

Integrating into the CSM Community (SYGN503) is a 1-credit hour course designed for both incoming and experienced international graduate students who want to strengthen their professional skills for their degree programs and careers. The class provides fresh ideas and support for efficiently navigating the unique academic setting at Mines. Through engaging materials and conversation, students learn how to more confidently meet expectations, strengthen communication skills, develop an effective professional relationship with their advisor and others in the campus community, and practice collaborative engagement. The class also offers a welcoming space for students to network with each other across departments, explore questions regarding the cultural and academic transitions they are making, access useful resources on campus, and share strategies for success in their particular degree programs.

(For students who would like one-on-one advising regarding challenges in their academic lives or further support and practice with the weekly topics, optional sessions are offered to discuss constructive ways to move forward and to explore additional resources.)

We touch on the following four syllabus topics:

- I. Academic perspectives and styles of teaching/learning used at CSM
 - concise, direct, transparent structure (in technical writing and oral presentations)
 - independence, initiative, and critical thinking
 - practice with interpretation and summary in technical writing
 - avoiding plagiarism
- II. Professional collaboration
 - managing student/advisor (and other important) relationships
 - bridging cultural, work style, and personality differences
 - conflict resolution
 - preparing deliverables
- III. Constructive interaction with the academic community
 - teamwork and group discussion
 - giving and accepting feedback
 - strengthening communication tools (e.g., for appointments and emails)
 - using word choice and tone to convey an intended message
- IV. Time management and strategies for success
 - negotiating transitions
 - stress management
 - best practices and wisdom-sharing from experienced students
 - community resources and assistance for continued professional growth