

CORE 100 First-year symposium, Fall 2003

Section 04A: The idea of a university

www.cburch.com/core/100/

Instructor: Dr Carl Burch

E-mail: cburch@csbsju.edu

Telephone: 363–3172 (office); 363–0040 (home)

Office: Peter Engel Science Center 205

Hours: Day 1: 10am–11am

Days 4, 6: 8:30am–9:30am

drop-ins and appointments always welcome

Introduction

Welcome to the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University! This year-long course, *First-Year Symposium*, is an intensive introduction to these colleges. I look forward to coaching you toward establishing a firm academic foundation for your studies here.

The primary purpose of First-Year Symposium is to develop the skills most necessary to education (thinking, reading, writing, and speaking); but we cannot do this without some content about which to reason. This section will be structured loosely around the theme "The idea of a university." The semester breaks roughly into four pieces of this theme.

- What is the nature of higher education?
- What are the issues students face?
- Where do CSB and SJU come from?
- How do these colleges understand their mission and future?

Goals

The goals of this class include the following.

- To establish the following skills at a level essential for success in the college curriculum.
 - reading complex texts critically,
 - locating and evaluating information,
 - communicating ideas through writing and speaking, and
 - contributing to discussion.

(All sections of First-Year Symposium share this goal.)

- To understand the academic community of the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University.

Books

The following texts are required.

- Hacker, D. (2003). *The Bedford Handbook*, 7th edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Rodriguez, R. (1981). *Hunger of Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*. Boston: Bantam Books.
- Schall, J. (1988). *Another Sort of Learning*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.
- Handouts distributed in class.

Office hours

I look forward to introducing you to CSB and SJU! Please feel free to contact me outside of class, in my office, by e-mail, or by telephone. This information is included above.

During work hours, and even outside of work hours, I am usually in my office with the door open, available to speak with you. While I post office hours at the top of this syllabus,

this merely indicates times that a trip to my office is less likely to be wasted. Feel free to stop by any time.

If you're making a special trip to my office, I recommend that you either make an appointment or call ahead. This is a good idea even during scheduled office hours, since I don't announce times when the rare meeting prevents me from being here.

Outside my office, always feel free to flag me down. Even if I look set on getting somewhere, it's probably just a whim of mine.

I will schedule meetings with you several times during the semester.

Evaluation

There are a total of 1,000 points over the semester. For the first half of the semester, the points are distributed thus.

date	component	score	possible
2 Sep	Assessment essay	___	20 pts
16 Sep	Paper 1 (narrative)	___	100 pts
18 Sep	Presentation 1	___	20 pts
26 Sep	Evaluated discussion 1	___	50 pts
14 Oct	Participation and exercises	___	60 pts
14 Oct	Paper 2 (argument)	___	150 pts
20 Oct	Presentation 2	___	100 pts
Midterm total		___	500 pts

The following sections describe some of these components more thoroughly.

As the course continues, I will regularly "curve" grades so that your current total reflects the letter grade you would receive, according to the following scale. (Also see the policy under "Attendance" below.)

A	930 or more	C	730 to 799
AB	900 to 929	CD	700 to 729
B	830 to 899	D	630 to 679
BC	800 to 829	F	0 to 629

I assign grades independent of any overall goal, but the average grade I assign is generally near 3.0.

Note: The meaning of college grades may differ from the interpretation to which you are accustomed from high school. The grade of *A* is reserved for an outstanding performance; a *B* is more typical and represents good work. The *C* is still respectable, but it does reflect some reservations about your preparation for future courses. Generally, students who regularly attend and complete assignments but demonstrate minimal readiness for future courses receive the *D* grade.

I reserve the right to make adjustments in the entire grading scheme or for particular students. (It is unlikely that I will exercise this right.)

Participation and exercises

This portion of the grade is for full, serious participation in class activities and for completion of assigned exercises out of class. Generally, students who indicate sincere effort will receive the full points allocated for participation. I will give you half of this grade at the middle of the term, and the other half at the term's end.

While I anticipate that the class will be responsible enough to complete the assigned readings, I reserve the right to administer quizzes based on them without warning. For such a quiz, a student who has read the assignment carefully is likely to receive full credit.

Fine arts attendance and review

To encourage students to learn about the excellent fine arts events available to them at these campuses, the colleges re-

quires each first-year student to attend four designated events each semester. This is a minimal requirement that any student taking good advantage of the opportunities available would do anyway.

While this requirement is formally separate from First-Year Symposium, this Symposium section includes a related component worth 50 points. Twenty of these points are for completing the first half of the Fine Arts Experience requirement. I will get information about your attendance from the Fine Arts Experience coordinator at the semester's end.

The remaining 30 points derive from a review you submit of one of the designated events. You may choose any one of the designated events you attend (except the Fine Arts Experience orientation!), but you must submit your review within three days of the event's occurrence, by e-mail or on paper. In this review, which should include at least 250 words, you should describe the event, including its title and the date of its occurrence, and some of your own thoughts surrounding the event. These thoughts may include your assessment of the event, what you found interesting about the event's production, or reflections on the event's subject matter. The evaluation standards for this paper will be identical to that of the other papers in the class.

Final

There is a required final during Finals Week; I will announce the date and location by e-mail and in class shortly after I learn of it.

The final will entail completing a timed essay. Understanding of content covered during the course will not be necessary. I will evaluate the final based on the same criteria used in other writing assignments, but the grades will be "curved" more generously.

Please note that I will not reschedule the final to accommodate travel plans or events.

Attendance

As the CSB/SJU catalog states, "Students are required to attend all class meetings of courses for which they are registered."

After two absences (excused or unexcused), I will deduct 30 points from your grade for each unexcused absence. Note that this penalty is in addition to whatever valuable information you miss in your absence. Because of the participatory nature of the class, it is frequently impossible to "make up" a missed class session.

Missing a portion of class will count as a fraction of an unexcused absence. I will assign this fraction, and it will not be in proportion to the total number of class minutes missed: Being 10 minutes late, for example, would count as 1/4 of an unexcused absence, not 10/70.

Let me know about anticipated absences before their occurrence whenever possible! Although I am normally very understanding in excusing absences, there are few better ways to irritate me than to assume your absence will be excused.

Plagiarism / cheating

You must properly attribute any work or ideas you use in assignments for this course which are quoted or derived from others. Plagiarism includes copying the ideas and the written or spoken words of others, as well as submitting work from previous classes as if it were original. I will report all instances of plagiarism, cheating, or other academic misconduct to the appropriate Academic Dean, and I will give an F for that assignment or for the course at my discretion.

Do not let this scare you from soliciting criticism from your classmates and from others. You are stepping over the bounds, however, when you incorporate others' ideas or words into your own work without clearly describing the extent and source of the other person's work.

Schedule

Part I: What is the nature of higher education?

date	class agenda
Tue 26 Aug	Welcome Introductions Distribute syllabus
Thu 28 Aug	<i>Read Schall, Ch. 1</i> Discussion: Schall Discussion on discussion Tutorial: Critical reading Distribute assessment prompt
Mon 1 Sep	<i>Start Rodriguez, Ch. 1</i> (It's long!) Labor Day Break (No school)
Tue 2 Sep	<i>Prepare assessment essay</i> Writing assessment (in-class essay)
Thu 4 Sep	<i>Read Bedford, Sec. 2a</i> <i>Complete Bedford Ex. 2-1</i> <i>Read Rodriguez, Ch. 1</i> <i>Find ≥ 4 major themes in Rodriguez</i> Discussion: Rodriguez themes Schedule conferences Distribute Paper 1 assignment Paper 1 topic discovery
Mon 8 Sep	<i>Be ready to discuss ideas for paper 1</i> No class (Individual conferences)
Wed 10 Sep	<i>Read Schall, Ch. 2</i> Discussion: Schall, Ch. 2 TBA
Fri 12 Sep	Meet in Alcuin Library lobby Tour of library Schedule oral presentations

Tue 16 Sep	<i>First paper 1 due</i> Conference groups with tutors
Thu 18 Sep	<i>Read Bedford, Ch. 9</i> <i>Complete Bedford Ex. 9-1</i> <i>Read Meno, pp 12-26</i> Oral presentation 1 Discussion: <i>Meno</i>
Fri 19 Sep	<i>Submit final paper 1 by 5pm</i> (Odd day — no class)
Mon 22 Sep	<i>Read Meno, pp 26-36</i> Oral presentation 1 Discussion: <i>Meno</i> Distribute Paper 2 assignment
Wed 24 Sep	<i>Read Meno, pp 36-53</i> Oral presentation 1 Discussion: <i>Meno</i>

Part II: What are the issues students face?

date	class agenda
Fri 26 Sep	<i>Read Bedford, Ch. 48</i> <i>Complete Bedford, Ex. 48-1</i> Watch <i>Oleanna</i> , part 1 Evaluated Discussion
Tue 30 Sep	Watch <i>Oleanna</i> , part 2 Evaluated Discussion
Thu 2 Oct	Watch <i>Oleanna</i> , part 3 Evaluated Discussion
Mon 6 Oct	<i>Complete first paper 2</i> Conference groups Schedule conferences
Wed 8 Oct	<i>Start Rodriguez, Ch. 2</i> No class (Individual conferences)

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- 9–10 Oct **Fall Break** (No school)
- Tue 14 Oct *Submit final paper 2*
Complete Rodriguez, Ch. 2
Distribute mid-term grades
Discussion: Rodriguez
- Thu 16 Oct *Read Bedford, Ch. TBA*
Discussion cont'd.
Schedule presentations
- Mon 20 Oct *Read Schall, Ch. 3*
Oral presentation 2
Discussion: Schall
- Wed 22 Oct *Read Schall, Ch. 4*
Oral presentation 2
Discussion: Schall
- Fri 24 Oct Oral presentation 2
Discussion cont'd

The schedule's second half will come later.

Note: This schedule is *tentative*. We are likely to follow it closely but not exactly.