I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE, CATALOG DESCRIPTION, CREDITS:

SLS 1515 CORNERSTONE EXPERIENCE (3 CREDITS)

The Cornerstone Experience course at Florida SouthWestern State College is an integrative and interdisciplinary course designed to help first-year students acquire critical thinking and decision-making skills that promote academic success. In this course, students will learn about college resources and requirements, explore career objectives and programs of study, establish relationships with mentoring faculty and develop a support group among peers. This course is a College requirement for First Time in College (FTIC) students. To successfully complete this course, a minimum grade of “C” or better is required.

II. PREREQUISITES FOR THIS COURSE:

None

CO-REQUISITES FOR THIS COURSE:

None

III. GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION: Topic Outline.

- Learning to Apply Critical Thinking Skills to be Successful Academically, Personally and Professionally (The Elder Paul Critical Thinking Model)
- Critically Assessing Your Readiness for College (Time Management, Learning Styles, Emotional I.Q., Using technology)
- Thinking Critically About Success Strategies (Study skills, Test Taking Strategies, Effective listening, Note-taking Methods, Working Effectively in Groups)
- Locating and Accessing Resources and Managing the Information Highway to Become a Self-Reliant Learner (Locating and accessing resources on campus, information literacy)
- Thinking Critically About Choosing A Career (Occupational Outlook, Work Ethic, Selecting a Career Choice based on Personality, Interviewing Skills, Resume Writing, Cover Letter, How to Dress For Success)
- Thinking Critically About Your Education Plan (General Education Competencies, Student Learning Outcomes and Rubrics, Long term Education Plan)
• **Thinking Critically About Diversity and Social Justice** (Appreciating College and Community Diversity, Raising Awareness to Combat Insensitivity, Advocating For Social Justice)

IV. **LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT:**

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES:**
General education courses must meet at least four out of the five following outcomes. All other courses will meet one or more of these outcomes.

*Communication (COM):* To communicate effectively using standard English (written or oral).

*Critical Thinking (CT):* To demonstrate skills necessary for analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

*Technology/Information Management (TIM):* To demonstrate the skills and use the technology necessary to collect, verify, document, and organize information from a variety of sources.

*Global Socio-cultural Responsibility (GSR):* To identify, describe, and apply responsibilities, core civic beliefs, and values present in a diverse society.

*Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning (QR):* To identify and apply mathematical and scientific principles and methods.

**ADDITIONAL COURSE COMPETENCIES:**
At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following additional competencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ASSESSMENTS</th>
<th>GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply the intellectual traits, standards, and elements of reasoning in the context of their personal and academic lives</td>
<td>Students will complete journal entries that will be evaluated based upon the course critical thinking rubric to demonstrate their ability to apply the Elder-Paul model of critical thinking in their personal and academic lives.</td>
<td>CT</td>
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<td>Students will take the California Critical Thinking Skills Test after completing the critical thinking module of the course and again near the end of the Cornerstone Experience.</td>
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<td>Demonstrate intellectual rigor and problem-solving skills by analyzing and evaluating information, generating ideas, and resolving issues</td>
<td>Students will participate in a final group presentation assignment (How to Succeed in College) and will be evaluated using a rubric designed to assess the following skills: time management, small group communication skills and problem-solving skills.</td>
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<td>Explore how background experiences impact their values and assumptions and explain how they influence personal relationships</td>
<td>Students will complete a Myers-Briggs type personality profile to increase self-awareness. They will reflect upon how their profiles influence personal relationships, career choices and success skills in their critical thinking journal. Entries will be evaluated based upon the course critical thinking rubric.</td>
<td>COM, CT</td>
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<td>Evaluate student-to-student and student-to-faculty interactions, and reflect on their relationship to academic, career, and social development</td>
<td>Students will participate in a final group presentation project in which they will apply effective group communication skills. Students will reflect upon the lessons learned from this experience and relate them to their academic, career and social development in their critical thinking journal entry which will be evaluated based upon the course critical thinking rubric.</td>
<td>CT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflect on the General Education requirements at Florida SouthWestern State College and articulate their application to academic and career goals</td>
<td>Students will engage in career exploration assignments and will learn how to develop an education plan to help them achieve their career goals. They will critically reflect upon suitable career choices and how to develop an education plan to accomplish their career aspirations in a critical thinking journal entry which will be evaluated based upon the course critical thinking rubric.</td>
<td>CT</td>
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<td>Enhance their awareness of the larger diverse community both inside and outside Florida SouthWestern State College</td>
<td>Students will engage in a variety of classroom assignments including a passport activity to enhance awareness of the diverse community inside and outside Florida SouthWestern State College to encourage an appreciation of diversity. They will critically reflect upon how valuing diversity will contribute to success in their personal life, academic success and obtaining future career goals in a critical thinking journal entry which will be evaluated based upon the course critical thinking rubric.</td>
<td>CT</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Apply one or more skills learned in the FYE course to other academic endeavors

| Students will complete journal entries demonstrating how two or more of the skills learned in the FYE course apply to assignments in other courses. Entries will be evaluated based upon the course critical thinking rubric. | CT |

Develop strategies for effective written and verbal communication, use of technology, listening, reading, critical thinking and reasoning

| Students will demonstrate their ability to engage in critical listening as they learn to utilize a researched-based note taking method. Students will explore the use of technology to research databases for college assignments, complete assessments in SMARTERMEASURE, and to navigate FSW Portal and/or the learning management system adopted by the college. | COM |

Demonstrate independence and self-efficacy through effective personal management, use of college resources and the development of positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty

| Students will write an essay in which they reflect upon the journals entries completed throughout the course and extract those ideas that they found most influential or important. Students will then create a “new plan for achieving success in college and for establishing positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty. The essay will be evaluated using the course critical thinking rubric. | COM, CT |

V. **DISTRICT-WIDE POLICIES:**

**PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Florida SouthWestern State College, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the College’s guiding principles, offers students with documented disabilities programs to equalize access to the educational process. Students needing to request an accommodation in this class due to a disability, or who suspect that their academic performance is affected by a disability should contact the Office of Adaptive Services at the nearest campus. The office locations and telephone numbers for the Office of Adaptive Services at each campus can be found at [http://www.fsw.edu/adaptiveservices](http://www.fsw.edu/adaptiveservices).

VI. **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STUDENTS:**

**Critical Thinking Journal**

The purpose of the Critical Thinking Journal assignment is to reflect upon the topics below demonstrating Critical Thinking skills (see specific outcomes on the Critical Thinking Rubric).

Each entry should include a standard heading with your name and date in the upper left-hand corner. The journal number (example: Journal #1) should appear centered as a title. The journal should be written in paragraph form with appropriate indentation. Entries should be double-spaced.
Students must use Standard English grammar and mechanics in all college assignments.

**Journal Entries**

1. Reflect and analyze why you are attending college. What motivated you to enroll? What goals do you hope to achieve?
2. Look at your results of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI). What are your areas of strength? How do your strengths make you a better student? Which area has room for improvement? Describe action steps you will take to improve.
3. Based upon your Personality Type report, identify three possible career choices that are suitable for you, and explain how one of those relates to your personality type, personal values, career interests and success factors.
4. Florida SouthWestern State College has established the following General Competencies: Communications (COM), Critical Thinking (CT), Technology/Information Management (TIM), Global-sociocultural responsibility (GSR) and Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning (QR) as listed in your syllabus. Please choose **TWO** and explain how developing each of these competencies will help you achieve academic, and career success.
5. Discuss how time management and financial responsibility will help you successfully complete your college education.
6. Describe how your participation in the GPS (Go Picture Scribe) has helped you feel more connected to FSW. How has your participation helped you develop an understanding of diversity?

*(Minimum word requirement: All journal entries should be no less than 250 words for each topic.)*

**Group Presentation**

The purpose of this assignment is to reflect upon what it takes to be successful at Florida Southwestern State College in order to build a foundation for lifelong learning.

Groups must analyze, evaluate and demonstrate what it takes for a student to be successful at FSW. This includes applying effective success strategies, developing higher level communication, and utilizing critical thinking skills. The conclusions drawn by the group must be shared with the whole class in a final project.

Brainstorming is the first step demanded for a successful group project. Some of the best projects have been creative/outside the box and based on students’ personal experiences.

Think Critically!

**Final Essay Assignment**

The purpose of this assignment is to write an essay that reflects upon the main themes/topics of the course that were most influential or important to you. The essay will conclude with a description of a “new” plan for achieving success in college.

The essay will be evaluated on the demonstration of Critical Thinking (see specific outcomes on the Critical Thinking Rubric). It is our expectation that all college written work must adhere to Standard English grammar and mechanics.

Final essay guidelines:
Write an essay that is a minimum of 500 words that includes the following components:

1- **Introduction** - Start by describing your thoughts and feelings at the beginning of the term. Then introduce your main topics/ideas that you found most influential across the semester. (1-2 paragraphs)

2- **First idea/topic** that was influential to you. Develop with specific examples and discussion. (1-2 paragraphs)

3- **Second idea/topic** that was influential to you. Develop with specific examples and discussion. (1-2 paragraphs)

4- **Third idea/topic** that was influential to you. Develop with specific examples and discussion. (1-2 paragraphs)

5- **Conclusion** - Describe your plan for achieving success and summarize the three topics/ideas that you found to be most influential. (1-2 paragraphs)

**FSW GPS (Go-Picture-Scribe)**

The purpose of this activity is to engage and connect you to FSW (Florida SouthWestern State College). FSW offers many great activities and resources. To be a successful college student requires that you utilize the resources to enhance your overall college experience. To successfully complete this assignment you will participate in the following:

1- **Academic Advising**: Schedule and meet with an academic advisor prior to registering for classes for the next term.

2- **Workshop requirements**: Attend a minimum of **TWO** academic or informational workshops at FSW such as FYE, Academic Success, Student Life, Career Center, and Financial Aid Workshops.

3- **Academic Support and Peer Tutoring Centers**: Utilize the ASC or Peer Tutoring for math, reading, writing or oral communications assistance.

4- **Choose six from other resources**: FYE social events, Service Saturday events, Student Life activities/events, use of the library services, use of the Tech Help Center, attendance at art events, plays, and any FSW-sponsored community event or activity.

A minimum of **TEN** activities must be included in a digital media representation. Each activity needs to include date, description, and purpose. Students can utilize video, Prezi, PowerPoint or a combination of any media. Creative deviations are encouraged; please consult your professor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Minimum number of events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Advising</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Support Centers</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other resources (1, 2)</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Attending a Service Saturday will count for two events in the “Other Resources” category.

2) It is possible to receive credit for participating in a non-FSW-sponsored community service event with prior approval from your instructor. Please consult your instructor to verify that the event will count towards “Other Resources.”
Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (pre & post test)
The CCTDI is specifically designed to measure the disposition to engage problems and make decision using critical thinking. It is administered with a preset time of 30 minutes and test takers are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree (6 point Likert scale) with 75 statements. No educational preparation is required and items can be easily read by the late adolescent and adult population. The CCTDI measures the attitudes and values that influence a test taker’s capacity to learn and to effectively apply critical think skills, disposition towards:

- truth-seeking or bias,
- anticipating possible consequences or being heedless of them,
- proceeding in a systematic of unsystematic way,
- being confident in the powers of reasoning or mistrustful of thinking,
- being inquisitive or resistant to learning,
- mature and nuanced judgment, and
- rigid simplistic thinking.

An overall thinking disposition score is also calculated.

Smarter Measure (pre & post test)
SmarterMeasure is a web-based learning readiness tool which indicates the degree to which an individual student possess the attributes, skills and knowledge that contribute to success in higher education. The six major assessment components measure:

- On-screen reading rate and recall
- Technical competency
- Individual attributes
- Life factors
- Preferred learning styles
- Typing speed and accuracy

SmarterMeasure helps students to recognize their strengths and provides resources to strengthen their weaknesses.

VII. ATTENDANCE POLICY:
The professor’s specific policy concerning absence. (The College policy on attendance is in the Catalog, and defers to the professor.)

VIII. GRADING POLICY:
Each assignment is listed below along with how your score will impact the percentage of your total grade.

- Critical Thinking Journal 25%
- Group Presentation 15%
- Final Essay Assignment 25%
- FSW GPS (Go Picture Scribe) 15%
- Attendance and In-Class Assignments 20%

Your final grade will be based upon the following Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 - 100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 89</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 79</td>
<td>C</td>
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</table>
60 - 69  =  D
Below 60  =  F

IX. REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

X. RESERVED MATERIALS FOR THE COURSE:
Other special learning resources.

XI. CLASS SCHEDULE:
See attached.

XII. ANY OTHER INFORMATION OR CLASS PROCEDURES OR POLICIES:
Technology Policy:
When class is in session, you, the student, are expected to be alert, attentive, and actively engaged. Technology such as cell phones, tablets, notebooks, etc. should be put away unless for class use. If you plan to take notes on a tablet or notebook, the wireless facility should be turned off.

Syllabus:
The professor reserves the right to change this syllabus at any time. If changes are made, students will be notified in class and through email.

Class Engagement:
Bring textbook, writing utensil and paper to each class. I suggest you use a three-ring binder or folder to keep all classwork and handouts.

Canvas:
Students will submit Critical Thinking Journals, the GPS, the Group Project, and the Final Essay through Canvas (an online Learning Management System). Students requiring technology support are encouraged to consult with a Peer Architect in the First Year Experience Office (Building Q Room 127).

Late Work:
Any work submitted late will receive no more than 50% than the maximum points allowed.