

## Template for FYE Transition Course Syllabus Fall 2015

**Instructor:** *(name, office, phone, email, office hours, etc.)*

**Course Prefix & Title** *(USI 130 or COUN 140 or USI 101 of LEAD 140,150-157)*

*For Learning Community sections, also include the specific course title: eg. "Ripple Effect" or "WHEE Teach", etc.*

**Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction and opportunity for you to transition to university life, as you discover the resources available (academic, co-curricular, community). You will examine the principles of leadership through the thematic lens. This subject of this course is you. It is intentionally designed to promote your self-awareness and personal success—in college and in life after college—by empowering you with flexible skills and strategies that are applicable across subjects (transferable, cross-disciplinary skills) and across time (durable, lifelong learning skills).

*PLUS: You should include additional thematic focus description as applicable: (Describe what makes the theme unique and what students can expect to learn and experience as they explore transitional (and leadership if applicable) principles through this lens.*

**Learning Community:** In a Learning Community students are organized into cohorts that appeal to their interests and goals, and may also include a residential co-location - thus the collaboration among educators reinforces and promotes integrated learning. Cohorts may enroll students in two or more courses (LC) or may connect one course with a residential component (LLC).

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**Textbooks:**

- **LEAD Courses:** Peak Performance: Success in College & Beyond, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.  
ISBN: 978-0-07-722771-5 (available in book rental)
- **USI and COUN Courses:** Your College Experience: Strategies for success, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. –  
ISBN: 978-0-312-60254-3 (available in book rental) –  
(Electronic content is available on the USI Course Template in Blackboard)
- **ALL Transition Courses:** One Book 2015 – The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates  
*(provided at no charge to all incoming freshmen during orientation. All Transition courses should include this book within curriculum plans.)*
- Optional supplemental texts/readings assigned by instructors to compliment thematic focus, or instructor preferences

## Purpose, Goals and Outcomes:

### The Purpose of this course is to:

- (1) *connect* you with other *students*—i.e., to help you form peer-support networks and peer-learning communities;
- (2) *connect* you with the *college*—i.e., to promote (a) your appreciation of the meaning and relevance of the college *curriculum* (liberal arts & sciences), (b) your involvement in the *co-curriculum* (out-of-class experiential learning), and (c) your use of *campus support services* (academic-support and student-development services);
- (3) *connect* your *present* college experience with your *future* goals and plans—i.e., to help you relate your current college experience with your upcoming decisions about your college *major*, your future *career* path, and your life beyond college.
- (4) *connect* you with the principles of *leadership* - i.e., to help you understand the importance of leadership to your college experience and your life.

### Transition Objectives for the course include the following

- To help you orient yourself at WCU by making you familiar with academic policies, programs and support resources;
- To help you cope successfully with the stresses that often accompany major life transitions, such as coming to college;
- To create a context in which you can clarify values and continue to develop a sense of responsibility for your academic, personal, and career development;
- To guide you to develop empathy, respect, and appreciation for others who are different from you in terms of the ways our society defines human and group differences, including race, ethnicity, religious backgrounds, linguistic differences, socioeconomic levels, age, geography, sexual orientation, and national origins.
- This Course is meant to get you off to a good start in college, and to motivate you to successfully complete your college education. It is the place to get your questions answered, explore and establish your goals, develop connections to the campus community, and discover resources that will help you be successful. Your instructor is also a mentor, a “go-to” person, when you have questions, insecurities, indecisions, or other difficulties—please take advantage of this both in class and individually!

### LEARNING GOALS & OUTCOMES:

To achieve the expected learning goals, WCU has identified a set of core skills and behaviors (goals) that are central to a student’s development as an integrated, intentional learner.

### University Learning Goals: Students should

- Identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations;
- Modify their behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences; and
- Recognize the synthesis of their university experiences relative to their future education and career plans.

1. **DISCOVER COLLEGE**
  - Students will identify the purpose and function of the campus resources that serve as tools for success (i.e., the Core Element Content).
  - Students will engage with the campus community.
2. **Be Involved** (*Practice civic engagement*)
  - Students will practice the Community Creed.
3. **Connect the Dots** (*Integrate information from a variety of contexts*)
  - Students will identify connections between personal experiences and closely related academic knowledge (i.e., facts, ideas, concepts, experiences).
  - Students will articulate their own strengths and challenges as learners in dealing with a specific task, performance, event, etc.
4. **Think First** (*Solve complex problems*)
  - Students will select from available information and resources to solve issues in their collegiate lives and campus communities.
  - Students will construct a plan to achieve an intended solution.
5. **Exchange Ideas** (*Communicate effectively and responsibly*)
  - Students will communicate as appropriate to the context and audience in order to articulate needs or share information.
6. **Calibrate Your Compass** (*Clarify and act on purpose and values*)
  - Students will choose learning experiences consistent with their own values and goals.
  - Students will prioritize values that influence decision making.

## OTHER POINTS OF IMPORTANCE AND INTEREST

***The First Year Experience*** aims to foster opportunities that will empower you to not only succeed with your transition to college life, but to also discover a passion for learning as you become the co-creator of your collegiate experience. Discover information and resources just for you at [fye.wcu.edu](http://fye.wcu.edu)

***Co-curricular Opportunities:*** This class will require your attendance of arts and co-curricular events outside of the class time, as indicated on the course outline and calendar. These events are intended to strengthen learning outcomes, and in some cases will define the outcome and the assessment, such as the completion of papers or projects in response to particular events, performances, or exhibits, thus having a direct impact on your course grade.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities. Students who require disability services or reasonable accommodations must identify themselves as having a disability and provide current diagnostic documentation to Disability Services. All information is confidential. Please contact Disability Services for more information at (828) 227-2716 or 144 Killian Annex.

**Attendance:**

Much of a person's learning and thinking originates in, and is supported by, interactions with other people. What happens inside the classroom is important for your success with the course. Therefore, your performance on in-class activities and contributions to class discussion are important to you and to your fellow students, and will be the basis for your course grade.

*As per the University's Undergraduate Catalog*, the Record, you are allowed up to two absences providing that your instructor excuses the absence. You are encouraged to consult the complete statement of this policy in the Undergraduate Catalog. Acceptable excuses include the following:

- Clear evidence that you are too ill or otherwise indisposed to benefit from being in class and will be a risk or distraction to others in the class;
- Documented evidence of your required presence in a court of law;
- Documented evidence of a personal or family emergency requiring your presence away from campus;
- Documented evidence of your participation in an approved university activity (field trip, athletic event, etc.; documentation will be provided by the university official in charge of the activity, and must be presented ***before the time of the absence***);
- Other circumstances approved by your instructor, preferably *prior to the absence*.

You must request IN WRITING that each absence be excused before the next regular class period. Your written excuse must be presented to your instructor as soon as possible after the absence occurs. If you miss class for what you believe is a good reason, you still must ask, in writing, that the absence be excused—we want to see that you are acting responsibly about class attendance. Even if you miss class unexpectedly or accidentally, don't compound the error by failing to turn in a request for an excuse; if you act responsibly, you might be granted an excuse even with a poor reason. It is up to your instructor to grant excuses, so don't ever assume your absence won't be excused until you have communicated with your instructor.

***Attendance WILL affect your final grade*** per course policy. Keep in mind that if you miss a class meeting, you are still responsible for the material addressed during that meeting and for submitting assignments due at the meeting.

***Classes meet each week*** as scheduled in the course calendar; in order to accommodate special activities, some class meetings will vary in location. A final assessment will be completed during final exam week. *The course calendar is subject to change per the instructor's notification.*

***Inclement Weather Policy:*** Please see the student handbook for the policy on inclement weather.

***Withdrawal and Drop/add:*** Please refer to your catalogue for the dates and policy. Do not assume that your non-attendance will result in an automatic withdrawal.

**Academic Integrity:** Western Carolina University's Code of Conduct, (available via the online Student Handbook at

[www.wcu.edu/univcenter/handbook/PDF/Student%20Handbook.pdf](http://www.wcu.edu/univcenter/handbook/PDF/Student%20Handbook.pdf)),

specifically prohibits "all forms of student (and faculty) academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism.

- Cheating is defined by the Code as follows: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
- Plagiarism is defined by the Code to mean "Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of someone else as one's own in an academic exercise."
- You may also review the University Academic Integrity policy at <http://catalog.wcu.edu/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=346#honestypolicy>

**Course Eval** is the WCU course evaluation and you are encouraged to participate and complete this on-line evaluation for this course. We strive to constantly improve course design and delivery – your cooperation to complete the Course Eval provides a mechanism that will help us in our goals to improve teaching and learning outcomes for all students.

**Student Responsibility & Etiquette**—*Students need to know and understand what is expected and what you have determined acceptable behaviour in your course. These elements are also highly personal based on your teaching approach and should be tailored accordingly. Many instructors address these elements and you may have others to include.*

- Class participation
- Food & drink in the classroom
- The use of cell phones
- The use of computers during class
- Assignments and in-class work (I.e.: late or missed work policy)

<b>Basis for Student Evaluation: EXAMPLE</b>					
Grading Standard			13 point scale		97-100 = A+
93-96 = A	90-92 = A-	87-89 = B+	83-86=B	80-82=B-	77-79=C+
73-76= C	70-72 = C-	67-69 = D+	63-66 = D	60-62 – D-	59 /below = F
Grade percentage	Evaluation Criteria	Methods/strategies ( <i>options appropriate to theme</i> )			
20 %	Writing	Journals; Papers – research/creative/reflective			
20 %	Tests	Core elements; Leadership Principles; Theme			
20 %	Documents	Portfolio; Creative; Surveys; etc.			
20 %	Experiential	Service Learning; Interdisciplinary; Departmental			
20 %	Collaborative	Study groups; Expressive; Events			

**Course Content Outline:**The “*The Core Elements*” of Transition: (WCU Standard)

- Academic Components/Policies
- Academic Success Centers
- Advising & Registration
- Blackboard and Catamount Email
- Campus Activities
- Career Counseling
- Communication Skills
- Difference & Diversity
- Grading & GPA
- Engagement
- Financial Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Leadership
- Liberal studies
- Responsible Living & Wellness
- Sense of Place
- Service Learning
- Status Checks
- Study Skills
- Synthesis

**Common Intellectual Experiences:** (*Required content*)

- Bookmark Success: *Discover campus resources and networks*
- FOCUS: *First-year Opportunities for Community & University Service*
- One Book 2015: *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*
- Difference and Diversity
- Financial Literacy: *Financial Aid Office*
- Finish in Four: *Advising Center*

**The COURSE CALENDAR**

*Your course calendar should integrate content areas with campus opportunities and activities that help to make the transition content authentic – the university events calendar and student life calendar will help you plan ahead to take advantage of interdisciplinary and current events. You will also have the option to visit or invite guests from resource units to utilize the expertise of resource specialists such as the WaLC, Advising Center, Hunter Library, etc.*

**NOTE:** *Please remember to include the **Common Intellectual Experiences** in course calendar and requirements.*