Course Description:
This course is designed as a companion learning course to educate and prepare students for graduate school or professional school. The goal of the course is to help students enrich their career learning through facilitated analysis and reflection on their work and to apply what they are learning in the classroom in a real world setting. There are no prerequisites or textbooks for this course.

Course Objectives: This course is designed to help you develop competencies essential to your ability to effectively navigate and participate in graduate and professional school opportunity. Specifically, this course supports the development of your ability to:

- Research graduate school programs, application requirements, curriculum, and competitiveness.
- Do a cost benefit analysis and calculate ROI (return on investment) for graduate school programs by weighing costs of program versus income and expected post graduate income.
- Understand financial aid, assistantships, fellowships, and other methods of funding graduate school.
- Understand the application process for their graduate/professional school choice. This includes the application and selection criteria, personal statement/essays, and testing requirements (GRE/GMAT/MCAT).
- Understand the value of college involvement, internships, relationships and networked connections for graduate/professional school.
- Enhance your understanding of professionalism and graduate school behavioral expectations, including the range of what is considered acceptable across higher education institutions.
- Apply the knowledge and skills learned during your undergraduate coursework towards writing a personal statement.

Grading & Course Deliverables:
All assignments are expected to be turned in by the published due date. Late work is not accepted unless arrangements have been made prior to the deadline. If assignments are missed, there will be no opportunity to make up the points.

A = 90 – 100
B = 80 – 89
C = 70 – 79
D = 60 – 69
F = Below 60

If your total points are on the border of the next letter grade, no consideration for an adjustment will be given if you have missed any assignments, received approval for a late assignment, or not fully participated in all class activities.
1. **Attendance & Participation (10 pts.):**
   Online attendance will be measured by your engagement with: the course content, course tools, your instructor and your fellow students in this course. It is a good practice to login to the course several times a week to stay informed of news, announcements, grades, assignments, and other important course information. Simply logging into Brightspace does **NOT** count as participation!

2. **Discussions (20 pts.):**
   Answer and post response to discussion topics.

3. **Graduate School Comparison Chart (15 pts.):**
   Research three different graduate schools/programs of your choice based on:
   - A “Likely” school – programs where your gpa and test scores are higher than the school’s averages and you are therefore likely to be admitted
   - A “Best-fit” school – a program where your numbers are on par with the college’s statistics, therefore you have a good chance of being admitted
   - A “Reach” school – a program were your numbers are below average. Your odds of getting into a reach school are not as good as getting in the first two types, but the program is renowned and meaningful to you therefore you should apply.

4. **Complete a Cost Benefit Analysis (15 pts.):**
   Complete the cost benefit analysis worksheet and calculate ROI (return on investment) for graduate school programs by weighing costs of program versus income and expected post graduate income. This assignment consist of researching the cost of three graduate programs, the average entry income for the career path you desire, and determine whether graduate/professional school is worth attending based on the amount of debt and earnings one is expected to acquire.

5. **Find & Interview a Mentor (15 pts.):**
   Creating & building relationships with faculty within your undergraduate major is an essential component for applying to graduate school. Those relationships are key for deciding on graduate schools, career opportunities and more importantly providing letters of recommendation that your graduate applications require.

   You are required to seek out a faculty member in your current field of study (your major) and conduct an interview. The interview will be turned in as an essay with the following guidelines:
   - APA format (this includes a cover page)
   - 500 words
   - Double spaced
   - 1 inch margins
   - 12 point Times New Roman font

6. **Personal Statement (15 pts.):**
   When applying to graduate school, you will be required to exhibit your writing skills within an essay called a personal statement. A personal statement allows a school to see what makes you a strong applicant for their program beyond your grades. Each student will write a personal statement that will adhere to the following guidelines:
   - APA format (this includes a cover page)
   - 2 pages
   - Double spaced
   - 1 inch margins
7. **Update your Resume (10 pts.):**
Students must update their resumes from SFA 110 and with their most recent college experiences (organizational participation, leadership roles, academic accomplishments, etc.) as well as any new work experiences. Also pay attention to the transferable skills you have developed through your campus involvement, leadership roles, employment (if applicable), or volunteer responsibilities. Resumes **MUST** be critiqued by the SFA Center for Career and Professional Development before you submit for a grade.

**Potential for Course Changes:**
This syllabus represents a “best” plan for this course; but as with most plans, it is subject to change depending on course needs and circumstances. Should any changes be necessary, students will be informed in writing as promptly as possible via D2L, so check frequently.

**Student Ethics and Other Policy Information Academic Integrity:**
It is the policy of Stephen F Austin State University that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include failure of the course or suspension from the University.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. You may read the policy at this link: ([#4 Academic Affairs](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academicintegrity.pdf))

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have **full discretion** over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**Students with Disabilities:**
To obtain disability-related accommodations and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, (936) 468-3004 / (936) 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify me and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. You will then need to schedule a time to meet with me, discuss your accommodations, and I will sign the Special Accommodation Request Form. For more information, visit this site: ([http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/))
Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.