



K-STATE 1 FIRST

First-Year Seminar Faculty Guide 2012

122 Anderson Hall
785.532.6237

kstatefirst@k-state.edu
www.k-state.edu/first

K-STATE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to K-State First	4
Mission	4
Core programs	5
History	5
Purpose of first year seminars	6
FYS philosophy	6
Common components for all FYS	6
Student learning outcomes	6
Sample course description	7
Sample attendance policies	7
Examples of first-year seminars	7
Thinking about the classroom	8
Best practices	8
Ideas for your FYS class	8
Field trip policy	8
Using the KSBN book	9
Additional resources	10
General timeline	10
Faculty consent form: IDEA reports	12
Field trip and co-curricular event awards	13

Chapter 1: An Introduction to K-State First

K-State First Mission

K-State First is an integrated effort to create an outstanding university experience for every first-year student at Kansas State University. The program provides new students with a transition to college-level learning and college life in four important ways:

- By fostering campus community and feelings of belonging
- By offering opportunities for diverse activities and interactions
- By raising academic expectations with engagement and compassion
- By empowering students with a strong sense of personal responsibility and social agency

Bringing together exciting small classes taught by exceptional faculty with a vibrant student life experience, K-State First helps students establish the foundation for a successful college career.



CAT Communities

Small student groups with similar interests take courses together



First-Year Seminar

Small classes with lots of interaction



Guide to Personal Success

A K-State professional invests in you and your first-year experience



K-State Book Network

All-university reading program

We know that the first year of college is a big deal for our incoming students. A positive transition to university-level learning and the college experience in general can set students on the path to academic success, degree attainment, as well as satisfaction and achievement in their careers and personal lives. The first year is also the place where students are most likely to encounter obstacles that could deter them from the learning and degree they seek.

Core Programs

K-State First has four core programs for first-year students:

- Connecting Across Topics (CAT) Communities
- First-Year Seminars (FYS)
- Guide to Personal Success (GPS)
- K-State Book Network (KSBN)

K-State First is also an advocate for first-year students and an important source for connection and communication among the various programs and opportunities for incoming students.

CAT Communities

Designed around students' academic interests, these learning communities allow first-year students to meet friends and work with experienced faculty in a specialized area of study. The same 22 students are enrolled in two general education classes together and a one-hour connections class.

FYS

A small group of 22 students fulfill a general education requirement while making the academic and social transition to college life.

GPS

A mentoring program for first-year students, GPS matches a first-year student with a faculty, staff member, or graduate student to serve as a professional point of reference throughout the student's first year.

KSBN

An all-university reading program that selects a common read for the academic year, KSBN connects all first-year students at K-State. It provides incoming students with a shared academic experience that helps open the conversation with professors, staff, administrators, and other students.

History

In 2008, we piloted a first-year experience model by offering First-Year Seminars, small classes designed to help first-year students adjust to university life and expectations. In 2009, we introduced our mentoring program, GPS, by pairing incoming students with faculty and staff. We officially launched K-State First in 2010, introducing then KSBN and CAT Communities as well.

In Fall 2011, more than 780 students took K-State First classes. In addition, 3,500+ students were given a copy of the common reading selection and more than 350 students participated in the GPS mentoring program.



Chapter 2: Purpose of First-Year Seminars

First-Year Seminar Philosophy

All First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses at K-State have common elements and goals within the classroom. We ask you to help us meet these aims. The purpose of the FYS program is to help students make the transition to university courses and college-level learning. As part of this effort, FYS classes focus attention on the intellectual and social skills students need to flourish at the university. As a place to ask questions about the University and practice the skills needed to succeed as a first-year student, these courses provide support for the transition into college life and the K-State community.

Emphasis on first-year students

Only first-year students can enroll in these small, 22-person classes. We want these courses to be a place for first-year students to connect with each other and with a faculty member from their very first semester of college.

Academic content

Each seminar is a special section of a regular, academic, general education class. Although the academic content varies among the seminars, each seminar focuses on a distinctive, college-level academic subject. The most important goal of these seminars is to provide fundamental support to K-State's academic mission and its focus on student learning.

Common elements

The FYS classes are connected to each other as part of a larger FYS Program. All seminars are designed to introduce students to the academic standards of college-level work and K-State's undergraduate student learning outcomes. They emphasize critical thinking, communication, community building, and the application of learning. First-Year Seminars also provide students with the opportunity to attend at least three co-curricular activities.

High-quality instruction

The FYS Program has a strong, skilled, and dedicated faculty. These faculty members are part of a team of instructors who are coordinated at the university-level and work with each other to plan, design, teach, and assess the FYS Program. These instructors, drawn from all over campus, are pedagogically excellent, experienced, and interested in undergraduate education at K-State. They are among the best instructors at the university.

Active learning

With their small size and community-focus, the First-Year Seminars invite and encourage an active learning environment. The seminars devote significant portions of class time to hands-on learning, group discussions, problem solving, inquiry-based learning, and activities that provide students with opportunities to develop their critical thinking and communication skills. The FYS's are also academic spaces that encourage students to collaborate, interact, and develop relationships with their peers and professors.

Common Components for All FYS

1. Syllabus including common Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
2. An attendance policy
3. Adherence to an active learning pedagogy
4. Participation in Common Reading program (KSBN)
5. Attendance at least one program-wide events, one course-specific event, and one other event



Student Learning Outcomes

All FYS share four basic Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): critical thinking, communication, community building, and application of learning. Our program-wide SLOs (listed below) should appear on your FYS syllabus. You may tailor them to fit your particular academic content or goals for the course.

Upon successful completion of a first-year seminar, students will be able to:

Think critically

Explain the implications and/or significance of material learned in the course

Communicate effectively

Express their own understanding of course content in respectful dialogue with others and with engagement, imagination, and self-reflection

Build community

Interact effectively with faculty and peers to learn and to help others to learn

Apply learning

Use the skills and knowledge learned in the class to solve new problems, answer questions, or identify areas for further investigation

Sample Course Description

Here is a sample course description.

“Welcome to Great Books! In most respects, this section of ENGL 287 will be similar to the other sections offered at K-State. In a few, hopefully exciting ways, however, our class will be a little different. It’s smaller (22 students), and it’s a class designed for first-year students only. The smaller class size should encourage an active learning environment throughout the semester. The focus on first-year students means that we should be able to use this class to talk about the transition to college-level learning and college life.”

Sample Attendance Policies

Here are two sample attendance policies.

1. In addition to careful reading, I expect good attendance and active participation in class exercises and discussions. As a First-Year Seminar, Great Books emphasizes active learning, student involvement, and student experiences. You will be at the center of the teaching and learning that happens during our open, student-centered class conversations and activities, and your attendance is absolutely essential to the learning that happens here. Thus, I take roll religiously. I believe in class attendance. Irregular attendance will hurt your grade and may cause you to fail. I understand that every once in a while circumstances may make it impossible for you to attend. If you miss one or two classes during the semester, don’t worry about it. If you miss more than that, your attendance will hurt your grade. To be specific, students who miss no class and no events will earn five extra credit points. Students who miss two weeks of class or six class sessions will receive zero points for attendance (10 percent of your grade). Students who miss more than three weeks of class (nine or more classes) automatically fail the course.

2. Attendance and Participation: The Psychology of Prejudice CAT Community is designed to provide a relatively small number of students with the opportunity to learn about and discuss issues related to stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. This information cannot be acquired by students who do not attend or who do not engage in class. For that reason, student participation and engagement will count heavily in the course grade. To earn full points, students must attend every class and be engaged in the day’s topic. This does not mean that students must make a certain number of comments or ask a certain number of questions, but it must be obvious that students are on task and paying attention. Two points may be earned in each class for attendance (1 point) and participation (1 point) such that 30 course points may be earned for attendance and participation over the 15 class periods.

Examples of Current First-Year Seminars

Interpersonal Communication
K-State Culture
Principles of Macroeconomics
Introduction to Literature
Insects and People

Earth in Action
History of the U.S. to 1877
Introduction to Formal Logic
American Politics
Introduction to Women’s Studies

Chapter 3: Thinking About the Classroom

Best Practices

As no two First-Year Seminars are alike, we cannot provide a step-by-step guide that delineates exactly how you should plan your course. However, we can offer a list of practices that have worked well.

In general, a FYS classroom should invite first-year students into the university community while engaging them academically and socially. To accomplish these goals, suggest the following strategies:

Encourage active learning

- Host lively discussions
- Arrange field trips
- Engage students in research

Challenge students, but offer support

- Hold high expectations
- Help students reach realistic learning goals
- Encourage risk-taking but offer clear feedback

Take a holistic approach to student success

- Understand that students have lives apart from the classroom
- Develop opportunities for both cognitive and social development
- Create an environment for students to mutually support one another

In addition to these components, FYS classes should also promote student development through college success strategies. Examples of such strategies are:

- Time management skills
- Study skills
- Note taking skills
- Professional demeanor
- E-mail etiquette

Activities and lesson plans that address these types of success strategies can be found in the additional resources listed on page 10.

Ideas for Your FYS Class

1. Connect your class with real-world situations or design activities around the pre-professional interests of your students.
2. Infuse your class with the student success ideas, lessons, and practices that will help your students to learn the skills and the knowledge they need to succeed in your course and your discipline.
3. Use your access to MAPWorks: take a look at the share information about how your students are adjusting.
4. Do something with your students early in the semester. Get some course work from them early and give them some feedback right away. The first three weeks can be crucial.



Planning a Field Trip

Field trips are a great way to get students engaged in their community and practice their skills. Consider taking them to the Beach Museum. Funding is available to help pay for the cost of your field trip. See page 13 for the funding request form for field trips and other co-curricular events.

Field Trip and Co-Curricular Event Awards

K-State First (KSF) has a fund to support field trips and other out-of-class co-curricular events for students in the CAT Communities and First-Year Seminar courses.

Faculty members may request these funds by completing a short application that provides information about the event and its purpose, date, number of students involved, and anticipated expenses. The kinds of expenses that may be covered include a motor pool vehicle, museum tickets, or certain student research expenses, for example. We will not be able to pay for food or items that might be borrowed without cost, such as video equipment available for checkout from iTAC. Application forms are available from Greg Eiselein (eiselei@k-state.edu) and Emily Lehning (lehning@k-state.edu), or they may be downloaded from the KSF website, www.k-state.edu/first/.

Each KSF event award will cover costs up to \$10 per student per section. Thus, a section of 22 students might receive as much as \$220 for an event. Event awards will be distributed until the fund is exhausted. For any monies that have not been allocated by November 1, a faculty member may apply once for a second award.

Using the KSBN Book

The KSBN book is a great way to open the conversation with your students, since most of them read it over the summer. You might consider emailing them before the semester begins, asking them to read the book prior to the first day of class.

The 2012-2013 KSBN selection is *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot.

For specific ideas about using the book, please check out the KSBN Faculty page at www.k-state.edu/ksbn/faculty.html

Past KSBN books include:

- *Zeitoun*, 2011
- *The Hunger Games*, 2010



Chapter 4: Additional Resources

Campus Events and Activities

In order to help get your students involved in campus events, here is a list of places to find out about what's going on at K-State.

Week of Welcome: wow.k-state.edu

Landon Lecture Series: www.k-state.edu/lectures/landon

Lou Douglas Lectures: www.k-state.edu/ufm/LouDouglas.htm

Campus Support Offices

Here is a list of offices on campus where you can direct students if they require additional support.

One Stop Shop for Student Success, Division of Student Life: www.k-state.edu/onestop/

Disability Support Services: www.k-state.edu/dss/

K-State Healthy Decision: www.k-state.edu/hd/

Counseling Services: www.k-state.edu/counseling/

Office of Student Activities and Services: www.k-state.edu/osas/

Office of Student Life: www.k-state.edu/studentlife/

Additional Reading

Angelo, Thomas A., and K. Patricia Cross. *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook For College Teachers*. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

Bain, Ken. *What the Best College Teachers Do*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2004.

Kuh, George D., et al. *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Palmer, Parker J. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007.

Pascarella, Ernest T. and Patrick T. Terenzini. *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Optional Textbook Suggestions for Your Course

Bedford/St. Martin's *Insider's Guide to College Etiquette*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin, 2011. Print.

Gardner, John N., A. Jerome Jewler, and Betsy O. Barefoot. *Your College Experience: Strategies for Success*. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.

Harrington, Christine. *Student Success in College: Doing What Works!* 1st ed. Boston: Cengage, 2012.

GENERAL TIMELINE

SPRING

Attend K-State First Spring Informational Meeting

SUMMER

Consider contacting your students prior to the beginning of the semester

Send a copy of syllabus to Greg at eiselei@ksu.edu

FALL

- Attend K-State First faculty meetings
- Attend program-wide KSNB Event

Sign and Return your IDEA form

WINTER

Consider decompressing and evaluating the semester in preparation for next fall.

Enjoy your break!



K-STATE FIRST | FALL 2012

..... FACULTY CONSENT FORM IDEA REPORTS

K-State First has committed itself to an ongoing study to assess the effects of first-year seminar courses and learning communities on student learning. The seminars and learning communities will be unique in that the maximum enrollment will be 22 students each and limited to first-year students. An emphasis will be placed on communication, critical thinking, and community building.

Your participation in this pilot study will give us the opportunity to utilize end-of-semester student ratings collected via the IDEA System. We intend to use IDEA Reports as part of the endeavor to observe what effects these first-year seminars have on student learning. We will look at individual sections as well as a group report for all sections. No individual faculty member's IDEA Report will be shared with the public. Aggregate findings will be shared with K-State First faculty members, the university community, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, and others (as applicable).

The following person may be contacted with any questions regarding one's rights regarding research protocol: Rick Scheidt, Committee Chair, Institutional Review Board, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224, or you may email the Committee Chair at rscheidt@k-state.edu

.....

I, _____, agree to release a copy of my Fall 2012 IDEA Report for the following course, _____, to the Office of Assessment at Kansas State University. I understand that the Fall 2012 IDEA Report will be used for the purposes designated above for the ongoing study of student learning in K-State First seminars and learning communities. I have had the study explained to me and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have read the description of this project and give my consent to participate. I understand that I will receive a copy of this informed consent form to keep for future reference.

Participant's Signature

Date

Director, Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning
Kansas State University
215 Fairchild Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
(785) 532-7828
CATL@k-state.edu

K-State First Request for Field Trip Funding

Contact Information

Faculty Name: _____ Department: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ Today's Date: _____

Field Trip/Event Information

Class (Course Number and Title): _____

Date(s) of Trip: _____ Location: _____ # of Students: _____

Purpose of Field Trip/Event

Please provide a brief description of your field trip or event, including its purpose within your course and the overall educational benefit of this experience for students.

Costs

Include a list of items for which you are requesting funding. For each item, indicate its cost and briefly describe its educational benefit. (Ineligible items include: food, prizes and gifts, or items that might be borrowed without cost, such as video equipment available for checkout from iTAC.)

Item	Cost	Educational Benefit
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Cost per student: _____

Total Cost of Trip: _____

Signature of Faculty Member: _____

Submit completed form to Greg Eiselein (eiselei@k-state.edu) and Emily Lehning (lehning@k-state.edu). Faculty members may expect to hear a decision about available funds approximately 10 days following the submission of a complete application.

Notes:

The logo features a dark purple horizontal bar with the text "K-STATE" on the left and "FIRST" on the right in white, bold, sans-serif font. A stylized, light gray number "1" is positioned between the two words, overlapping the bar. Behind the bar is a light gray circular graphic element that forms a partial circle around the "1".

K-STATE 1 FIRST

**First-Year Seminar
Faculty Guide
2012**

122 Anderson Hall
785.532.6237
kstatefirst@k-state.edu
www.k-state.edu/first

K·STATE



K-STATE FIRST