

College Experience Seminar

The purpose of the College Experience is to ease your transition to Marietta College as a residential liberal arts institution and to the world of learning in general. Implicit in this statement is the recognition that Marietta College is more than an academic institution and that learning involves more than "book learning". Thus, the first year's transition also involves residential, co-curricular, and extra-curricular life.

Goals of Course

- 1. Transition to College:** Beginning college involves students in a major transition. CESE 101 provides a means of examining transitions and developing strategies to cope with those transitions. In doing so, it defines the values of Marietta College as an academic and residential institution so that you have a clearer sense of to what you must adjust.
- 2. Values Clarification and Theme Study:** Selected reading assignments create a foundation for a semester-long examination of your own values and those of others. This foundation is built on by reading *The Sparrow* by Mary Doria Russell. You will also interview family members and others in an attempt to discover a little about the forces that have shaped your life so far.
- 3. Group Building:** This takes the form of special exercises. The purpose is both the development of the individual and the development of relationships. In other words, the course intends to create a "belonging-place" for new students.
- 4. Introduction to College Life:** You will be exposed to campus events and offices to increase your awareness of resources, facilities, and activities available on campus that can enrich your life.
- 5. Improvement of Communication Skills:** In order to achieve the communication mission of a liberal arts college, you are required to complete several exercises that are designed to enhance your awareness of the need for specific observation, reflection, and precise recording of detail. In addition, there will be a special library assignment, which will culminate with group panel formal presentations.
- 6. Improvement of Study Skills:** Special attention will be given to improvement of skills in note-taking and listening, textbook-reading, test-taking and time management. In general, this course hopes to help you become an active learner.

Expectations and Assumptions

- 1. Perfect attendance.** If you must be absent, you must let me know by voice or email before you actually miss class. Since much of the seminar is interactive, it is not possible to make up some activities that you miss. This could affect your grade.
- 2. Willingness to participate in class and small group work.** Interaction and involvement are crucial for us to achieve our goals.
- 3. Preparation for class.** You must complete assignments on time, and come to class prepared for the day's activities.
- 4. Mature, polite behavior.** In class discussions and presentations you must be polite and attentive at all times. If you disagree with another, I expect you to express your disagreement with the ideas expressed, not the person expressing them. This behavior is to carry over to outside events as well.
- 5. Participation in group activities.** When assignments are made to groups requiring that the group meets outside of class, it is expected that you will do your fair share, including making yourself available for meetings, even if it means adjusting non-critical portions of your schedule to do so.

Work to Be Done

Reading: 1. *The Sparrow* by Mary Doria Russell

2. Assorted assigned readings

- Writing:**
1. A 3-5 page paper utilizing library research.
 2. A short (5 page) paper comparing how you are adapting to college with how one of the characters in *The Sparrow* adapted to change.
 3. A final, 10 page analytical formal paper on "journal" entries.

Other: Some assignments will be generated by the discussions we have in class.

Residence Hall Programs:

You must attend 5 programs sponsored by Residence Life. 3 of these are mandatory; 2 will be selected by the class.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1. Alcohol and Substance Abuse | Wednesday September 3 rd
Thursday September 6 th | 7pm –or-
8:30 pm |
| 2. Sexual Assault Program | Weeks of September 10 th & 17 th | TBA |
| 3. SDHP Mock Hearing | Monday, September 24, 7:00-8:30 p.m. (sexual harassment) –or -
Tuesday, September 25, 8:00-9:30 p.m. (discriminatory harassment) | |
| 4. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. _____ | _____ | _____ |

Group Work: One group panel presentation

Service Learning: You must engage in one service activity of at least 4 hours duration over the course of the semester, and submit a 1-page, typed paper describing the experience and what it revealed about yourself. Ideally, this will be a class project.

Journal: You will keep a journal of writings throughout the semester. This will take the form of a loose-leaf binder into which you will place your writing. On Thursdays, you will turn in the week's writing; I will return it to you the following Tuesday. Most of the writing will be in the form of answers to questions I pose; these are listed for you later in this syllabus. One entry each week will be on a topic of your own choosing, although it should relate in some way to your adjustment to college. The journal will eventually be a major resource for your final research paper, so you want to put some serious effort into it. You can also use the journal as a vehicle to raise questions with me that you might not want to raise in class, and I will try to write a response to you. The contents of your journal will be kept as confidential as possible; although I will not go to jail to protect your confidentiality so if you kill your roommate, let's make that *your* little secret. **Note: Use your journal notebook to keep all material from the course. Do not throw any of your work away. I may ask you to re-submit already graded work at any time.**

Co-Curricular Events:

In **addition** to attending four required Residence Hall Programs, you can attend up to 10 additional Marietta College events for credit. These can include art shows, musical events, sporting events, lectures, etc. The events must be sponsored by the college, must not charge an attendance fee, and you can not count more than 2 events from any one "category". For instance, if you attend a varsity football game, a volleyball game, and a tennis match, you can only count two of these "sporting" events towards your ten. You *cannot* count any event that you are participating in. There is a form attached to this syllabus to keep track of your ten events, and another form (which you must copy) to be filled in for each of the events you attend. Your event checklist and any new event forms must be turned in weekly with your journal. You will receive no credit for events submitted two weeks or more after the date the event took place.

Grading:

Library Research Paper	100 points
College Adaptation Paper	100 points
Rewrite of Comparison Paper	50 points
Final Journal formal Paper	150 points
Panel Presentation	150 points
Service Learning	50 points
Class Participation	100 points
Journal	200 points
Other assignments	0-50 points
Co-curricular events	10 points per event if 6 or more events are attended
Total:	Approximately 1,000 points

900-1000 points = A, 800-900 = B, etc. +/- grades at the discretion of the instructor; in most cases anyone with 30 – 70% of the points within a given letter grade will receive the nominal grade; those with more will get a + and those with fewer points will get a minus.

Course Schedule:

I want this class to be built around you - I want it to cover things of interest to you. Therefore, there is no schedule determined at this time. We will spend the first few weeks in group building activities; included in these will be some exercises to determine priorities for discussions later in the semester. As the semester progresses, we will turn from group-building and introductory material to discussions of our central theme and topics of interest to you.

Instructor Information:

Dr. Dave McShaffrey
Bartlett 306
Phone:

Office - 376-4743 Home - 374-8687

email – mcshaffd@marietta.edu

home page: <http://mcnet.marietta.edu/~mcshaffd/>

My schedule and other information – including information about this course – can be accessed from my web page.

Note: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me as soon as possible to discuss their individual needs for accommodation. Please see me during the first week of classes or within a week of having such a disability diagnosed and documented. ***If you suspect that you may have a learning disability of any type, please arrange to see Denise Norris in the Academic Resource Center (ARC). Denise can work with you to help document any disabilities and determine what accommodations might help you succeed at Marietta College.***

Journal Assignments

The following questions are to guide you in writing your journal. Remember, that in **addition** to these assigned questions, **you must write a reflective entry of your own each week**. The blanks indicate questions that may be assigned in response to the way the class develops, and you should have room to jot the question down in the blank area.

Date	Question/Assignment
1	Write a 1-2 page autobiography
2	Why have you come to college? Why Marietta College? What do you hope to "get" while you are here?
3 August 30	
4	Describe the town you came from. What are its key values? What do its citizens take pride in? What common traits do people from your community have in common?
5	What is your favorite hobby? Why?
6 Sept. 6	
7	What is your favorite type of music? What does this say about you?
8	Describe a job-related situation where you learned an important lesson.
9 Sept. 13	What character do you identify with most closely in <i>The Sparrow</i> ? Why?
10	How do people of different cultures interact? Explore your thesis with examples from <i>The Sparrow</i> and from your own life.
11	Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10? 20? Describe what your work and home life will be like.
12 Sept. 20	Note: Have The Sparrow read by this point.
13	Interview one or both of your parents. Write a biography based on the interview.
14	What traits of your parents do you see reflected in yourself?
15 Sept. 27	Who is responsible for what happens to Emilio Sanchez? Note: Library Research Paper Due!
16	What subject are you doing best at? Worst? Why?
17	Talk with a friend who went to another college, and with a friend who didn't go to college. How have your experiences differed?
18 Oct. 4	What news event occurring this week had the greatest emotional impact on you?
19	What are your strengths and weaknesses as a person?
20	Describe how an experience your parents had has affected your outlook on life.
21 Oct. 11	What is the greatest problem facing your generation? How might it be solved? Note: - College Adaptation Paper Due!
22	Interview an aunt or uncle, or a person of your parents' generation who knew one of your parents when they were growing up. What insights do you gain into your parent's and your own life?
23	What constitutes academic dishonesty? Under what conditions might you cheat?
24 Oct. 18	Choose the class you got the lowest midterm grade in. Make an appointment and go in to talk with the instructor. List strategies you and the instructor agreed on to help you improve your performance.
25	How important is being popular? What would you sacrifice to be popular?
26	How are you adjusting to school so far?
27 Oct. 25	What was the most embarrassing thing that ever happened to you?

Date	Question/Assignment
28	What is your favorite class? Why?
29	What is the most difficult problem faced by a character in the book you chose? How do they deal with it? How did their family or community prepare them to deal with it?
30	Nov. 1 What was the funniest thing that ever happened to you? Note: Paper Rewrite Due!
31	How do expectations of students differ at Marietta College as opposed to other schools your friends have gone to?
32	How does Marietta differ from your hometown?
33	Nov. 8
34	Talk about a person you consider to be a real hero, and another you consider to be a false hero. What is the distinction?
35	Describe heroic characteristics in your own personality and in other people you know.
36	Nov. 15 What is your favorite TV show? Why?
37	Which characters in Mary Doria Russell's book would you consider to be heroes? What about in the book you chose?
38	What are your priorities? How have they changed since the beginning of the semester?
39	Nov. 20 TUESDAY!!! Note: Service Learning Paper Due!
Thanksgiving Break	
40	Dec. 4 Note: Final Paper Due! (no class)
	Dec. 6 All- Freshman Celebration – 11 AM – Gathering Place

Co-Curricular Event Checklist

Name: _____

Number	Date	Event	Category	Approved
		Sexual Assault Program		
		Alcohol Awareness Program		
		SDHP Mock Hearing		
		Residence Hall Program #4		
		Residence Hall Program #5		
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

Note: Fill in **ONLY** the name of the event and the date - the instructor will fill in the number, decide the category, and sign approval. This form must be turned in each time you submit additional events for addition to your list. Submit responses for each event using the form on the next page.

Categories: Lectures, Movies, Plays, Concerts, Debates, Sporting events, etc.

Event Response Sheet

Use copies of this sheet to record your responses to the 10 extracurricular activities and 4 residence hall programs. You must complete this form and turn it in with your weekly journal entries within 2 weeks of the time when the event took place. If you do not turn this page in on time you will not receive credit for the event.

Name: _____

Title of Event:

Date of Event:

In the space below, describe the event - where it was held, who the main speaker(s), performer(s) were, what happened, etc.

In the space below, describe your reaction to the event.