium Reactor (Developers through Westinghouse AP1000)	October 21st Midterm Grades HOMECOMING
Week 10 Oct 29&31	Discussion Exercise Peer Review	(Small Modular Reactors to end) Safety A Sustainable World	Reflection Exercise
Week 11 Nov 5&7	Discussion Exercise	Energy Policy	Schedule Advising Appointments
Week 12 Nov 12&14	Discussion Exercise Group Project Work Time	Excerpts from Planet B	Registration begins November 7
Week 13 Nov 19&21	Discussion Exercise	Excerpts from Planet B	Reflection Exercise
Week 14 Nov 26	Research Project Presentations		Oral Presentation

Major Projects, Required Activities, and Assignments:

Reflection/Writing Assignments – Writing skills are essential and will be practiced in this and many of your classes. Writing assignments will be defined and assigned throughout the course. Deductions will be taken for basic spelling and grammar errors. All written assignments, unless stated otherwise, should be submitted in the following format:

- Typewritten (handwritten papers will not be accepted), double spaced, one-inch margins, left justification
- Times Roman (or similar), 12-point font

Research Project: Verbal communication skills are essential in any career. The project will provide you a collaborative effort where you must practice interpersonal, time management and organizational skills with those in your small group. The oral presentation will begin to prepare you to clearly convey ideas to an audience. Group and topic selection will be discussed during the semester.

Other Assignments: Throughout the semester, you will be asked to participate in individual and group activities to enhance and demonstrate your understanding of the many topics covered in this seminar course. Assignments may include homework assignments and/or quizzes over assigned readings, surveys, pop responses, role play, debates, and online chats and discussions.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes and their Linkage to Program and University Goals and Outcomes.

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Desired Student Learning Outcomes for this course	Linked to which Program Goal(s)	Linked to which institutional goal(s)?	Evidence used to demonstrate student achievement of objectives & goals
Students will demonstrate improvement in their proficiency in the following areas: reading, writing, informed discussion and research.	1,2,3,4	2,3,4	Discussion Activities, Reflection Exercises, Group Research Project, Group Research Project Presentation
Students will improve their ability to see multiple sides of issues; identify solutions to complex problems; evaluate the quality of opinions and facts.	1,2,3,4,5	2,3,4,6,7	Discussion Activities, Reflection Exercises, Group Research Project, Group Research Project Presentation
Students will analyze a problem into its relevant/irrelevant and/or valid/invalid component elements.	1,2,3,4,5	2,3,6,7	Discussion Activities, Group Research Project
Students will combine relevant elements through imaginative insight to reach a conclusion	1,2,3,4,5	2,3,6,7	Discussion Activities, Group Research Project
Students will demonstrate understanding of the processes for discerning patterns of relationships	1,2,3,4,5	2,3,6,7	Discussion Activities, Group Research Project