Syllabus
RSTO 1325.501
Purchasing in Hospitality Industries
Fall 2020

Instructor: David M. Fickes  
Pronouns: He/Him/His

Course Time & Location: RSTO 1325 is delivered entirely online through Brightspace; Classes begin August 24, 2020 and end December 4, 2020; Finals are administered December 7-11, 2020.

The Final Exam for this class will be administered online through Brightspace by D2L. Due to current COVID-19 precautions, the exam will not be administered for certification. Please see the Course Timeline on Brightspace for D2L for additional exam information.

Office: Online via Zoom  
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 3:00pm – 4:00pm CDT/CST or by appointment

Email: fickesdm@sfasu.edu (NOTE: there is another Fickes, so please be sure you are emailing correctly.

Preferably, use Brightspace to send emails related to the course. If Brightspace is unavailable, send email to fickesdj@sfasu.edu and include “RSTO 1325” somewhere in the subject line.

Credits: 3 Credit Hours

This class is offered as a required course for all Hospitality Administration students pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree. This degree is managed by the School of Human Sciences and the James I. Perkins College of Education.

Prerequisites: None

Course Fees: None

Please Note: The syllabus may change at the discretion of the instructor. Notification of changes will be made through Brightspace.

The Mission of Stephen F. Austin State University’s School of Human Sciences is to prepare students to be highly qualified professionals in global markets who positively influence individuals, families, and businesses in diverse communities.
Course Description and Credit Hour Justification

Three semester credit hours (lecture). This course includes the presentation of materials and managerial purchasing information needed for the successful operation of hotels, restaurants and/or institutional food service in the hospitality industry. The course includes the study of purchasing functions, organization, policies and sources of supply, quality concepts, pricing, storekeeping, sustainable purchasing, and the forecasting of food, beverages and other supplies.

Per SFA policy 5.4, your schedule should reflect that there is (1) an amount of student work per credit hour that reasonably approximates not less than three hours per week of class or direct instruction and out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks over a long semester. A 3 credit hour course in the fall or spring term should approximate a minimum 150 minutes of classroom time or direct instruction and at least 6 hours of additional student work per week for fifteen weeks, totaling 127.5 hours of work. A student in RSTO 1325 who fully participates and successfully completes all activities and assignments can expect to spend approximately 129.75 hours interacting with the class and content. As an online class, RSTO 1325 incorporates a course orientation (45 minutes, or .75 hours, total), 15 weeks of online lecture content including PowerPoint presentations and instructional videos (150 minutes, or 2.5 hours each week, 37.5 hours total), 8 individual journal assignments (30 minutes each assignment, 4 hours total) with assignment feedback from instructor (15 minutes per assignment, 2 hours total), 8 quizzes (60 minutes pre-quiz study time per quiz, 8 hours total; 30 minutes per quiz, 4 hours total), and a final, 2 hour certification exam in week 16 (180 minutes, or 3 hours, study time). In addition, students are expected to read their 220 page textbook as assigned (15 minutes per page, 55 hours total) ,utilizing any conceptual problems (approximately 30 at 15 minutes per problem, 7.5 hours total) and practice quiz questions (160 at 3 minutes per question, 8 hours total) provided in the text.

Diversity Statement

The James I. Perkins College of Education is committed to proactively recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty, staff, and student population. Through open dialogue, mutual respect, and shared responsibility, faculty, staff, and students will demonstrate an understanding and sensitivity to ethnicity, race, gender, exceptionalities, culture, language/dialect, age, social class, family structure, sexual orientation, religion, and spiritual values in order to enhance the quality of life in a diverse, global community.

Intended Learning Outcomes/Goals/Objectives

This course supports the vision, mission, and core values of the James I. Perkins College of Education and the School of Human Sciences. It is one of the core courses for Hospitality Administration students pursuing the Bachelor of Science in Human Sciences degree and aligns with the standards of AAFCS, the accrediting body of the School of Human Sciences.
James I Perkins College of Education

The James I. Perkins College of Education (PCOE) includes the Departments of Elementary Education, Human Services, Kinesiology and Health Science, and Secondary Education and Educational Leadership, and the School of Human Sciences. Each offers programs of study in educator certification as well as in various non-teaching programs.

Vision

The James I. Perkins College of Education will be the college of choice for students striving to achieve professional excellence through exemplary programs that are recognized at state, national, and international levels.

Mission

The mission of the Perkins College of Education is to prepare competent, successful, caring and enthusiastic professionals from diverse backgrounds dedicated to responsible service, leadership, social justice and continued professional and intellectual development in an interconnected global society.

To accomplish this mission, the goals of the Perkins College of Education are to:

1. Provide programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels based upon sound pedagogical and clinical practice.
2. Prepare teachers, support personnel, and educational leaders for Texas Employ and support faculty members who are committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service.
3. Provide a variety of teaching venues incorporating the latest technologies to a range of diverse student interests, backgrounds, and aspirations.
4. Maintain resources and facilities that allow each program to meet its expected outcomes.
5. Collaborate with external partners to enhance students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions, and to influence the ongoing exchange of ideas for mutual benefit.
6. Engage in outreach services.
7. To address specific needs in the broader community.
8. To enhance student learning.
9. To instill commitment to service, and to promote the reputation of the University.
10. To conduct research to advance knowledge and to contribute to the common good.

Core Values

In the Perkins College of Education, we value and are committed to:

- Academic excellence through critical, reflective, and creative thinking
- Life-long learning
- Collaboration and shared decision-making
- Openness to new ideas, to culturally diverse people, and to innovation and change
- Integrity, responsibility, diligence, and ethical behavior
- Service that enriches the community
Course Goals: Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

1. Resource Development: The students will demonstrate the use of appropriate technology and sustainability in the hospitality industry.
2. Professional Behavior: The student will exhibit the professional behaviors (strong communication skills, a professional image, a good work ethic, and adequate preparation for employment in his/her specific discipline) expected in the fields of Human Sciences and Hospitality.
3. Key Competencies: The student will demonstrate competence in his/her specific discipline using oral and written forms. The student will also demonstrate competence in calculating, interpreting, and understanding ratios, financial statements, and budgets related to the hospitality industry.
4. Service Attitude: The student will demonstrate a positive service attitude.

Course Objectives: Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

This course is designed to provide students with a basic understanding of purchasing activities within the hospitality industry. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify purchasing as an important operational function for foodservice operations. Assessed by journal assignments, quizzes, and the final exam.
2. Explain the ethics of purchasing operations. Assessed by journal assignments.
3. Demonstrate ethical purchasing practices for the hospitality industry. Assessed by journal assignments.
4. Describe the purchasing cycle and the basic functions of purchasing. Assessed by journal assignments, quizzes, and the final exam.
5. Develop product specifications for commonly used food products. Assessed by journal assignments, quizzes, and the final exam.

Course Assignments, Activities, Instructional Strategies, use of Technology

Getting Started: The ‘Getting Started’ materials will be available in Brightspace by D2L during the first week of classes. Successful completion of ALL activities will allow you to earn points toward your final grade.

Journal Assignments: Journal Assignments utilize the Brightspace Discussion Board Tool. These assignments are shared between each student and the instructor, though fellow classmates can see and comment on each post.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be administered in Brightspace by D2L. Quizzes are designed to be completed individually. Any assistance with quizzes, human, text, or technological, is unacceptable.

Certification Exam: The ManageFirst Purchasing Manager Certification Exam will be administered as the final exam. This is an online, proctored exam. Specific information regarding the administration of the exam will be available in the course. Please refer to the Course Timeline (this is NOT the Brightspace Calendar Tool) for the exam date and time.
The Final Exam for this course is a Critical Assessment of the Hospitality Administration program. Therefore, it is imperative that all students access the test in the same way, online. Failure to acquire the correct testing voucher will result in a failing grade for the final exam and a five (5) percent drop in your overall course grade.

**Required Technology**

RSTO 1325 will be delivered through the university’s Learning Management System (LMS), Brightspace. Each student is required to have access to a computer with internet capabilities in order to access the course. Each student is also required to have a working, university (jacks.sfasu.edu) email account.

As a student of Stephen F. Austin State University, you have free access to this course’s Brightspace site. You will need to access the course regularly throughout the semester. Assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Brightspace, unless otherwise instructed. Some assignments may require audio files. Students must have a working computer microphone or the ability to add audio to files on their computer to complete these assignments. Files with audio are submitted as PowerPoint files unless otherwise instructed. All other submitted files must be in PDF or Word format.

**Brightspace Technical Support**

If at any point during the course you experience technical difficulties in Brightspace, please let your instructor know immediately. Please realize: 1.) That your instructor is not qualified to provide Brightspace support; and 2.) That notifying your instructor of technical difficulties does not exempt you from assignments or activities that are due. Notifying your instructor is a courtesy. In order to obtain proper technical assistance you will need to contact the SFASU Brightspace Support Team by emailing d2l@sfasu.edu or calling 936.468.1919.

**Online Student Conduct Policy**

Netiquette refers to “Network Etiquette”. It is the way one should behave when sending email, posting to threaded discussions, or chatting online.

Here are some basic Netiquette rules to help you get the most out of online learning:

- **ALL CAPS IMPLIES THAT YOU ARE SHOUTING** - Please do not do this (unless you are capping specific words, nicely, for emphasis)!
- Watch your “tone” - it’s written, not verbal communication. It can be very easy to misinterpret someone’s meaning online.
- Check your spelling - Always!
- Make your messages easier to read by making your paragraphs short and to the point.
- Never “say” anything that you would not want posted on the wall of a face to face classroom, because it could be!
- Behave as you would in a face-to-face classroom.
- Remember there is a real live person at the other end reading your posts and email. Treat them with respect.
- Foul language, insults and harassment are not tolerated (just as it would not be tolerated in a face to face classroom).
• Think about what you have written before you submit it.

**Evaluation and Assessments (Grading)**

Students have the opportunity to earn 380 points in this course. Grades are determined from a variety of assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Bonus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting Started Activities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Individual Journal Assignments</td>
<td>15 points ea./ 120 points total</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Quizzes</td>
<td>20 points ea./ 160 points total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100 points total</td>
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**TOTAL COURSE POINTS**

380 POINTS

**GRADING SCALE:**

- A=342-380pts. (90%) B=304-341pts. (80%) C=266-303pts. (70%) D=228-265pts. (60%)

**Guidelines for Evaluating Students in Human Sciences degree programs:**

**What is an ‘A’ Student?**

- Consistently goes above and beyond what is required in the experience
- Displays initiative
- Looks up information before asking questions
- Contributes meaningfully to the class
- Acts enthusiastic, even when he/she does not feel that way
- Is open to criticism without getting defensive
- Does not act like a “know it all”
- Displays maturity
- Is proactive – does not wait to be told to do everything; takes care of things before they become problems
- Displays common sense
- Is flexible

Every student should not expect an ‘A’! It is the student who displays the above characteristics, as well as sound technical ability and theoretical knowledge, who receives the “excellent” grade.

A grade of ‘B’ should not be perceived as failure. A grade of ‘B’ means you have done “good” or “above average” work. A grade of ‘C’ means “average”. Be extremely careful of the number of ‘C’ grades you earn as graduate students are expected to perform at above average levels. If you feel you are tending toward a final grade of ‘C’ contact your instructor; help him/her help you.

**If a student wishes to contest a grade, this must be done prior to the semester’s Dead Week.**
Tentative Course Outline/Calendar

The calendar here is a tentative outline of the course. Your instructor reserves the right to change/modify this calendar as the course progresses.

Please see the official *Course Timeline* on the RSTO 1325 Brightspace homepage (this IS NOT the Brightspace Calendar Tool) for a complete schedule of all due dates and times.

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<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>MODULE</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 24-28</td>
<td>Getting Started</td>
<td>• Read this by August 28</td>
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<td>o Getting Started Module Content</td>
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<td>• Submit this by August 28</td>
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<td>o Getting Discussion Discussion</td>
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<td>o Show What You Know: Syllabus Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29-</td>
<td>Module 1/ Chapter 1</td>
<td>• Read this by September 9</td>
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<td>September 9</td>
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<td>o Module 1 &amp; Chapter 1 Submodule Content</td>
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<td>• Submit this by September 9</td>
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<td>o Share What You Know: Manager’s Redbook Chapter 1</td>
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<td>o Show What You Know: Chapter 1 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 10-</td>
<td>Module 2/ Chapters 4 and 7</td>
<td>• Read this by September 18</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>o Module 2 &amp; Chapter 4 Submodule Content</td>
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<td>o Chapter 2 in textbook</td>
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<td>• Submit this by September 18</td>
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<td>o Share What You Know: Manager’s Redbook Chapter 4</td>
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<td>o Show What You Know: Chapter 4 Quiz</td>
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<td>Module 2 &amp; Chapter 7</td>
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<td>Submodule Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 7 in textbook</td>
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**Submit this by September 30**
- Share What You Know: Manager’s Redbook Chapter 7
- Show What You Know: Chapter 7 Quiz

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<tr>
<th>October 1-21</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 3/ Chapters 2 and 3</td>
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**Read this by October 21**
- Module 3 & Chapter 3 Submodule Content
- Chapter 3 in textbook

**Submit this by October 21**
- Share What You Know: Manager’s Redbook Chapter 3
- Show What You Know: Chapter 3 Quiz

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<th>October 22- November 11</th>
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<tr>
<td>Module 4/ Chapters 5 and 6</td>
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**Read this by October 30**
- Module 4 & Chapter 5 Submodule Content
- Chapter 5 in textbook

**Submit this by October 30**
- Share What You Know: Manager’s Redbook Chapter 5
- Show What You Know: Chapter 5 Quiz

**Read this by November 11**
- Module 4 & Chapter 6 Submodule Content
- Chapter 6 in textbook

**Submit this by November 11**
- Share What You Know: Manager’s Redbook Chapter 6
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 12-20</td>
<td>Module 5 / Chapter 8</td>
<td>• Read this by November 20&lt;br&gt;o Module 5 &amp; Chapter 8 Submodule Content&lt;br&gt;o Chapter 8 in textbook&lt;br&gt;• Submit this by November 20&lt;br&gt;o Share What You Know: Manager’s Redbook Chapter 8&lt;br&gt;o Show What You Know: Chapter 8 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 21-29</td>
<td>SFA HOLIDAY</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 30-December 4</td>
<td>DEAD WEEK</td>
<td>Classes resume online&lt;br&gt;• Meet with Instructor by appointment (as needed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 7-11</td>
<td>FINAL EXAMS</td>
<td>Final Exams Administered Online&lt;br&gt;• Exam for this class will be available 12am-11:30pm CST on Monday, December 7. The exam must be completed and submitted by 11:30pm on Monday, December 7.</td>
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*There is no definitive final exam time for summer/online classes. Final exam times are determined by course instructors. For more information on your final examination date and time, please see the official Course Timeline on the RSTO 1325 Brightspace by D2L homepage.

**Deadlines Policy:** In this course you are part of an active community of learners, and as such, meeting the due dates and deadlines is extremely important. You are expected to keep an eye on the Course Timeline provided on Brightspace and to complete work on time. You cannot wait until the end of the semester to complete assignments; you must complete them as the semester progresses. All assignments are due by the dates and times indicated on the Course Timeline and will not be accepted late (think of failing to complete an activity as missing an entire week of class.) Improperly submitted assignments, or assignments that are emailed without prior instruction to do so, will fall under the category of late.

If, due to unforeseen circumstances, you feel you need a brief extension on any due date, please contact your instructor 2-3 business days ahead of time to discuss alternate arrangements.
**Make-Up Policy:** Make-up work is not allowed without a university-approved, documented excuse. For the purpose of this class, only the following will be considered an excused absence. Other absences may be excused at the discretion of the instructor. NOTE: Alerts from the Office of Community Standards/Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities alone do not fulfill the requirements below.

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<tr>
<th>Excused Absences</th>
<th>Make-Up Requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>University-related event (i.e. athletic event) with letter of proof provided to the instructor, by the student, at least seven (7) days in advance.</td>
<td>All graded content submitted within seven (7) days of approved absence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observance of Religious Holy Day (a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20.) with letter provided to the instructor, by the student, at least seven (7) days in advance.</td>
<td>All graded content submitted within seven (7) days of approved absence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance Policy:** As this is an online course, physical attendance in a classroom is not required. The entirety of this course will be completed online. There are firm deadlines for the course outlined on the Course Timeline provided on Brightspace. You are strongly encouraged to log into the course every day.

This course spans 15 weeks in the long semester, 5 weeks in summer semesters. The course contains extensive written content that includes the same information that would be presented in a face-to-face lecture course, requiring students to engage the online modules for a minimum of three (3) hours per long week, 15 hours per summer week. In addition to the “lecture” materials, students have required academic components and deliverables: discussions, written assignments, and a final exam. For every hour a student spends engaging with the online content, he/she should spend at least two (2) hours completing associated activities and assessments.

**Medical Emergency:** There may be an instance of medical emergency that arises. Examples of medical emergency include, but may not be limited to, car accident, broken limbs, or extended hospitalization. Please make every effort to contact your instructor immediately in this instance. If you are unable to do so, please have a trusted friend or family member do so. Your instructor will provide further information at that time to assist you in contacting other instructors.

**Readings**

**Required Text:** *Purchasing*, 2nd edition (with online testing voucher*)

Author: National Restaurant Association ManageFirst Program

ISBN: 9780132724890

This is a ManageFirst™ textbook with an online certification exam testing voucher included*. This book is available at Barnes and Noble in the Baker Patillo Student Center or Jackbackers. You may also purchase the book online.
Due to current COVID-19 precautions, the final exam will be administered through Brightspace. This exam will NOT provide a certification opportunity. However, a proctored, certification exam will be held in the fall semester. If you wish to take the certification exam (in addition to, not as a replacement for, the final exam in this course), please purchase your text NEW and be sure you are purchasing the ONLINE TESTING VOUCHER.

Additional information regarding the exam is provided on Brightspace.

Course Evaluations

Course Survey: Near the conclusion of each semester, students in the College of Education electronically evaluate courses taken within the COE. Evaluation data is used for a variety of important purposes including: 1. Course and program improvement, planning, and accreditation; 2. Instruction evaluation purposes; and 3. Making decisions on faculty tenure, promotion, pay, and retention.

The course evaluation process is completed electronically through MySFA. Although the instructor will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

As you evaluate this course, please be thoughtful, thorough, and accurate in completing the evaluation. Please know that the COE faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and continued improvement. Therefore, your response is critical!

Student Ethics and Other Policy Information

Class Attendance and Excused Absence: Policy 6.7

Regular, punctual attendance, documented participation, and, if indicated in the syllabus, submission of completed assignments are expected at all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which the student is registered. Based on university policy, failure of students to adhere to these requirements shall influence the course grade, financial assistance, and/or enrollment status. The instructor shall maintain an accurate record of each student’s attendance and participation as well as note this information in required reports and in determining final grades. Students may be excused from attendance for reasons such as health, family emergencies, or student participation in approved university-sponsored events. However, students are responsible for notifying their instructors in advance, when possible, for excusable absences. Whether absences are excused or unexcused, a student is still responsible for all course content and assignments. Students with accepted excuses may be permitted to make up work for up to three weeks of absences during a semester or one week of a summer term, depending on the nature of the missed work. Make-up work must be completed as soon as possible after returning from an absence.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Policy 6.1 and 6.6

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325 (936.468.3004) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify
the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to SFASU Disability Services.

Student Academic Dishonesty: Policy 4.1

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; and/or;
- 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 one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an assignment as one’s own work when it is at least partly the work of another;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and/or,
- incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty

Penalties may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, resubmission of work, make-up exam, failure of course, and/or expulsion from the university.

Student Appeals

A student who wishes to appeal decisions related to academic dishonesty should follow procedures outlined in Academic Appeals by Students: Policy 6.3.

Withheld Grades: Policy 5.5

At the discretion of the instructor of record, and with the approval of the academic unit head, 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, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Student Code of Conduct: Policy 10.4

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. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave the class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This policy 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 assignments/exams may be referred to the iCare: Early Alert Program at SFA (936-468-2703).

IX. Other Relevant Course Information

Resolving Student Grievances

1. Should a student encounter an issue in this, or any, HMS course, the following chain of authority should be followed and not circumvented:
2. Contact the instructor and attempt to resolve the issue.
3. If the student is uncomfortable discussing the issue with the instructor, the student should contact their program director and/or the Interim Director of the School of Human Sciences, Dr. Chay Runnels.
4. At this point, if the issue remains unresolved, the student should contact the Interim Associate Dean for Student and Faculty Services in the College of Education, Dr. Stacy Hendricks.
5. If the problem has to do with being a student at Stephen F. Austin State University the student may visit the Dean of Student Affairs in room 3.105 of the Baker Pattillo Student Center.

The Instructor’s Role in this Course

The Instructor’s role in this course is NOT to lecture or provide lengthy videos or presentations, but rather to facilitate a process that allows everyone to bring their own interests and expertise to the class. The Instructor will provide materials, experiences, and expertise that will encourage the students to interact and engage with the readings and other course materials. As someone conscious that there are many learning styles, the Instructor will make every attempt to present material in a variety of ways to better help facilitate learning and comprehension. Respectful exchanges and differing opinions are encouraged in the hope that this may help everyone learn from each other— including those who support stated opinions/viewpoints as well as those who present stated opinions/viewpoints that differ from our own.

How to “Manage” an Online Class

A key issue for online learners is time management. Below are several strategies that can help online learners, like you, manage time to successfully complete your course:

1. **Make the course a priority.**
   For the duration of the course (or online program), make the course your professional priority. You are expected to complete every reading, every assignment, every discussion and every activity. Can’t do that? Consider taking the course another time when you can devote more time to the effort.

2. **Take the course with a friend or colleague.**
   Online learning has been described as "a lonely experience." Make it less lonely- and increase your chances of both completing the course and managing time well- by seeing if a friend will take the course with you. Online learners are more likely to complete a course of study when they have actual colleagues.

3. **Set aside a minimum of one hour a day to work on the course.**
   Think of the hour per day as your class time. Can’t spare a whole hour? How about 15 minutes four times a day? Make the coursework the very first thing you do when you open up your computer in the morning. Then it’s over and done with for that day!
4. **Make a study plan.**
   Set fixed times during the week to work on the course. If you have a learning partner, decide what days you will meet to go through course readings and participate in the online discussions.

5. **Make your own calendar or schedule.**
   Some weeks will be easier than others for getting all your work done, so look ahead and make a schedule. Determine what weeks look very busy and plan how you'll get your coursework done ahead of time to compensate for your lack of time in busy weeks.

6. **Get rid of distractors.**
   That may mean closing the door to keep family members away, going to a café, turning off your cell phone, not opening your email or social media, or turning off the TV. Figure out what distracts you from your online course and eliminate it as you work on your course.

7. **Set goals and incentives.**
   Give yourself, or have someone give you, incentives for completing a module or assignment within a certain time period. Set personal learning and time goals. Give yourself a treat when you've finished a module or a discussion (but don't reward yourself when you haven't!).

8. **Explore ways to multitask that don't contribute to cognitive overload.**
   Can you access the course on your tablet and do the readings at the gym? In multitasking, it's important to avoid cognitive conflict (e.g., reading while watching TV doesn't really help) or cognitive overload (reading while on a Skype call, for example).

9. **Ask for help.**
   Communicate. Your Instructor cannot help or advocate for you if he/she doesn't know what is going on. Schedule a meeting to discuss your needs, and how you can succeed in class.

**How to “Manage” Your Mental Health (Disaster Planning):** Research has shown that one-fourth (1 in 4) of today’s college students will experience a Mental Health issue at some point of their college career. Unfortunately, many of these students will not seek help, often because they do not know where to look. This leads to larger problems that affect not just school, but also work, relationships, and day-to-day life. This “Disaster Plan” is designed to assist students in finding the help and resources they need to prevent a Mental Health crisis.

**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS EXPERIENCING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS CALL 9-1-1 OR THE NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE AT 1-800-273-TALK (8255).**

Mental Health issues may include, but are not limited to, alcohol and drug addictions, anger, anxiety, codependency, depression, eating disorders, food addiction, gambling addiction, love and relationship addiction, obsessions and compulsions, physical-sexual-emotional abuse, and sexual addiction. If you or someone you know is dealing with any of these issues, please seek help. Counseling is a free service for all SFA students designed to assist them in overcoming obstacles to their personal and academic goals. Schedule an appointment by emailing counseling@sfasu.edu or calling 936-468-2401. Other Mental Health Providers are also available to help in and around the Nacogdoches area.

You are not alone! The brain is an organ of the body, just like the heart. If you were told you needed help to keep your heart working properly, you would seek medical attention. If you need help to keep your brain working properly, you should do the same. Help yourself help yourself.

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