

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

FALL 2025

INSTRUCTOR

Daniel John Sportiello, Ph.D.
Welder Library 103
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701-355-8109

OFFICE HOURS

By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The First-Year Experience Seminar at the University of Mary supports students in their academic and social development. Students are engaged in activities and discussions that aim to increase their sense of community and connection to the institution and develop the necessary skills for a successful college transition. Students are also introduced to the University of Mary's Mission, Benedictine Values, Servant Leadership, and the concept of a liberal-arts education.

COURSE OUTCOMES

This course asks you to do all of these:

- Successfully utilize campus resources.
- Understand academic life, including educational requirements and academic advising.
- Implement leadership practices, roles, and responsibilities.
- Refine communication skills, including verbal, written, auditory, interpersonal, and professional.
- Engage in vocational exploration.
- Develop success strategies that can be applied in social, academic, personal, and professional contexts.
- Apply the University of Mary's Mission and Values.

Note that, to measure your attainment of these outcomes, you must do certain assessments.

ASSESSMENTS

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on twelve reflections, in four interviews, and at three convocations—and, for that matter, by your attendance:

- Twelve reflections will determine twenty-five percent of your final grade. You must submit each reflection on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.

- Four interviews will determine forty percent of your final grade. You must submit a report on each interview on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.
- Three convocations will determine thirty percent of your final grade. You must submit a report on each convocation on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.
- Attendance will determine five percent of your final grade. When your absence is excused, it will be counted as an attendance.

Note that, if you fail to do an assessment by the time that it is due—for any reason—then you may receive a grade of zero on that assessment. Because of this, you should not wait until the last minute to do any assessment!

BENEDICTINE VALUES

All six of our [Benedictine Values](#) are implicated in this course. At its heart, though, is Hospitality—that is, a sort of vulnerability to the ideas of others.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Because discussion plays a crucial role in this course, it is crucial that you not only attend class but also listen attentively and contribute seriously to that discussion—not occasionally but every time that we meet. You should, in other words, be present at and participating in every class—unless, of course, you provide an official university excuse.

I reserve the right to drop you should you miss five classes without an official university excuse. This is in accord with the excessive absence policy, which is available for review [online](#).

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Though laptops, tablets, and smartphones are profoundly useful, they are also profoundly distracting—not only to you but also to others. Therefore, you may not use laptops, tablets, and smartphones in class unless, at your request, I have given you permission to do so.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

It should go without saying that academic dishonesty of any sort is wrong. Worse than that, though, academic dishonesty reveals a serious confusion regarding the reasons that one is in a course in philosophy—or, for that matter, at a university—in the first place. Such dishonesty is occasion for as much pity as anger.

Presenting the work of another as your own is academically dishonest. Whenever you copy the words of another, therefore, you must place those words within quotation marks and cite their source. (This goes for the words of any artificial intelligence, by the way!)

As a deterrent, let me promise that I will prosecute every instance of academic dishonesty. But do not misinterpret this promise: if you feel that you do not understand something well

enough to explain it in your own words—whether in this course or in any other—then come to me for help. We will work together to overcome whatever difficulty stands in your way.

COURSE INFORMATION

This course, FYE 122 21, meets for fifteen weeks on Mondays at 2:00 PM in Welder Library 144. It is worth one credit, is required for the core curriculum, and is graded according to the usual scale. (Note that there won't be any rounding.)

STATEMENT ON WORKLOAD

Since this is a one semester-credit undergraduate-level course lasting fifteen weeks, students can expect to spend a minimum of one hour a week instructional time and another two hours a week studying outside of instructional time.

STATEMENT ON EXCUSED ABSENCES

The University has a policy on excused absences related to sponsored or sanctioned activities and events. The policy is available for review [online](#). Students participating in such activities and events are expected to review this policy and comply with it. As long as appropriate prior notification is given according to this policy, students and faculty reach a mutual agreement concerning make-up work, and students complete the work in question, faculty shall not penalize a student for missing a class or exam when they were granted an excused absence from the university. Any questions concerning the policy may be referred to the course instructor who may refer the question to the athletic director, the student activities director, or academic affairs for an answer.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to read the University of Mary's [Academic Honor Code and Honor System](#) and abide by all the standards of conduct and requirements contained therein. When a student is in doubt about whether or not an action might constitute an Academic Honor Code violation, he or she should request clarification from the instructor *before* the action in question is undertaken.

STATEMENT ON REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Mary, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and in the spirit of our mission, offers support for disabled students who provide the required documentation. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should apply to the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#). For further information, contact Dr. Lynn Dodge, coordinator of Student Accessibility Services, in the Student Success Center. You can reach her at 701-355-8264 or ljdodge@umary.edu.

COURSE COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Students should communicate any questions or concerns relating to this course to the following individuals in the order listed below. To learn more about the University of Mary's

process for responding to academic concerns, students should read its policy, which is available for review [online](#).

Dan Sportiello, Associate Professor of Philosophy > Hannah Venable, Chair of the Philosophy Program > James Peliska, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences

1	Monday	September 1	No Class		
	Wednesday	September 3	No Class		
	Friday	September 5	No Class		
2	Monday	September 8	Introduction		
	Wednesday	September 10	No Class		
	Friday	September 12	No Class		Reflection 1
3	Monday	September 15	Hard Skills		
	Wednesday	September 17	No Class		
	Friday	September 19	No Class		Reflection 2
4	Monday	September 22	Hard Skills		Interview 1
	Wednesday	September 24	No Class		
	Friday	September 26	No Class		Reflection 3
5	Monday	September 29	Hard Skills		
	Wednesday	October 1	No Class		
	Friday	October 3	No Class		Reflection 4
6	Monday	October 6	Hard Skills		
	Wednesday	October 8	No Class		Convocation 1
	Friday	October 10	No Class		Reflection 5
7	Monday	October 13	College		
	Wednesday	October 15	No Class		
	Friday	October 17	No Class		Reflection 6
8	Monday	October 20	College		Interview 2
	Wednesday	October 22	No Class		
	Friday	October 24	No Class		Reflection 7

9	Monday	October 27	College		
	Wednesday	October 29	No Class		
	Friday	October 31	No Class		Reflection 8
10	Monday	November 3	Soft Skills		
	Wednesday	November 5	No Class		
	Friday	November 7	No Class		Reflection 9
11	Monday	November 10	Soft Skills		
	Wednesday	November 12	No Class		Convocation 2
	Friday	November 14	No Class		Reflection 10
12	Monday	November 17	Catching Up		Interview 3
	Wednesday	November 19	No Class		
	Friday	November 21	No Class		
13	Monday	November 24	Catching Up		
	Wednesday	November 26	No Class		
	Friday	November 28	No Class		
14	Monday	December 1	Soft Skills		
	Wednesday	December 3	No Class		
	Friday	December 5	No Class		Reflection 11
15	Monday	December 8	Soft Skills		
	Wednesday	December 10	No Class		
	Friday	December 12	No Class		Reflection 12
16	Monday	December 15	No Class		Interview 4
	Wednesday	December 17	No Class		Convocation 3
	Friday	December 19	No Class		