

**First Year Program
Brown College (FRPG 187A)
Fall 2007**

Making A Difference: Active Citizenship in a Democratic Society

CLASSROOMS

Plenary: T/Th 10:10-11:40 a.m., PK 015
Seminar: T 2:20 to 3:50 p.m., H 112

FACULTY

<p>Elizabeth Regosin (eregosin@stlawu.edu) History Vilas 103 x5213 Office Hours: Monday 2:30-4:30</p>	<p>Ronald Flores (rflores@stlawu.edu) Sociology HJ Commons 203, x5228 Office Hours: TBA</p>	<p>Brenda Papineau (bpapineau@stlawu.edu) Community Based Learning HJ Commons Rm. 112 x5255</p>
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BROWN RESIDENTIAL STAFF/COMMUNITY MENTORS

<p>RESIDENCE COORDINATOR:</p>	<p>COMMUNITY ASSISTANTS: Danielle Rhubarb x Neil Couhinto x.</p>	<p>MENTOR Stephanie Schonholz x Office hours: Sun. 6:00-9:00 H-J Commons; Monday 7:00-9:00 Library</p>
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Why did you decide to commit the next four years to a college education and who will benefit from your education experience? What difference will it make if you complete a liberal arts education? What difference will you make? Many young people go to college so that they can get a good paying job in a competitive market place. And, that is important, but is it enough? We will argue that it is not, and we'll explore how we can and will use our college experience to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Many of our conversations and assignments will center on the **role of the citizen as leader** both past and present. Our work in the classroom will also be heavily informed by learning and serving in the local community throughout the fall semester.

COURSE OUTLINE:

We will open with a discussion of the basic concepts of the course, all of which have many competing definitions. For example, what is meant by "making a difference"? The idea of "making a difference" is really about democracy, since we are trying to make sense of how action is taken (or not) in our society. Thus, at the core of our conversation should be a discussion of power, how it's given, used distributed and shared. We'll begin with a look at the concerns (and solutions) our founding "fathers" had about how power should be distributed in a democracy. These concerns over the distribution of power then sets the stage for current debates

over the health of our democracy if power, is as some argue, is in the hands of elites. If that is the case, then how a difference is made, if at all, may be in the hands of a few.

Following our discussions on power, we then turn to understanding leadership and citizenship in a democratic society. While we will explore various definitions of leadership, the class will work together to develop its own working definition of leadership. From there, we'll apply our definition to important questions about current leaders in the United States. For example, what is the relationship between leaders and followers and does the United States suffer from a dearth of strong leaders?

With a working understanding of leadership and citizenship in hand, we turn the lens of the course inward and focus on the relationship between a liberal arts education and leadership/citizenship. Should teaching and learning leadership and citizenship be part of a liberal arts education? The debate on this issue is quite lively, and we'll take a look at one of the more contentious issues, namely the need for a multicultural education as preparation for citizenship in a diverse society.

One very important issue that we will then discuss is the obstacles that can prevent communities and nations from making a difference. One issue that has received considerable attention in recent years is civic engagement in the United States today. Are we, as a people, simply less likely to get involved in community affairs? And, if so, what are the implications of such a decline in "social capital" on the effectiveness of leaders and on the health of democracy? From there, the conversation will move to an examination of the effects that inequality, difference and exclusion have on our ability to make positive change.

As we examine and discuss these important questions, issues, and concepts, we'll also engage in an in-depth application of the basic concepts of the course to two very different events, one historical and one contemporary. First, we will go back about 50 years and explore how ordinary people got together to achieve extraordinary changes during the civil rights era. During our conversations, we'll address a number of important questions: What were the historical circumstances that resulted in the socially transforming events that occurred during the fight for civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s? What risks were people willing to take to fight for social change? Who and what brought people together to achieve the goals of the movement? What roles did young Americans, black and white, play the fight for racial equality? And, what have the impacts of that period in our history on the current American landscape?

Second, we will look at a recent event that for many represents a failure to "make a difference." In 2005, from August 28 through the first weeks of September, the nation, if not the world, was riveted by the events unfolding in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama as Hurricane Katrina ripped through those parts of the country leaving behind a bloody trail of tragedy. What appalled Americans was the seemingly incompetent and flawed efforts on the parts of national and local leaders to meet the needs (even the most basic such as food, water and safety) of the thousands of victims of the disaster. For many, the images of so many poor African Americans in despair raised questions about the roles of class and race in the tragedy, especially regarding the poor quality of the response. For others, the failure of the response raised fears about our ability as a nation to adequately respond to the needs of its people, especially during periods of crisis. Why (if it did) did leadership fail? What leaders were most to blame? On the other hand, how did local groups and people rally together to save thousands of lives? Who were the real leaders and

how did they step up? And, lastly, many are now very concerned about the future of the devastated communities. How will we come together to rebuild New Orleans? What voices are going to be heard and what interests are going to be championed as decisions are made about the future of the Big Easy? What roles will race and class play in the rebuilding process? What role will leadership and democracy play?

LEARNING AND SERVING IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY:

We believe that making a difference and leadership can and do happen every day and that it begins with the process of identifying and understanding a problem as a group and finding solutions collaboratively. Thus, an important component of the course is to offer students the opportunity to make a difference both in the community and on our campus. During the semester, students will work with local agencies/programs including the following possible placements: Canton Methodist Church, United Helpers Home for the Aged, The Meals on Wheels Program (Office for the Aging), the New York State Association for Retarded Citizens (NYSARC), the Little River School, and St. Mary's School. Through their placement experiences, students will learn how ordinary folk set up and operate programs and organizations that meet the needs of their community. Throughout the semester, we'll look reflectively on the connections between community service, civic engagement and democratic action as they manifest themselves in our experiences in our placements. Through this reflection, we will come to a better understanding of how each of us can "make a difference."

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:

All of the course assignments will ask you to reflect on leadership and how people come together to address to meet common goals and improve the lives of their fellow citizens. The **Learning Journal** is the place where most of that reflection will take place. It is here that you will reflect on both the materials covered in class and your experiences in the community. The journal will also serve as the place where you will identify your goals for this course and monitor your progress toward those goals. The emphasis of the journal is to introduce both agency and intentionality into your learning. Specifically, it is through the journal that both you and your instructor will assess not only what you have learned, but how and why you've learned it.

The **first formal writing assignment**, like all your assignments, will be drawn from your learning journal. In this assignment, you will be asked to look at the relationship between community service and democracy as it reflected in your personal experiences in the community. The **first oral assignment** will bring students who are placed in the same agency together for the purpose of "speaking to inform" the larger community (in this case, our class) about the central issues that face their agency. The **second formal writing assignment** asks students to examine a specific aspect of leadership during the civil rights movement. Lastly, the **second oral assignment** will again bring groups of students together in a forum, titled the Katrina Summit, where they will *speak to persuade* the audience on either their strategies for disaster responsiveness or plans for rebuilding New Orleans.

Detailed information on all assignments will be made available on our college Angel site.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND KEY DEADLINES OF MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:

Written Assignments (70%)

- **Learning Journal (40%)**

We will randomly collect journals, so be ready to hand in your journal at the end of every week.

- **First Writing Assignment: *The Relationship between Service and Democracy with revisions (15%)***

Date Assigned: September 18

Due Dates:

First Draft due: September 28

Final Draft due: October 11

- **Second Writing Assignment: *The Civil Rights Movement with revisions (15%)***

Date Assigned: October 23

Due Dates:

First Draft due: November 1

Final Draft due: November 15

Oral Communication/Creative Projects (30%)

- **First Oral Presentation: *Local Community Agencies: Identifying and Meeting their Needs with revisions (15%)***

Date assigned: October 2

Presentation: October 16

- **Second Oral Presentation: *The Katrina Summit with revisions (15%)***

Date Assigned: November 13

Presentation: December 11

Attendance and Participation Expectations

Lectures, presentations, and discussions are a major source of conceptual and analytical information not included in the reading, and discussion participation is expected of all students in the class. Attendance will be taken in both plenary and seminar sessions. **A total of three (3) physical absences, whether excused or unexcused, will be allowed. After that, .25 will be deducted from your final course grade for each absence.** Two (2) late arrivals will be considered equal to one absence. **Please note that it is not enough just to show up.** Students who attend class but who are clearly not prepared and as a result can not engage that day's materials or activities will be marked intellectually absent.

Assignment Policy

The schedule is tight, so all five major assignments (three written, two oral) must be handed in or performed on due dates as assigned. The following rules apply to timely completion of all assignments:

- Any assignment turned in late will be dropped .25 for each calendar day it is late (including weekends).
- Any assignment performed late will be dropped .25 for each class day it is late.
- Late first presentations and/or drafts will also result in a .25 per day deduction in the final grade for that project.

- Failure to present adequate materials for peer review on the dates assigned will result in a .25 deduction in the final grade for that project.
- Having a computer or printer problem at the last minute is not a valid excuse for late papers or drafts. Plan ahead.
- **Failure to hand in (within three days of due date) or perform any one of the five major assignments results in an automatic failure in the course.**

Exceptions/extensions may be negotiated in extreme circumstances but must be worked out in advance of the due date, and evidence of progress on the project must be shown.

REQUIRED TEXTS FOR THE COURSE (in MLA citation format):

Available at the Brewer Bookstore. Readings will be assigned on a weekly basis. You are expected to complete the readings by the date listed in the syllabus for in-class discussion. You will find all other course readings on our Angel site.

Coles, Robert The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

Hacker, Diana A Pocket Style Manual, 4th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

Robinson, Jo Ann Gibson with David Garrow The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987.

West, Cornel Democracy Matters: Winning the Fight Against Imperialism New York: Penguin Press, 2004.

SPECIAL EVENTS

You are required to attend the following:

- **President's Picnic – Wed., August 29, 5:10 p.m.**
- **Community social evening – Event is to be determined by the students**
- **FYP-Wide Meeting, Thurs., September 20 during Plenary time**
- **Black Panther Party Exhibit Lecture, Monday, September 24, 7:00 p.m., Griffiths 123**

(See Attached Statement of Philosophy and Goals for the Residential Component of the First-Year Program)

SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1:

Plenary – Thursday 8/30

Discussion of basic concepts of the course. What does it mean to “make a difference” in a Democratic Society? Who gets to decide if a difference needs to be made? What is YOUR place in society?

Readings, West, Chapter 6, “The Necessary Engagement with Youth Culture”

Week 2:

Plenary – Tuesday 9/4

Examination of the historical underpinnings of U.S. citizenship.

Readings, Ricci, “The Republican Moment” and “The Democratic Moment”

Seminar - Tuesday 9/4

Class discussion on the community placements with CCEL professional staff. We will discuss expectations and the CBL contract. Students should share their initial thoughts about their expectations about their service experience. We should also chat about what service means to them. Their initial responses and reactions should find their way into their initial journal entries.

Plenary - Thursday 9/6

Tuesday’s conversation continued.
Readings, Wood, “The Public Good”

Week 3:

NOTE: All students should have participated in their first agency activity by Monday, Sept. 10.

Plenary - Tuesday 9/11

As a follow-up to conversations surrounding the historical underpinnings of U.S. citizenship, in today’s plenary we will discuss various views on how power is distributed in United States. Are we a Democracy or is power limited to an elite class or classes?

Readings: C. Wright Mills ‘The Power Elite,’ G. William Domhoff “Who Rules America”

Seminar – Tuesday 9/11

Class will discuss initial experiences in community placements (for those who have already visited) and such service experiences in the context of leadership/citizenship. Based on the work of Robert Coles, we will discuss how one approaches a community service experience.

Readings: Coles, “Chapter 1 Method”

Plenary - Thursday 9/13

We’ll continue our conversation about Mills and Domhoff today.

Week 4:

Plenary Tuesday 9/18

Class will come together to develop a working definition of leadership. Based on our definition, we will assess whether there is a leadership void in the United States.

Readings: Gardner, “The Cry for Leadership,” Burns, “The Crisis of Leadership” Couto, “Defining a Citizen Leader” and Greenleaf, “The Servant Leader”

Seminar Tuesday 9/18 – As part of our continuing self reflection on our community experiences, we will examine our motivations for engaging in community service. Why do we do it and does that matter?

Formal Writing Assignment 1 assigned and discussed

Readings, Coles, “Chapter 2: Kinds of Service”

Plenary - Thursday 9/20

Informal presentations on definitions of leadership by student groups. Discussion on leadership and citizenship in democratic society follows.

Readings: Hughes, Ginnett and Curphy, “What is Leadership,” Spitzberg, “Paths of Inquiry into Leadership” Barber, “Neither Leaders Nor Followers: Citizenship Under Strong Democracy” and

Week 5:

**** Special Event: Monday 9/24 – Lecture by Billy X Jennings, Black Panther Party Historian, 7:00 Griffiths 123**

Plenary -Tuesday 9/25

Discussion of the civic mission of the University. Is leadership and citizenship teachable? And, if it is, is the part of a liberal arts education?

Readings: Barber, “The Civic Mission of the University” Dewey, *The Democratic Conception in Education* Cantor, “Civic Engagement: The University as a Public Good” Cronin, “Teaching and Learning about Leadership” Fish, “Aim Low”

Seminar – Tuesday 9/25

Discussion of connections between serving and learning across classroom and community

Readings – “Coles, Chapter 5: On Doing and Learning”

Plenary - Thursday 9/27

FYP-WIDE MEETING

Due Date – Friday 9/21 - First Draft of Writing Assignment 1 due by noon in Angel drop-box

Week 6:

Plenary – Tuesday 10/2

Discussion of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the roots of revolution.

Readings: Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women who Started it*; Martin Luther King, Jr., “Speech at Holt Street Baptist Church”

Seminar – Tuesday 10/2

First Oral Assignment assigned and discussed

Visit the Gallery to see “The Black Panthers: Photographs by Steven Shames”

Plenary – Thursday 10/5

Continue Discussion of Montgomery Bus Boycott

Week 7:

Plenary – Tuesday 10/9

Discussion of the student movement: the Sit-Ins and the birth of SNCC

Readings: Howell Raines, “Black Surprise;” Joanne Grant, “Political Mama;” Ella J. Baker, “Bigger than a Hamburger;” “An Appeal for Human Rights.”

Seminar – Tuesday 10/9

Town Hall Meeting – Conversations with our Community Partners. Students will invite placement supervisors to join us in a conversation about their experiences and issues they face in their placements.

Due Date – Thursday 10/11 Final Draft of Writing Assignment 1 due by noon in drop-box

Thursday 10/12 Mid-semester Break

Week 8:

Plenary - Tuesday 10/16

First set of presentations Local Community Agencies: Identifying and Meeting their Needs

Seminar - Tuesday 10/16

First set of presentations Local Community Agencies: Identifying and Meeting their Needs

Plenary - Thursday 10/18

Begin Discussion of Black Panther Party, film: *Eyes on the Prize*

Readings: Black Panther Party Platform

Week 9:

Plenary - Tuesday 10/23

Discussion of Black Panther Party

Readings: JoNina Abron, “‘Serving the People’: The Survival Programs of the Black Panther Party”

Seminar – Tuesday 10/23

Discussion of community placement experiences. **Second formal writing assignment assigned and discussed.**

Plenary -Thursday 10/25

Discussion of Cornel West’s *Democracy Matters*

Readings: *Democracy Matters*, TBA

Week 10:

Plenary - Tuesday 10/30

Discussion of inequality in the United States. Who are the winners and who are the losers in the current economy and how does that affect the power of collective action?

Readings: Kozol, "Savage Inequalities" Oliver and Shapiro, "Black Wealth, White Wealth," Danzinger and Gottschalk, "The Diminishing American Dream"

Seminar - Tuesday 10/30

Discussion of inequality and poverty as it is reflected in student community experiences. A look at rural poverty and what can be done about it.

Reading: Davidson, Chapter 3: The Rise of the Rural Ghetto"

Plenary - Thursday 11/1:

Building on this week's discussions, we take a closer look at exclusion and how to fight back.

Readings, Lorde, Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference; Rappolo "Symbolic Racism, History and Reality: the Real Problem with Indian Mascots."

Due Date: Thursday 11/1 First draft of Second Writing Assignment due by 4:00PM in Angel Dropbox

Week 11:

Plenary - Tuesday 11/6 Library Workshops

Seminar - Tuesday 11/6

Discussion of community placement experiences. **Second oral assignment assigned and discussed.**

Readings – Coles, Chapter 3 Satisfaction

Plenary - Thursday 11/8 Class cancelled and replaced by one-on-one sessions with advisors

Week 12:

Plenary - Tuesday 11/13

Begin discussion on Hurricane Katrina – First an overview of the events of August 28-September 10, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina struck Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama and the immediate aftermath. In-Class presentations and discussions. If time permits, we will begin historical context underlying the central issues that would emerge from the Katrina Disaster.

Readings: CNN Reports, [Katrina: State of Emergency](#)

Seminar - Tuesday 11/13

Discussion of community placement experiences

Readings – Coles, "Chapter 4 Hazards"

Plenary – Thursday 11/15: Discussion of the poor government response and the race question
Readings: “Dyson Chapter 2: Does George Bush Care About Black People” and “Chapter 3: The Politics of Disaster” Tierney, “Social Inequality, Hazards and Disasters”

Due Date Thursday 11/15 Final draft of Second Writing assignment due today by noon in Angel drop-box

Thanksgiving Break – Happy Eating!

Week 13:

Plenary - Tuesday 11/27:

Discussion on our lack of preparedness for disasters

Readings, Meyer, “Why We Under-Prepare for Hazards” and Ryland, “Providing Economic Incentives to Build Disaster Resistant Structures”

Seminar – Tuesday 11/27 –

Final Conversation on community experience. What were the key themes that held our experiences together?

Readings, Coles, Chapter 8: Consequences

Plenary - Thursday 11/29

Debate and Discussion on the quality of leadership during and after the disaster.

Readings: Vicki Bier, “Hurricane Katrina as a Bureaucratic Nightmare” Walters and Kiel, “The Katrina Breakdown” Goodman, “Jefferson Parish (LA) Emergency Services Task Force: “Making a Difference””

Week 14:

Plenary - Tuesday 12/4:

So, now what? Planning and Rebuilding New Orleans. Discussion on the role of leadership, civic action and the future of New Orleans

Readings, Olshansky, “Planning After Hurricane Katrina”

Seminar Tuesday 12/4

Group work for final oral presentation

Plenary - Thursday 12/6

Discussion on the role of leadership in the rebuilding of Hurricane Katrina

Readings, Fluker, “Needed: Ethical Leadership in the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina” and Cunnigen, “Black Leadership in the Twenty-First Century”

Week 15:

Plenary - Tuesday 12/11 –

Final Oral Presentations –The Katrina Summit

Seminar - 12/11
Final Oral Presentations – The Katrina Summit

Plenary - Thursday 12/13
Course evaluations

Week 16: Finals Week

Completed learning journals due no later than noon, Monday, December 17. NO LATE journals WILL BE ACCEPTED.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism:

At St. Lawrence, all members of the University community have a responsibility to see that standards of honesty and integrity are maintained. It is the responsibility of each student to learn and understand the standards of academic integrity expected at St. Lawrence, as expressed in the University's academic honor code. Additional information regarding academic honesty, plagiarism and academic dishonesty procedures and penalties can be found in the Student Handbook (Herrick College syllabus, fall 2002). To avoid one of the most difficult situations in which a student may find him/her self, we remind you of what constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is a form of theft: i.e.: presenting someone's words or ideas as if they were your own, without acknowledgment. This includes other students' or faculties' work, as well as information from books, or any other written material, and the Web. If you are accused of cheating or plagiarism, your work will be sent to a university-wide committee who will judge the case and recommend action to the Dean. The minimum penalty for plagiarism is usually failure in the course (Priest College syllabus, Fall 1997). Students are directed to read the relevant section of the student handbook to familiarize themselves with the varied dimensions and aspects of plagiarism. Further, you are expected to read and sign the academic honor pledge in class at the beginning of the fall semester.

Reading, Class Preparation and Discussion:

All our classroom discussions will be grounded in readings and/or personal experiences in your community and through your internships. Course readings will give us grounding in the issues of different types of communities and community structures, and while personal experiences are important in an FYP like ours, and we expect that you will connect them directly to the readings you are doing. We will strongly engage all the readings during classroom discussions, therefore, class preparation is essential. It is crucial that you read texts actively – it will increase your comprehension and also your enjoyment. Reading actively includes many aspects. On the most basic level, it requires that you understand the text's vocabulary, sentence construction, and key references to concepts. It also consists of comprehending the text's structural organization, and trying to grasp its larger purpose or argument. Many students have difficulty because they focus too intently on the details and ideas within a single sentence or paragraph. Always try to keep in mind the larger picture – what problems does the author pose, and does s/he provide a solution to the problem? What is the author trying to persuade you of (or engage you in)? How does s/he structure the text to achieve that goal?

There are many ways to read actively, including highlighting or underlining, making margin notes, taking notes in a notebook, diagramming or outlining the structure, and reading out loud (this last will become particularly relevant when we read dramatic texts)...By reading actively, you should have some ideas about the text's structure and main ideas, as well as questions about its meaning. Class discussion offers the chance to present your ideas and your questions to your colleagues, so that we can all come to a deeper understanding of the material. Active participation in discussions will enable you to work through difficult concepts, perceive links between different topics and readings, and clearly articulate your own perspectives on the subject matter. Come to class prepared with issues that interest you about the text, whether they are questions, observations, or critiques.

Meaningful discussion requires an ability to keep an eye on the text's larger significance without neglecting the realm of the specific. Your questions, comments, and observations should be grounded in specific passages in the text, while speaking to the work's key themes. Everyone will bring different qualities and ideas to discussion.... You should not be afraid to disagree – it is through constructive, energetic debate that we will all come to more sophisticated understandings of the material.... When you engage in debate with your colleagues, make sure you stay grounded in the texts – you should be able to provide evidence to support your interpretations, and it is fair to ask your colleagues for the same....The more you have prepared for discussion in advance, the easier it will be to participate in the class itself (Herrick College syllabus, fall 2003).

Revisions:

As part of St. Lawrence University's commitment to the continued development of student communication (written and oral) skills, all assignments in the First Year Program will include a formal and informal revision process. Good writing is a dynamic process where drafts progressively improve as the result of personal and outside review. Both forms of review are critical components of all assignments and are required of all students. Students will have all of their drafts (both written and oral) reviewed by their classmates. In addition, your mentor, **Stephanie Schonholz**, is a valuable resource for reviewing both substantive and stylistic components of papers, presentations and performances. The library also houses the **Munn Word Studio**, which is also an excellent resource for improving the quality of your drafts. Since review and revision is a required part of all assignments, students must submit all edited and reviewed drafts along with final drafts. In the FYP, we not only evaluate the quality of your final draft, but the quality of the process by which that draft was produced. We also recognize the quality of peer reviewing in assessing final grades.

All writing assignments will be formally submitted to your instructor for their review and assessment. First drafts will not be assigned formal grades, but students will be made aware of the quality of their work by feedback from the instructor.

Handing in a rough or incomplete first draft will result in a grade penalty for the final grade on the paper. It is never acceptable to hand in work that does not represent your best efforts. A first draft is **not** a rough draft.

All first drafts will receive detailed comments from instructors in the formal revision process. As students prepare their final drafts, they are to address ALL of the comments (including

substantive, stylistic and grammatical comments). Please note that the standards of evaluation on the final draft are much more stringent than on initial drafts.

Courtesy:

Due to the sensitive nature of the topics under study, some classroom conversations may become a bit heated. Our hope is to maintain a relaxed environment that encourages participation and facilitates learning for everyone in our community. This can only be achieved if each member of the college acts as a responsible member of the community. Discourteous behaviors (arriving late, leaving without reason, rudely interrupting others while they are speaking, carrying on disruptive private conversations, using intimidating or disrespectful language or gestures towards fellow students or faculty, etc.) will not be tolerated. Such behavior will result in your being asked to leave class. In addition, you will be penalized for your absence (Corey College syllabus, Fall 1997).

The Mentor's role:

Think of your mentor as a Writing Center tutor who is particularly knowledgeable about the subject matter of your course. Our mentor, Stephanie Schonholz, will participate in class activities as often as possible, and she will be able to help you with both your writing and oral assignments. She will have ten official office hours in Brown each week (schedule to be announced soon). We expect you to take advantage of her talents, and we may, in fact, require some of you to see her at certain points in the semester. Though having a mentor is an extraordinarily valuable resource for you as a student, Stephanie is not a miracle worker and cannot fix things for you at the last minute. Working with Stephanie throughout the process will not necessarily guarantee you a perfect 4.0 paper, but it will certainly give you a much better paper. We as faculty rely on Stephanie's work and her feedback; we work as a team.

First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals 2007-08:

The First-Year Program (FYP) and First-Year Seminar (FYS) are the first steps in a four-year process of helping you meet the University's Aims and Objectives and the broader goals of a liberal education. The faculty of the FYP and FYS see themselves as partners and mentors in the process of working with you to acquire the intellectual habits of the mind, writing, speaking, and research skills, and the ethical self-reflection that are at the core of a liberal education. The FYP and FYS will ask you to consider new perspectives on the world and your place in it and will challenge you to confront many of the hidden assumptions you bring to college with you. We hope to open you to new ideas, help you to see the complexity of the way in which knowledge gets produced and used in society, and encourage you to see yourself as an active contributor in making the world a better place. The course topics, the texts you will read, listen to, and watch, the in-class and out-of-class activities you will engage in, and the writing, speaking, and research assignments you will work on are all designed to introduce you to the depth of critical thinking and the quality and complexity of the communication skills that will be expected of you at SLU and as a citizen of an increasingly diverse society.

First and foremost among our goals are those related to your abilities as a communicator. The work of the FYP and FYS asks you to design and deliver written, spoken, performed and/or visual texts that demonstrate basic skills in the relevant modes of communication and with an increasing degree of rhetorical sensitivity. Our focus on "rhetorical sensitivity" means that we

expect you to cultivate the awareness that all of your communication, whether formal or informal, involves having to make choices about your messages, whether written, spoken, aural or visual. To become a good communicator, you need to recognize that the creation of meaningful and powerful written, spoken, performed, or visual texts involves both a creator and an audience, and that therefore the voice you adopt in your communication, the audience you imagine yourself communicating to, and the social and ethical context of the content, matter a great deal in creating such texts. One important way to become a better communicator is to become a better critical reader, viewer, and listener, which is why we will ask you to engage challenging materials in a variety of forms and work with you to learn how to interpret them.

Learning to read, listen, write, speak, do research and/or perform well also requires feedback. As faculty, we submit our work for feedback from colleagues all the time, and giving and receiving constructive feedback from both friends and strangers is central to collaborative work in any field and is itself a form of critical thinking and learning. We further recognize that this feedback process is not linear and that good communication requires that you continually rethink, restructure, and revise your work in order for it to be your best. This is why we require that your writing, speaking, and performance assignments be “projects” that include preparatory exercises and multiple drafts or rehearsals, all of which ask you to continue to reflect critically on the choices you have made in the texts that you produce. Furthermore, we see all of these forms of communication as complementary and intertwined, which is why many of your assignments will ask you to integrate elements of the written, spoken, performed, and visual. Finally, developing good habits of critical inquiry and communication also means reflecting on the ethical dimensions of how your work represents that of others, thus one of our goals is to help you to understand both the nature of academic integrity and the social processes by which knowledge is produced and represented.

To ensure that the program is meeting its stated goals, all FYP and FYS syllabi are read by other faculty in the program to determine if they include a variety of assignments that foster the writing, speaking, research, and critical thinking goals of the program. All FYP and FYS courses have to be approved by faculty in the program before they are offered.

Special Needs and Tutors:

If you have a disability of any kind and need special accommodation, the first step is to contact John Meagher in the Office of Academic Services for Students with Special Needs. He will help you with all necessary steps to receiving appropriate accommodation for your disability. If you feel you simply might need additional help with any course materials (not just FYP), you can also contact Lynette Sumpter in the Office of Academic Achievement. They have free student tutors available for all subject areas, and they offer workshops on study skills, time management, and other practical issues as well. The office’s website also offers tips and strategies for general academic achievement: <http://www.stlawu.edu/acskills/index.htm>.

Technology Introduction for Brown College – Fall 2007

What information should you have received by the time you arrive on campus?

- Network, Email and Angel Account ID and Passwords
- ResNet Services & Support Info
- Help Desk Services & Support Info

- Prospective/New Student Info (link to online materials)

(If you didn't get this mailing, or don't have it with you on campus, another copy has been sent to your SLU address, so check your mail ASAP.)

What will you need to know about technology to function in the Brown community?

- **E-mail** We will do a great deal of communicating to the class members via your campus e-mail address. If you intend to use an e-mail account other than the one assigned to you on campus, please be sure to forward your SLU account to the other e-mail account. Forwarding instructions at http://it.stlawu.edu/email_services/email_FAQ.htm
- **Angel** We post many class readings and all of our handouts (assignment guidelines, small group discussion questions, peer review sheets, etc.) on a class Angel course management site. You have access to read and/or print all the files on this site from any computer on campus. You must know how to open and download or print documents from this site, which can be accessed by going to <http://it.stlawu.edu> and using the Angel link. Students must self enroll for Angel and instructions are available here by clicking on the "documentation and information" link. There are also discussion forums that will be used during the semester to expand and enhance classroom discussion and/or your internship experiences. Finally, all written assignments (including drafts) will be submitted and returned through the Angel site.
- **The P:drive** Everyone is assigned a personal storage drive, and we will expect you to know how to access your own (personal) p-drive on the SLU system. This is probably the most reliable way to save all your documents, though you may wish to back these files up in another drive as well. You can access this drive from any computer on campus.