The SPU University Colloquium

The word colloquium means “conversation” and the new SPU *University Colloquium* is intended to be just that -- a place of conversation where new-to-college freshmen can enter into our academic community by studying and discussing an interesting problem or academic topic with a faculty instructor and student peers.

**COURSE SPECIFICS**

Catalog Course Title and Description

Your Title Here

This course introduces first-year college students to learning in an academic community in a weekly discussion-based seminar. (A brief description of your colloquium will be here). Students will also learn strategies for planning coursework, learning about majors and minors, and other general strategies for college success. Instructor’s Discipline:

Course Outcomes

The course is intended to meet the following general outcomes.

* Introduce an interesting disciplinary topic through a combination of reading and/or activities and discussion, helping students begin the process of becoming college-level learners through both an academic and relational context.
* Provide an additional early connection with the SPU community through close interaction with a regular faculty member, fellow students, and an upper-division student mentor (if the instructor chooses to work with a mentor).
* Introduce students to various strategies for learning about majors and minors and planning coursework.

Course Guidelines

* The one credit course will be offered only in fall quarter and is limited to 20 students per section.
* The course will begin Orientation week and end during week 8 (the week prior to Thanksgiving).
* You will select your own topic for the *University Colloquium*. Some of you might want to choose a contemporary problem for your course. Choose a topic you are eager to explore. To invite students, choose a topic that is not too esoteric or narrow. Contemporary issues or problems are often of high interest.
* The course is not intended to provide students with an introduction to a major.
* This is a Pass/No Credit (P/NC) course. As such, a student will have to participate fully in the course (attend classes, participate in discussions, complete assigned work) to receive a passing grade.
* The course meets once per week for 50 minutes. Because the weekly meeting time is so limited, we ask that you limit outside of class meetings, e.g, fieldtrips, performances, and film screenings to one session. If you choose to include an outside of class time meeting, please provide this information in some fashion in your section listing.
* The course should be discussion-based with limited lecture. It may include projects, labs, fieldwork, studio work, field trips, film screenings and other activities.
* Homework appropriate to the topic should be assigned. This may include readings, written reflections and essays, single or group projects, and in-class presentations. Feedback on homework is encouraged for development of academic skills. Quizzes and exams are optional and not necessarily encouraged.
* Given that the course ends prior to the end of the quarter, no final exam is permitted.
* Colloquium faculty generally will not serve as their students’ academic advisor of record (see the FAQ below) but we hope that you will devote time in the course to discussions of major and minor exploration and course selection.
* All faculty teaching the University Colloquium will receive a one-time $250 stipend for course development. It will be paid June 30, 2016.
* Funds (approximately $100 per section) are available for hospitality or other course-related activities.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

***Will I serve as faculty advisor for my Colloquium students****?*

No. Students will be assigned to a faculty advisor in September. Assignments will be based on intended major as noted by the student in Banner and faculty advising availability. Most undergraduate faculty will be assigned freshman advisees. If you would like to serve as the faculty advisor for your Colloquium students for their first year, please contact Debbie Crouch (dcrouch@spu.edu) or Gaile Moe (gmoe@spu.edu). We will try to accommodate your request in the context of the overall University advising assignments.

***May I include college-success strategies (such as inviting Center for Learning staff to give presentations) as part of my course content?***

Minimally. Many of the college-success strategies will be included in the writing sequence and should not be repeated in the colloquium. Moreover, we are eager to ensure that there be ample room in an already limited amount of class time to allow for meaningful student faculty conversations to occur.

***How will students learn about the library and its resources?***

Students will interact with the library in significant ways in the writing courses. To bolster this knowledge you could assign them to view instructional videos that the library has prepared or to take a library tour outside if class. If learning library-based research skills fits in with your course, you might want to invite a librarian to a session.

***Will I have a student mentor?***

That’s up to you. If you’d like to work with a mentor or student assistant, by all means recruit one.

***How will the course be evaluated?***

All students will be asked to complete an online evaluation which will be provided to them on the last day of class. This will not be part of the University’s regular evaluation system and faculty will not be expected to include this evaluation information in tenure, promotion or review files, but they will have access to their own results. Additionally, course faculty will also be asked to complete an evaluation. Data from students and faculty will be aggregated to evaluate how well the colloquium is working for us.

***Who can I contact with questions about my University Colloquium section?***

Gaile Moe, Director of General Education, gmoe@spu.edu or 281-2238.

*Thank you for your commitment to our first-year students and for signing on to teach a University Colloquium.*