

Integrating into the CSM Community SYGN503 CRN #83356 Course Syllabus

Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the unique academic and research demands at CSM, strengthen your communication and professional skills, and assist you in efficiently completing your degree within this environment. The class materials and activities will focus on understanding expectations, developing effective professional relationships in the campus community, preparing deliverables in a professional style, actively contributing to discussions and team work, and networking with other students across different departments to share strategies for success that you can apply to your degree program. Another intent of the course is to provide a relaxed, friendly space for you to ask questions regarding the cultural and academic adjustments you are making, learn about available resources, and build confidence in skills of collaboration.

Evaluation:

attendance and participation 70%; homework 30%

If you come to class on a regular basis, engage with others, and do the homework (which is minimal), you can easily earn a high grade in this course.

Homework:

You should expect to spend 1 1/2 - 2 hours per week on homework, which I will post on our online site. A typical assignment could be reading new material (to prepare you for the next class), OR responding -- in casual, journal-style writing -- to a couple of questions, OR having a short discussion with a classmate or colleague on campus.

This course will cover many aspects of developing professional skills. Because we meet only once per week, we will not go into great depth on any given subject. If you would like reinforcement of the weekly topic or one-on-one advising about a challenge in your academic life, I will offer optional sessions to discuss constructive ways to move forward, practice skills, and explore additional resources. **During the remainder of your time on campus, you may partake in these optional sessions and/or request individual advising.**

Format of Course:

- 1) exploration of a variety of materials designed specifically for this class, including cases representative of situations you are likely to encounter at CSM; this background will stimulate thought and determine issues and questions
- 2) group work to exchange ideas and practice collaboration
- 3) reinforcement of skills through short assignments

*Your level of engagement determines the level of benefit you will receive from the course; if you attend regularly and participate enthusiastically, **this course should save you time during your academic career** because you will develop the insight, confidence, and skills needed to more efficiently complete your degree.*

Since much of our class work involves interaction with your classmates, **it is essential that you attend class.** If you are absent, it is impossible for me to reconstruct what you have missed. Please notify me if you must miss class due to illness, conference, or emergency.

Course Materials: Available through your online campus account

Schedule: Thursdays 2-3, Green Center Room 263

Office Hours: Wednesdays 6-7; Thursdays 3-4; or by appt. (sign-up for an appt. outside my office door)

Instructor: Diane Witters

Adjunct Faculty, Graduate Student Mentor, Communication Coach

Teaching technical writing, public speaking, & professional skills

Department of Geophysics

Green Center 260E

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