

## *UWG 1101: The First Year University Experience*

**Course Section Number: 03**

**Classrom: UCC 207C**

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### **Course Description:**

**UWG 1101** is designed to help students succeed at West Georgia, succeed academically as well as personally and socially. The fundamental focus of the class is to provide an understanding of the basic structure of critical thinking and of academic disciplines in order to increase learning in the university classroom. Also, the course will provide an overview of resources available which will help to insure student success in the university classroom. Furthermore, UWG 1101 provides students with essential information about the University as a whole, its rules, procedures and resources. UWG 1101 classes include subjects that cut across the academic and nonacademic lines of school; these subjects include time management, college study skills, basic computer skills, the structure of the Core Curriculum, choosing a major and career, and using the UWG library. Most classes require that students attend several University activities and events, events that introduce students to important University offices and events that discuss topics such as safer dating, multiculturalism and drug and alcohol abuse. Students are required to attend class and to interact with their instructor and classmates. While students must take responsibility for their own learning, the course attempts to support and enhance that responsibility by creating in the class a learning community within the University.

**Course Characteristics:** UWG 1101 is a 2-semester-hour course that generally is limited to freshmen. It does not fulfill general studies requirement, but counts as an elective that may be applied toward graduation. Based on student performance, the grade of *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, or *F* will be awarded upon completion of the course. The grade in UWG 1101 is computed in a student's Grade Point Average (GPA).

### **Course Goals**

- To promote for first-year students a positive adjustment and assimilation into the University;
- To help students learn to balance their freedom with a sense of responsibility as part of the process of enhancing self-knowledge and self-confidence;
- To develop a network of colleagues;
- To involve students in the total life of the University;
- To reduce student anxiety about written and oral communication
- To enhance college-level analytical reading, and provide supplemental practice in applying the knowledge students gain in other first-year courses;
- To increase student awareness about deciding on a particular major and academic department or to recognize that their most appropriate current choice is to remain undecided;
- To introduce students to American higher education with emphasis on its history and current structure;
- To provide students additional training, practice, experience, and knowledge in the following skill areas: decision making, goal setting, planning, time management, and group/teamwork;

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will identify and utilize a set of adaptive study, coping, critical thinking, logical problem-solving, and success skills;
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of some of the most typical pedagogical strategies of their professors' teaching and presentation styles;
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the function of a mentor and how to go about finding one;
- Students will summarize basic information about UWG: its history, purposes, organization, rules and regulations, people, services, resources, and opportunities for student development;
- Students will utilize the following resources available to them at UWG: the Library, the EXCEL Center, and the Health Center; students will also identify the location and function of other important offices on campus, such as Student Development Center, the Writing Center, and the Mathematics Laboratory and the Career Services Office;
- Students will identify some of the major health and wellness issues for students;
- Students will document their personal goals for careers and academic majors and their plans achieving these goals;
- Students will demonstrate some basic skills in computer literacy through activities involving the use of e-mail and the Internet;
- Students will identify elements of democratic structures within which they will be civically engaged on the UWG campus, in the larger community and in the State of Georgia;
- Students will demonstrate the ability to examine and discuss ways in which UWG students, faculty, and staff identify, prioritize and debate issues affecting civic

engagement and democracy.

**Textbooks:**

*Connection and Student Handbook.* (Conn.)

Carol Carter and Sarah L. Kravits. *Keys to Success: How to Achieve Your Goals.*  
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2000. (*Keys*)

**Assessment Strategies:**

Journal

Essay

Presentations

Email or Discussion Board

**Tentative Schedule of Assignments and Events:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Instructor</b>
August 18	Welcome, Introductions, Syllabus Review Discuss: Purpose of college, why you're here Review "Quick Start to College" in <i>Keys</i> Handout 20 Questions Assignment	
August 20	Intro to UWG: Mission, organization Resources: the Catalog, Handbook, & Web Homework: Find the answers to 20 questions using these resources.	
August 25	Day Off to Visit an Office	
August 27	Learning Style and Goals (2)	
September 1	No class - Labor Day	
September 3	Alcohol (10) Sexual Decision Making (11)	Guest: Debra Dugan
September 8	Goal Setting & Time Management (3) Wellness & Stress Management (10)	
September 10	Listening, Note-Taking, & Memory (6)	
September 15	Administer Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test.	
September 17	Interpretation of MBTI Instrument	Guest: Melanie McClellan and John Frevert
September 22	Critical & Creative Thinking (4)	
September 24	Reading & Studying (5)	
September 29	Reading & Studying (5)	
October 2	Test-Taking (8)	
October 6	Review Academic Success Skills	

October 8	Review Academic Success Skills	
October 13	No class - individual student meetings	
October 15	No class - individual student meetings	
October 20	Mid-Term	
October 22	Researching & Writing (7)	
October 27	Using the Library	Visit to Library
October 29	Researching & Writing (7)	Guest: Sonja Bagby
November 3	Self-Awareness/Career Planning (2, 11)	
November 5	Career Planning (11)	Guest: Wanda McGukin
November 10	Learning Style and Goals (2) Revisited	
November 12	Diversity (9)	
November 17	Improving Communication Skills (9)	
November 19	Parent & Family Issues	
November 24	Financial Management (11)	Guest: Peer Counseling Program
November 26	No class – Thanksgiving	
December 1	Life-Long Learning (12)	
December 3	Last Class: Final Thoughts	

**Notes:**

October 9 is the last day to withdraw with a W

November 3 - Advance Registration begins

October 8 & 13: Rather than having class, each student will schedule a 1-hour appointment with an instructor during the week to talk about how class and the semester are going.

**Grading :**

Students are required to attend class. Unless the student can provide documentation of serious illness or a true personal or family emergency, more than three absences will result in a letter grade reduction.

Students are required to attend three “Success Seminars” and write a brief response to each seminar.

Students are required to attend three other campus events and write a brief response to each event. No more than two of these events can be of the same type. Event types are athletic events, student activities event, cultural or fine arts events, public lectures or other educational event.

Students are required to perform 15 hours of community service during the course of the semester. Instructors will assist students in locating an agency in which to work. Students will need to keep a log of the hours worked and activities performed, which will need to be signed off on by an official of that agency at the end of the semester. The community service work will serve as the theme for the final paper.

Students will do brief presentations throughout the semester on something that requires them to visit a campus office and perhaps perform a small amount of research on that office and its function. The first week of class, the attached list of offices will be put on slips of paper and put in a hat. Each student will draw one out and will need to visit that office and do a 5-10 minute presentation during the semester. Students will be given a list of suggested questions.

Mid-Term: The mid-term exam will be shaped by the first few weeks of class; it may need to be a traditional exam or it could be something else such as group presentations.

Final: Students will write a paper centered around their community service activities. The paper will require the student to conduct some research about the agency in which he/she worked (history, structure, purpose, services/programs) and the need that agency fills for the community. The student will then describe his/her activities in the agency and what he/she learned from that experience.

Students are required to keep a journal, at least two pages a week, on separate days, and at least one page should be focused on responding to reading in the text.

Reading quizzes will be given from time to time as a reading motivator, for one, and to initiate discussion and sharpen students’ critical reading skills.

Occasionally, the so-called one-minute essay will be required. This is given at the very end of a class discussion and it allows the students to indicate what was clear in the discussion and what was not so clear.

***Grade Weights:***

- 15% Student Success Responses
- 15% Events Responses
- 15% Community Service
- 15% Journal
- 15% Mid-Term
- 15% Final
- 10% Participation, Attendance, Reading Quizzes