SYLLABUS: What is College For?
Professor Trace Jordan – Fall 2015

FRSEM-UA 474 001
Fall 2015
WHAT IS COLLEGE FOR?
Wednesdays, 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.
Academic Resource Center, Room LL-02

INSTRUCTOR
Professor Trace Jordan
College Core Curriculum
Office: Silver 903B
E-mail: trace.jordan@nyu.edu
Phone: 212 - 998 - 8078
Office Hours: Thursdays, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

SEMINAR DESCRIPTION
Why did you decide to attend college? To broaden your intellectual horizons and become a
more open minded person? To gain specialized knowledge in a specific subject? To achieve a
more successful and financially rewarding career after graduation? To have a fun social life
and make new friends? To become an engaged participant in a democratic society? To
satisfy your parents' plans for your future? Or perhaps some combination of these reasons
that you are still figuring out? This seminar examines historical and contemporary
discussions about the personal and societal goals of higher education. It will also prompt you
to be more reflective and purposeful about your own academic choices during your time as
an NYU student. At the beginning of the 21st century, current models and practices of
higher education are receiving increased scrutiny. During the semester we will study issues
that have the potential to profoundly transform the college experience. Does higher
education need to redefine its academic mission? Should everyone attend college? Will new
technologies change how professors teach and how students learn? Finally – and most
importantly – how can students, professors, and administrators all contribute to creating a
successful college environment?

REQUIRED BOOKS
The following two books are required reading for the course and they can be purchased at
the NYU Bookstore.

Andrew Delbanco, College: What it Was, Is, and Should Be

Ken Bain, What the Best College Students Do
These two texts provide the core reading for the seminar but additional readings, videos, etc. will also be required. The assigned materials for each week will be provided in the syllabus or announced in class.

GRADE COMPONENTS

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Assignment Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Paper #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College journal entries</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Paper #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Paper #3</td>
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<td>Paper #4</td>
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EXPECTATIONS

A college seminar course is an opportunity to explore new topics, actively engage with complex ideas, reflect on and challenge your own assumptions, and learn from the diverse perspectives of all participants in the course. I have the following expectations for your participation in this seminar:

- Complete all the assigned readings in advance of each seminar class.
- Submit study questions each week based on your assigned reading.
- Attend all seminar classes during the semester and actively participate in discussions.
- Be respectful of all ideas raised during class discussions, even if they disagree with your own viewpoint.
- Write two entries each week in your college journal.
- Complete four paper assignments.
- Follow the principles of the CAS Honor Code (http://cas.nyu.edu/page/honorcode)

COLLEGE JOURNAL

One of the seminar requirements is to keep a weekly college journal to prompt you to reflect on your academic experiences inside and outside the classroom. I will provide you with these journals at the first seminar meeting.

I expect you to complete two journal entries each week of approximately one page each (a little more or a little less is okay). Each journal entry should contain a thoughtful reflection on some aspect of one of your fall semester classes (including this seminar). Your reflection could be based on an assigned reading, a lecture, a classroom discussion, a homework assignment, a lab experiment, a group study session, or a discussion with friends or family about your courses. I will collect and read your journals each week and return them to you at the next seminar class.

Your updated journal must be delivered to the College Core Curriculum Office (Silver 903) by 5:00 p.m. on Monday of each week.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Each week you will submit discussion questions based on the assigned reading. These questions should highlight interesting points within the reading that can be used as the basis for our in-class discussions. The best discussion questions are thoughtful reflections on the readings that open the door for further exploration during the seminar sessions.

Your discussion questions must be submitted online to the WEEKLY DISCUSSION FORUM on the NYU Classes site. I will post a new discussion forum for each week of the semester. The forum posting will highlight the specific readings that should be used as the foundation for your discussion questions.

Discussion questions must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Monday of each week.

PAPER ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

An important goal of this Freshman Honors Seminar is to develop your ability to effectively communicate your ideas in writing. There will be four essay assignments during the semester with the dates given below. The final paper of the course (Paper #4) will be submitted as a draft for peer critique before you submit the final version.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment given</th>
<th>Assignment due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper #1</td>
<td>September 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper #2</td>
<td>September 30</td>
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<td>Paper #3</td>
<td>October 28</td>
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<td>Paper #4</td>
<td>November 11</td>
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WEEKLY SYLLABUS AND READINGS

WEEK 1 (September 2)
Introduction to the Seminar

Assignments
One page (single-spaced) response paper - "Why am I going to college?"
Bring your response paper to the first class.

Reading
No assigned reading

WEEK 2 (Sept. 9)
What is College For?

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and study questions for the reading.

Reading
Delbanco, College
Prefaces (pp. xi - xx), Introduction (pp. 1 - 8), and Chapter 1 (pp. 9 - 35)

Paper #1: Assignment and Guidelines
You will be provided with details and guidelines for Paper 1, which is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, September 25. The paper must be submitted in print and uploaded to the NYU Classes site for the course.

WEEK 3 (Sept. 16)

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and study questions for the reading.

Reading
Delbanco, College
Chapter 2 (pp. 16 - 66)

Thomas Jefferson, Report of the Commissioners for the University of Virginia
http://mailer.fsu.edu/~njumonvi/jefferson_uva.htm
WEEK 4 (Sept. 23)
Higher Education in the U.S. (Part 2): The Rise of the Research University

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.
Paper #1 submission deadline.

Reading
Delbanco, College
Chapter 3 (pp. 67 - 101)

Vannevar Bush, Science: The Endless Frontier

WEEK 5 (September 30)
Who Goes to College?

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.

Reading
Delbanco, College
Chapter 4 (pp. 102 - 124)


Professor X, "In the Basement of the Ivory Tower," The Atlantic, June 2008.

Paper #2: Assignment and Guidelines
You will be provided with details and guidelines for Paper 2, which is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, October 15. The paper must be submitted in print and uploaded to the NYU Classes site for the course.
WEEK 6 (October 7)
What is the Future of College Education?

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.

Reading
Delbanco, College
Chapter 5 (pp. 125 - 149) and Chapter 6 (pp. 150 - 177).


WEEK 7 (October 14)
New York University: Past, Present, and Future (Part 1)

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.
Paper #2 submission deadline.

Reading
Chapters 1 - 4

NYU’s Project 2031
http://www.nyu.edu/nyu2031/nyuinnyc/

NYU’s Global Network University
http://www.nyu.edu/global/the-global-network-university.html

WEEK 8 (October 21)
New York University: Past, Present, and Future (Part 2)

This class will include a visit to Bobst Library Archives

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.

Reading
TBA
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WEEK 9 (October 28)

What the Best College Students Do (Part 1): What Makes an Expert?

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.

Reading
Bain, What the Best College Students Do
Chapter 1 (pp. 1 - 31) and Chapter 2 (pp. 32 - 63)

Paper #3: Assignment and Guidelines
You will be provided with details and guidelines for Paper 3, which is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, November 12. The paper must be submitted in print and uploaded to the NYU Classes site for the course.

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WEEK 10 (November 4)

What the Best College Students Do (Part 2): Managing Yourself

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.

Reading
Bain, What the Best College Students Do
Chapter 3 (pp. 64 - 98) and Chapter 4 (pp. 99 - 132)

WEEK 11 (November 11)

What the Best College Students Do (Part 3): Tackling Messy Problems

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.
Paper #3 submission deadline.

Reading
Bain, What the Best College Students Do
Chapter 5 (pp. 133 - 163) and Chapter 6 (pp. 164 - 198)

Paper #4: Assignment and Guidelines
You will be provided with details and guidelines for Paper 4. This paper assignment is due in two parts:
• Wednesday, November 26 - upload a draft of the paper to NYU Classes
• Wednesday, December 10 - submit the final version of your paper

WEEK 12 (November 18)

What the Best College Students Do (Part 4): Making the Hard Choices

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal and discussion questions for the reading.

Reading
Bain, What the Best College Students Do
Chapter 7 (pp. 199 - 220) and Chapter 8 (pp. 221 - 247)


(November 25)

No seminar class – Thanksgiving Recess

Assignments
Upload a draft of Paper #4 to the NYU Classes site.

Happy Thanksgiving!
WEEK 13 (December 2)
Peer Editing of Student Papers

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal.

Reading
Peer editing of student papers: Read the draft papers of 3 - 4 other students in your assigned group. Make constructive edits and comments. Bring the annotated papers to class.

WEEK 14 (December 9)
Conclusion: Where Do You Go From Here?

Assignments
Two entries in your college journal.
Paper #4 submission deadline.