

**Tompkins Cortland Community College**  
**Master Course Syllabus**

**Course Discipline and Number: FSS 110**  
**Course Title: Freshman Seminar-General Interest**

**Year: 2023-2024**  
**Credit Hours: 1**

**Attendance Policy:** *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

### **Course Description**

Intended for the first semester, this course will allow students to engage in an exploration of issues related to college success including engaging themselves in the college community, understanding diversity and relationship dimensions, understanding college resources, policies and procedures, and acquiring a self understanding of one's own strengths and intelligences and how these can be applied to academic goals, wellness issues, and issues related to future academic plans both within TC3 as well as after earning an associate degree. Because of the similarity of the course content, students may not receive credit toward their degree for ACAD 100, ACAD 150 or any other FSS course taken in combination with this course. Prerequisites: Prior completion or concurrent enrollment in ENGL 099 and RDNG 099 if required by placement testing. 1 Cr. (1 Lec.) Occasionally.

### **Course Context/Audience**

The Freshman Seminar can be used to satisfy an unrestricted elective requirement. The course is designed to assist students in any degree program in achieving better success in their program as well as focus on their goals upon program completion. Research indicates that freshman seminar courses such as this increase student retention, grade point average, number of credit hours attempted and completed, graduation rate, student involvement in the college community, and students' attitudes about and perceptions of higher education (Hunter and Lindner, 2005). Because there are some programs at TC3 with more room for unrestricted electives than others, such as the liberal arts/general studies program, we expect that students in those programs with available unrestricted electives may make up the majority of students taking this course. Because of the entry-level basic skills levels of this course, it may also be an appropriate course for students taking primarily pre-college courses in their first semester.

### **Basic Skills/Entry Level Expectations**

**Writing:** W1 Student should be taking ENGL 099 (if needed). The course requires very limited writing, e.g., short written responses of a paragraph or less.

**Math:** M0 Course requires very little or no math.

**Reading:** R1 Course may be taken concurrently with RDNG 099.

### **Course Goals**

1. Develop connections with faculty, staff and other students.
2. Understand college-level expectations related to personal responsibility for academic and life outcomes.
3. Be generally familiar with, and be able to obtain detailed information on, the College's student-related policies, code of conduct, procedures and systems.

4. Be generally familiar with and be able to obtain information on the College's key academic, wellness, and personal support services.
5. Be aware of fundamental time management and organization methods.
6. Understand and apply basic study skills and strategies.
7. Be able to critically reflect on decision-making about life choices related to health and wellness, financial management, and the attainment of personal and academic goals.
8. Be able to articulate a self-understanding of strengths, intelligences or learning styles and describe ways they are currently using this self-understanding toward achieving academic, career and personal goals.
9. Have acquired successful stress management strategies.
10. Have learned about common college relationship and diversity dimensions.
11. Be able to obtain information about careers and college degree programs.

### Course Objectives/Topics

Objective/Topic	% Course
College resources available for solving problems (Baker Center, Counseling/Career Transfer Services, etc.)	7-14%
Strengths/ Intelligences/Learning Styles and how to develop these	7-14%
Setting goals/time management/decision making	7-14%
Stress Management/Wellness	3-10%
Strategies related to textbook reading, lecture note-taking, studying and test-taking	7-14%
Relationships/Conflict resolution techniques	7-14%
Dimensions of diversity	7-14%
Academic standing, talking to advisor, and advisement/registration process	3-14%
Academic majors and careers	7-14%
Student code of conduct/academic integrity	3-7%
Using library resources	3-7%
Financial Literacy and Financial Aid	3-14%

### General Education Goals - Critical Thinking & Social/Global Awareness

CRITICAL THINKING OUTCOMES	HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
<p>Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ develop meaningful questions to address problems or issues.</li> <li>➤ gather, interpret, and evaluate relevant sources of information.</li> <li>➤ reach informed conclusions and solutions.</li> <li>➤ consider analytically the viewpoints of self and others.</li> </ul>	<p>Students will be taught study skills involving critical reading and listening as a part of course content. They will be asked to hand in short written assignments of a paragraph or two (appropriate to those taking ENGL 099) and will engage in class discussion.</p> <p>There are many ways students may be asked to use this ability in this course, the most obvious one being that students will be acquiring formal knowledge about their strengths and/or intelligences and/or learning styles and will be given assignments asking them to apply their understanding of these individual differences to how they choose class and career options, how they study, extracurricular activities they choose to engage in, and other choices and decisions that they make.</p>

SOCIAL/GLOBAL AWARENESS OUTCOMES	HOW DOES THE COURSE ADDRESS THE OUTCOMES (Include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used to address the goal/outcomes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will begin to understand how their lives are shaped by the complex world in which they live.</li> <li>➤ Students will understand that their actions have social, economic and environmental consequences.</li> </ul>	<p>Content on diversity and relationship dimensions should be specifically helpful in asking students to understand perspectives different from one's own as well as how one's own perspective (including one's strengths) influences perception.</p> <p>Students will be asked to engage in a self-evaluation at the end of the course integrating all the information they have been exposed to in order to evaluate where there is the greatest need for academic and personal development and how they can apply their strengths and the resources available to them to develop in these areas.</p>

### Instructional Methods

As much as possible teaching methods for this course should involve active engagement and discussion. Asking students to do brief assignments in preparation for class discussions should be the norm. Classes may also involve guest lectures and visits to resources on campus.

Graded assignments may include

1. Journal or write reaction papers about experiences their first semester including content such as needs for further information about something, experiences where they had to solve a specific problem, insights into how they are using their specific strengths and intelligences, short and long term goals, etc.
2. Make short class presentations either individually or in teams about a specific topic (e.g. What they learned about a specific method of studying, what they found when they visited a specific office on campus, etc.)
3. Engage in discussions on Angel related to a course assignment as part of their homework
4. Keep a log of how they spend their time each week
5. Create a plan for developing and applying one or more of their strengths or intelligences

Where possible, learning activities should be tied back to a discussion of the student's unique goals, skills, strengths and intelligences so that students understand that their strategies for success and the resources they choose to use may be quite different than someone else's strategies for success due to their individual differences. In addition, where possible students should be given a choice of learning activities or homework assignments so that they can choose activities that best fit their specific needs and styles.

Because research shows that students are more successful when they are engaged in activities outside of class in the community, students will be required in general to attend a few college or community events. Obviously exceptions will need to be made on an individual basis for students who can only be on campus during their classes because of work and/or childcare commitments. In this case, students should be encouraged to find events in their community outside of school to go to as a substitute (for example, they could take their child to a read-aloud session at their local library, attend the meeting of a community organization, etc.).

### Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
Assignments (e.g. online discussions, journals, logs, reaction papers)	30-60%
Attendance at college events with event write-up	15-30%
Class attendance/preparedness/participation	10-25%

## Text(s)

TC3 Student Planner (current year)., Latest Edition,  
Required

TC3 Catalog 09-10 (current year)., Latest Edition,  
Required

It is recommended that instructors use one of the following texts below or a similar text approved by the freshman seminar coordinator, Latest Edition,  
Required

Keys to successful learning, Carter, C., Bishop, J. & Kravits, S.L., Latest Edition, © (2007) Pearson/Prentice Hall Boston, MA:(this is a book that can be customized for all sections of the course offered at this college)  
Required

On course: Strategies for creating success in college and in life., Downing, S., Latest Edition, © (2008) Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin  
Required

Power learning: Strategies for success in college and life., Feldman, R.S., Latest Edition, © (2009) New York, NY: McGraw-Hill  
Required

Your college experience: Strategies for success, Concise edition, Gardner, J.N., Jewler, A.J. & Barefoot, B., Latest Edition, © (2008). Boston, MA: Thompson Higher Education

). A student's guide to succeeding in community college, Hoerr, D.L., Latest Edition, © (2008). New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Co. \*\*note: this book is very reasonably priced and thus may be more appropriate for a one credit class\*\*

## Bibliography

Clydesdale, T. (2007). The first year out. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press

Koch, A.K., Foote, S.M., Hinkle, S.E., Keup, J. & Pistilli, M.D. (Eds.). (2007). The first year experience in American higher education: An annotated bibliography (4th ed.). Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina. National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition

Pasquarella, E.T. & Terenzini, P.T. (2005). How college affects students: A third decade of research (2nd ed.) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Staley, C. (1999). Teaching college success – the complete resource guide. New York: Wadsworth Publishing

Troxel, W.G. & Cutright, M. (Eds.). (2008). Exploring the evidence: Initiatives in the first college year (Monograph No. 49) Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina. National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition

Upcraft, M.L., Gardner, J.N. & Barefoot, B.O. (Eds.). (2005). Challenging & supporting the first year student. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley and Son

## Other Learning Resources

### Audiovisual

A+ study skills series

Gallup Strengthsquest videos

There are many other videos that may be appropriate for this course depending on the instructor's specific lesson plans

### Electronic

Websites with helpful information or material which could be used in the course:

<http://www.sc.edu/fye/resources/fyr/index.html>

<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/Links/firstyear.htm>

<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/Links/firstyear.htm>

Instructor Resource Websites:

Resources for Teaching College Success Courses

<http://www.oncourse.com/>

Instructor and Student Resource Websites:  
Chemeketa Community College - links to information  
<http://www.howtostudy.org/>

City College of San Francisco - links to information  
[http://www.ccsf.org/Services/Learning\\_Assistance/lernsites.shtml](http://www.ccsf.org/Services/Learning_Assistance/lernsites.shtml)

**Other**

No resources specified