

UNV 101
The Freshmen Experience
Fall Semester 2014, August 20th – December 10th

Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:15 PM, CSB 100

INSTRUCTORS

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday	12:00 – 2:00 PM; 3:00 – 5:00 PM
Tuesday	2:00 – 3:00 PM; 4:30 – 6:00 PM
Wednesday	12:00 – 2:00 PM; 4:30 – 6:00 PM
Thursday	5:00 – 7:00 PM
Friday	12:00 – 2:00 PM

Feel free to stop by anytime the door is open. We can also set up an appointment if the hours listed above do not fit with your schedule.

I want to encourage you to email me or call me anytime a question or problem arises. Do not ever be afraid to ask any question or discuss any problem whatsoever you may have.

You are welcome to give me a call at home or on my cell anytime, especially if a problem arises which may affect your class attendance or if you need to discuss an urgent issue.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Who can answer my questions? What resources are available? How can I get the most out of college? A course that introduces you to the structure of higher education and the

heritage of Mercer University, UNV 101 is intended to help you make a successful transition to college. You will better understand the value of a liberal arts education, identify campus support systems, develop better learning techniques, and succeed intellectually, socially, and personally during your first year at Mercer. Required of all first year students who are not enrolled in an experiential section of First-Year Seminar. Graded S/U. 1 hour credit.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, students will have been exposed to :

- The history and heritage of Mercer as well as higher education, in general.
- Informal (or formal) methods for critical thinking, including decision making and problem solving within the context of weekly topics.
- Appropriate study skills for their academic success.
- Diversity issues that affect the individual, the institution, and the community.
- Various applications of technology as they relate to the academic journey, including the University's e-mail system.
- Available resources and opportunities for involvement on campus and in the community.
- Academic and social policies of Mercer University.
- The advising and registration processes.
- Ways to establish a productive relationship with their academic advisors and other faculty and staff.
- Wellness issues that contribute to academic and personal success.
- The concept of vocation.

COURSE MATERIALS

- *The Whisper of the River* by Ferrol Sams, Penguin Publishing, 1985.
- *The Lair*
- Current *Mercer University Catalog*
- Calendar/planner/organizer

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

Please contact me as soon as possible if you must miss class for any reason. This is an interactive class. You will get the most out of this course if you actively participate and interact with members of the group. Much of the relevant course material will be presented through group discussions and exercises. Your involvement will be critical. You can't participate if you don't attend, so attendance is vital. Attendance counts as 50 of your course points, and your attendance score is based on the percentage of classes you have attended or have received an unexcused absence.

GRADING POLICIES

This course will consist of 200 points which can be earned by you in the following manner:

Attendance & Participation (broken down as follows)	100 points
• Attendance at Wednesday Class Meetings (50 points)	
• Attendance & 1 Page Review of Two 1 st Year Friday talks (20 points)	
• Attend the <i>Pilgrimage to Penfield</i> on October 17 (20 points)	
• Course Portfolio (10 points)	
<i>Whisper of the River</i> Writing Assignment	30 points
Involvement in four co-curricular activities	20 points
Reflection Essay	20 points
Interview a professor	20 points
4-Year Strategic Plan Spreadsheet	10 points

GRADING SCALE

Grades in this course will be assigned using a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) scale based on the total points you have earned :

160 or more	S
Less than 160	U

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is expected that each student will behave honorably throughout this (and every other) course. All students are expected to abide by the *Honor Code* as found in *The Lair*. All violations of the *Honor Code* will be referred to the Honor Council. I will provide as much information as possible to clarify my expectations for appropriate completion of assignments as they relate to issues of academic integrity (e.g., whether collaboration is permitted on a project, how sources should be documented, etc.) If you are unsure about any of these expectations, please feel free to ask me.

REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS

- 1ST YEAR FRIDAY TALKS 10:00 – 10:45 AM in Willingham Auditorium
 - ❖ Friday, August 22 : Tips from Mercer’s Outstanding Faculty
 - ❖ Friday, September 5 : Academic Excellence in the First Year...and Beyond!
 - ❖ Friday, September 12 : Responsible Decision Making
 - ❖ Friday, September 19 : Community Engagement: A Mercer Hallmark
 - ❖ Friday, September 26 : Get Your Career Plan On!

- ❖ Friday, October 10 : Many Faces of Aids
- ❖ Friday, October 24 : Majors in Minutes (Penfield Hall)
- ❖ Friday, November 7 : Registration Tips & Tricks

Include a one page review of two of the above talks in your portfolio. You will receive 10 points extra credit for each additional talk you attend.

- CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students must participate in four co-curricular activities from the categories below. At least two different categories must be represented.

1. a visual or performing arts event
2. an athletic event (e.g. intercollegiate, intramurals, city team)
3. a meeting of campus-wide organization (SGA, SUAB, RUF, etc.)
4. an academic lecture
5. a service learning or community service event
6. a museum or place of interest in Macon (Museum of Arts & Science, Allman Brothers Museum, Tubman Museum, Fort Hawkins, Ocmulgee Indian Mounds)

For each activity, type up your answers to the four questions below and include them in your portfolio. You will receive 5 points extra credit for each event from a different category after your first two categories.

1. What was the activity in which I participated?
2. Why did I choose this particular activity?
3. Did I enjoy the activity? Why or why not?
4. How can this type of activity contribute to the college experience

- INTERVIEW A PROFESSOR

The objective of this exercise is to acquaint yourself with at least one professor early in your college career who might be helpful to you somewhere down the road. In the process, you will learn the importance of making and keeping appointments, interacting with people at a professional level, and to summarize the meeting in a written report. You can select any Mercer professor in any of the schools for this purpose. Please be punctual for your interview and rehearse your questions to time yourself. The interview should be brief, to the point, and must not exceed 30 minutes. The report must be double spaced typed (2-3 pages).

Due : Wednesday, September 24

- REFLECTION ESSAY

This assignment allows you to reflect back on your first five weeks at Mercer. This should be double spaced typed (3-4 pages) and should address each of the areas below.

1. Things I do and do not like about Mercer
2. My Roommate and I
3. Thoughts about my classes and major so far
4. Reactions to my first tests
5. People I've met at Mercer and friends I've made
6. If you had a chance to go back in time and change, or "Edit, Undo," one thing from your first five weeks, what would it be and why?

Due : Wednesday, October 1

- FOUR YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SPREADSHEET

Create a spreadsheet that attempts to chalk out all the courses you will need to graduate from Mercer over the next four (or five) years. Even if you are not very sure about your major, just use any major as an example for this purpose. This project will help you learn about the various course requirements, their prerequisites (if any), the sequence in which some courses have to be taken, and their typical frequency of offerings. Obviously, I do not expect a plan that will be cast in stone for you, however you will be graded on the amount of effort put in by you.

Due : Wednesday, November 5

- *Whisper of the River* WRITING ASSIGNMENT

After finishing reading *The Whisper of the River*, please respond to the following discussion questions on the book. Include at least one quotation and page number with each response. Each answer should be a minimum of one to two typed paragraphs in length. This is an individual assignment, and all answers should be your own. This is due at the end of the semester in your course portfolio.

- i. Highlight three of Porter's pranks that made the greatest impression on you. Do you agree with Porter's choices in these situations? Why or why not?
- ii. What influence did Porter's parents have on his transition to college? How are your parents' influences similar and different? Why do you think Porter hid the letters from his mother that he received? How did Mr. Osborne's talk with Porter on the way to Willingham influence his transition? Did you talk with someone about similar topics and how did that advice differ from Porter's father's advice?

- iii. Choose one relationship Porter establishes during college and trace the development of the relationship and its impact on Porter. Choose from Boston Harbor Jones, Tiny Yeoman, Mrs. Captulet, Dr. Rudh, and his fraternity brothers.
- iv. Put yourself in Porter's shoes. Think about his living experiences. At the end of college, what do you think he would say about how his living environments impacted his life? How did he interact with his roommates? Would you have handled situations differently?
- v. Based on this story, what qualities are essential to becoming a successful college student?
- vi. What were the benefits and detriments of the Greek system at Willingham? Are they the same at Mercer?
- vii. Why does Ferrol Sams title this book *The Whisper of the River*? Where is this river at in Macon?
- viii. The day Porter Osborne left home with his father and moved into college was a "life defining" moment for him. We all have those moments. What would you say are the defining moments of your life to date and why?

- COURSE PORTFOLIO

All class notes, handouts, assignments, and group & individual work should be saved and organized into a portfolio. Be sure to summarize all outside activities and First Year Fridays attended. All *Whisper of the River* questions and handout questions (*Emperor's Club*, How spending time?, I Survived!) should be answered. Include any materials you might have collected from outside activities (e.g., scavenger hunt, pilgrimage, etc).

Create a portfolio you are proud of and that will be useful to you as a reference in the future. All topics in the notebook should be legible, arranged in some logical order which is meaningful to you, and easy to find.

Due : Wednesday, December 10

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE & IMPORTANT DATES

Wednesday, August 20	Intro to higher education & Mercer; Letter to Yourself
Wednesday, August 27	Adjustment to College; Values Auction, Show & Tell
Wednesday, September 3	Meet at Mercer Law School Downtown Tour
Wednesday, September 10	Ethics & Academic Integrity; College Study Skills Guest Speaker from Honor Council
Wednesday, September 17	Scavenger Hunt around Macon
Wednesday, September 24	Campus Safety; Alcohol & Drug Awareness Interview with Professor Assignment Due
Wednesday, October 1	No Class – Fall Break Week Reflection Essay Due
Wednesday, October 8	Major & Career Exploration Student-Faculty Connection & Academic Success
Wednesday, October 15	<i>The Emperor's Club I</i>
Friday, October 17	Pilgrimage to Penfield, 4 PM – 11 PM
Wednesday, October 22	<i>The Emperor's Club II</i> Relationships & Appreciating Differences
Wednesday, October 29	Tower
Wednesday, November 5	Advising/Registration, Catalog, GPA Four Year Strategic Plan Spreadsheet Due Meet with me this week or the following week
Wednesday, November 12	Mercer on Mission & Study Abroad
Wednesday, November 19	Class Dinner on town, 6 PM Preparing for Finals
Wednesday, November 26	No Class – Thanksgiving Week
Thursday, December 4	Christmas Tree Lighting