**First Year Seminar**  
UCRS 1850 Summer 2025  
Monday/Wednesday 4:00PM – 5:50PM

Instructor: Brandon Fisher

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Office Location: Student-Athlete Academic Center, Room 145B

Office Hours: By appointment only. Contact via E-mail.

I am available for communication through phone, Teamworks, email, or in person. To ensure timely and effective responses, I kindly request that assignment-related inquiries be sent during reasonable hours. While I make every effort to respond within 24 hours, please allow for occasional variations in response times.

***Course Description***

The aim of this course will be to introduce students to new and exciting ways of becoming active/engaged citizens of the university community and larger society through the exploration of problems in the current world. Students develop skills in critical thinking, communication, values clarification, and self-awareness. Varying topics require a creative and interdisciplinary view of the world. Past topics include leadership, information literacy, career and major exploration, community engagement and service. Through practical and engaging content, students will be equipped with the tools needed for holistic success at University of North Texas.

***Course Objectives***

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will:

* Have better understanding of their personal holistic growth by integrating cognitive, emotional, and social aspects, enabling them to become well-rounded individuals and active contributors to society.
* Identify their personal values and ethical beliefs, promoting self-awareness and the ability to make informed decisions aligned with their principles.
* Understand the concept of leadership and its various forms and how to apply leadership skills in both academic and real-world contexts.
* Identify potential career paths and academic majors, fostering informed decision-making about their educational and professional trajectories.
* Understand the concept of active citizenship and the importance of engaging effectively in both the university community and the larger society.
* Demonstrate creative thinking and problem-solving to generate innovative solutions to the challenges presented in the course.

***Required Texts, Materials, or Equipment***

This course does not require a specific textbook. However, there may be readings assigned throughout the semester. These readings hold significance for collaborative, in-class discussions and completing assignments at a satisfactory level.

Although a laptop is not required, there may be set class dates when a laptop will be used. If you do not own a laptop, please reach out to me and we will see what we can do to assist.

***Course Requirements and Grading/Extra Credit***

Your grades will be made up of the following components (detailed guidelines for each assignment will be provided in-class or made available on the Canvas course website):

Attendance and Engagement 100 points

4 Assignments (25 points each) 100 points

**Total Possible**  **560 points**

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| **Grade** | **Points Required to Earn** |
| **A** | **180-200** |
| **B** | **160-179** |
| **C** | **140-159** |
| **D** | **120-139** |
| **F** | **120 and below** |

Your grade for this course will be determined based on the total points you earn, as outlined in the grading chart provided. The final grade will reflect the effort and commitment you demonstrate throughout the course.

Extra credit opportunities will be limited and offered to the class as a whole, not on an individual basis. **Attendance is mandatory, and per UNT policy, four or more unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the course. This policy is non-negotiable.**

***University – Approved and Excused Absences***

The only absences that will be considered “excused” are university-approved absences. University-approved absences include: 1) Absence due to the observance of a religious holiday, 2) Absences due to participation in university-sponsored activities, and 3) Absences due to a diagnosed illness, with documentation from a physician or athletic trainer. All coursework due dates missed due to university-approved absences are expected to be completed prior to your absence unless other arrangements have been made with me in advance. All excused absences will be subject to verification.

***Academic Honesty***

The University of North Texas is clear on this point. Students must do their own work. Cheating on exams or quizzes (this includes “sharing answers” on online exams or quizzes), plagiarism, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty *will not be tolerated and consequences for this behavior will be severe*. A detailed explanation of university policy may be found in the UNT Policy Manual at [http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT Policy/volume3/18 1 11.html](http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT%20Policy/volume3/18%201%2011.html) or in the Student Handbook at http://www.unt.edu/csr

***Accommodations for Disabilities***

*“The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.”*

As faculty, are both required by law and committed in principle to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Students needing accommodation **must** notify the instructor of their needs in a timely manner (ideally, within the first 48 hours of the course) and provide documentation from the Office of Disability Accommodation. If you are not sure whether you have a disability or qualify for accommodation, please see me ASAP. You can contact the Office of Disability Accommodation in Sage Hall (room 167) or at (940) 565-4323 to obtain more information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations

***Late Work***

Late work will incur a penalty of 5 points per day and will not be accepted if submitted more than 3 days past the due date, unless an alternative arrangement has been discussed in advance due to an excused absence. Please ensure all assignments are submitted on time to avoid penalties.

***Classroom Expectations***

* Show up on time and stay for the whole class.
* Engage with the class. If you all do this, I think this course will be pretty fun. If you are all mentally checked out during class, then this course will almost certainly be boring. It’s up to you.
* Limit distractions. Please turn off all electronics and personal devices that may disrupt class (unless previously approved by me or the ODA). You are more than welcome to use your cell phone to take a picture of a PowerPoint, but I should not see it otherwise.
* Speak from your own experiences, and respect that others’ may be different. The nature of every college course means that we might study or discuss issues that students may find personally disturbing, controversial, or otherwise difficult to handle. Please remember that we never know exactly what life experiences each person comes from. As such, we expect all of you to work hard to listen to each other with respect and respond with thoughtfulness.

***Other Problems, Questions, or Concerns***

NEVER hesitate to talk to me outside of class if you are having problems with this course, the reading material, our classroom, or if you have any other additional questions. Before anything else I am here to help you learn and grow, but I need you to take an active role in this process as well. I cannot help you resolve a problem if I do not know that you need help!

*Please note that the professor reserves the right to modify course material as necessary.*

**Classroom Schedule**

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| ***Class Dates*** | ***Class Focus/Topics*** |
| Week 1 | Intro/Expectations/Academics/Technology  Compliance SATA Testing  **Campus Bingo Board** |
| Week 2 | Academic Integrity/PTD/Email Etiquette/AI Community Service  **Email Etiquette Assignment** |
| Week 3 | Campus Resources  Health Resources/Leadership Development  **Campus Tour Assignment** |
| Week 4 | Title IX/Mental Health  NIL/INFLCR  **NIL Reflection** |
| Week 5 | Financial Literacy  Career Development |