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# UNIV 1810: University Learning Skills

**Fall 2021**

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| **Instructors:** | **Email Address / Webex Link** | **Virtual Office Hours:** |
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***"The world needs all kinds of minds”***

***– Temple Grandin***

## Course Description

Welcome to the University of Connecticut and First Year Experience (FYE)! FYE is a unique one-credit course designed to provide you with the opportunity to explore issues relevant to new students at the University of Connecticut, with a particular focus on engineering students who identify as neurodiverse. Our goal for the semester is to provide an open forum for discussion about college transition issues and concerns, and to promote greater self-awareness, growth, and understanding of you as a neurodiverse individual, engineer, and global citizen. Over the course of the semester we will investigate your college experiences holistically, which will allow you to make informed decisions paving the way for a richer, fuller college career.

This course is designed to be fun, supportive, practical, and intellectually challenging. Most of our work in this class will be cooperative. Therefore, our success will largely rely on active, earnest participation from you. Students who successfully complete the course will leave with transferable skills, increased cultural competency, knowledge of UConn resources (general and specific to neurodiverse students), increased self-awareness and self-advocacy, working knowledge of HuskyCT, a writing sample, and a resume. In addition, we hope that you will have some fun memories, confidence, and meaningful connections with faculty/staff and your fellow students.

## Course Learning Objectives

**LO1:** This course will help students *discover and connect with the University of Connecticut* by using appropriate campus resources and engaging in opportunities that contribute to their learning within and beyond the classroom.

**LO2:** This course will help students *develop their definition of academic success* by identifying and practicing basic academic and professional skills necessary for undergraduate success at UConn and beyond.

**LO3:** This course will help students *exhibit personal growth and development* by examining and developing strategies that promote wellbeing, foster relationships with peers/faculty/staff, and increase appreciation for diversity.

**LO4:** This course will help students *cultivate their curiosity* by increasing self-awareness and exploring countless opportunities throughout their first semester.

**LO5:** Students will *identify and articulate the strengths and challenges* associated with neurodiversity in different realms of personal, academic, and professional life, both in college and beyond.

**LO6**: Students will *recognize the resources and strategies* to support the success of neurodiverse individuals at the University of Connecticut.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete the course will:

1. Identify strengths and challenges associated with their identity as neurodiverse engineering student,
2. Explain how cultural competency will enable your success as a UConn student and beyond,
3. Research and locate UConn resources, including resources that facilitate academic success as neurodiverse student
4. Demonstrate increased self-awareness and self-advocacy through reflective activities and assignments,
5. Develop a working knowledge of HuskyCT and other academic tools,
6. Create a resume and a writing sample, and explain how you will build meaningful connections with faculty/staff and your fellow Huskies.
7. Build a support network to navigate college life and academics as a neurodiverse student.

## class schedule

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| **Semester Week** | **Class Date** | **Topic/Special Location** | **Assignments Due  (To be completed before class meets unless otherwise noted)** |
| 1 | Aug. 30 | Welcome to UConn FYE!  Introductions, Getting to know each other, Expectations, and Syllabus (ND Module) | Post your intro video on FlipGrid |
| 2 | Sept. 13 | Identifying your unique strengths and talents | Complete Clifton Strengths Finder online, FlipGrid “My Strengths” response due |
| 3 | Sept. 20 | Goal setting | Pre-class activity |
| 4 | Sept. 27 | Becoming an Engineer – what the Engineering Identity means to you | FlipGrid response Due |
| 5 | Oct. 4 | Guest Presentation **Center for Students with Disabilities – Using Self-Advocacy to Maximize Success** | **First draft** – Critical Reflection Assignment due  \*\*Make **appointment** to meet with Writing Center Tutor next week!\*\* |
| 6 | Oct. 11 | **Guest Presentation from the Academic Achievement Center – Time Management and Prioritizing** | Meet with Writing Center Tutor this week |
| 7 | Oct. 18 | Your wellness – Stress, Mental Health and Personal Well-Being | FlipGrid response Due |
| 8 | Oct. 25 | In Class: Telling your story through your resume  - Intro to “Your First College Resume” assignment (online module - Center for Career Development) | Breakfast Club entry #1  **Final draft** – Critical Reflection Assignment due |
| 9 | Nov. 1 | Strategies for a successful interview as neurodiverse student | **Draft your resume, complete CCD module** and **make appointment** to meet with CCD. |
| 10 | Nov. 8 | **Guest Presentation** - Violence Against Women Prevention | **Final draft - Resume Assignment due** |
| 11 | Nov. 15 | FYE Mentor presentation – Social life as a neurodiverse student in college | FlipGrid response Due |
| 12 | Nov. 29 | Tech hacks and workarounds: assistive technology tools to maximize your learning (CSD Tech Team) | Breakfast Club entry #2 |
| **Thanksgiving Recess** | | | |
| 13 | Dec. 6 | Reflection Showcase and Discussion | Reflection due |
| ***LAST DAY OF CLASSES*** | | | |
| ***Reading Days*** | | | |
| ***FINALS*** | | | |

## Assignment Summary

**Below are brief summaries of the course assignments. Additional information will be discussed in class and can be found on our course HuskyCT site. If you have any questions please ask before the assignments are due.**

Class Participation – Due Each Class Meeting (30 Points):Active and thoughtful participation is ***crucial and meaningful*** to your experience in this course. Effective participation consists of being prepared to discuss weekly topics, engage with in-class assignments and activities, and tie in any assignment reading materials to class discussions. Students must be present to participate therefore, absences will impede your ability to participate and thus having a negative impact on your achievement***. If there are special circumstances causing absences, please contact me by email.*** ***\*\*This includes if you are exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19. Please do not come to class and contact*** [***SHaW-Medical Care***](https://shs.uconn.edu/)***.\*\**** Students will be responsible for content covered in missed classes. If you know in advance that you will need to miss class we can work together to find a way to catch you up. Each class is worth **2 points** in participation and the one-on-one meeting with the FYE Mentor is worth **4 points**.

FlipGrid Reflections & Engagement (10 Points): Connecting with each other is critical to build friendships and learn about your peers. FlipGrid is a social learning platform that we will use to post a question in which you will respond to in video form. To earn a point each week we pose a question, you will respond to the question your FYE Mentor or I post and you will be required to interact (view, comment/stickers) with at least 2 of your peers’ videos (on certain questions we post for public response). The first FlipGrid (your intro video) will be worth 2 points and will be due by **the beginning of class each week it is assigned**.

Résumé Assignment, 1 Page (15 Points):The Center for Career Development (CCD) (<http://www.career.uconn.edu/>) and First Year Programs & Learning Communities have established a collaborative partnership in an effort to introduce first-year students to CCD and the importance of creating a résumé early in your college career. The résumé module/assignment has a few easy steps:

1. Watch Career Kickoff webinar and complete myth busters activity
2. Update résumé format and upload to HuskyCT
3. Upload résumé to Handshake
4. Schedule and attend a 10-Minute Virtual Résumé Review with the Center for Career Development
5. Upload form from 10-Minute Virtual Résumé Review to HuskyCT
6. Update bullet point statements and upload final-draft résumé to HuskyCT

Critical Reflection Assignment, 2-3 Pages (15 Points): For this assignment, you are required to stretch yourself by reflecting on a specific prompt (see HuskyCT for the prompt we chose for the class). You will then engage in the academic conversation by writing and revising a brief paper summarizing as well as critically reflecting on the prompt. The focus of this reflection should be on the writer’s analysis and interpretation that answers the question, “so what?” Because revision and peer review are vital elements to this process, you will visit the University Writing Center (virtually) (<http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/> and <https://uconn.mywconline.com/>) with a group before revising and submitting your final draft. Assignment details, the prompt and steps for success will be available on HuskyCT. Be creative, and have fun!

### Breakfast Club (10 points)

Everyone needs to eat, right? This is your chance to grab a meal or coffee/tea with some of your fellow FYE students and connect. You will be assigned into groups of 3 or 4 and your task is simple; select a time you can all dine together (in-person or virtually). The objective of the Breakfast Club is fairly straight forward: (1) To get to know each other and (2) To feel less alone and isolated at UConn. ***The one rule of your Breakfast Club - No technology! (***other than if you need to meet virtually) As a group, you can decide to use one of the two sets of conversation prompts (found in HuskyCT) or come up with your own.

You should meet with your Breakfast Club at least **2 times** throughout the semester and after each one, you will complete a photo journal entry in HuskyCT. This entry should include at least **2 photos**: evidence of you meeting with your group (e.g. a group selfie) and what meal/food/drink you shared. In addition to the photos, you should reflect on whether you met the above objectives and how you achieved them. You can discuss both strategies for achieving these objectives and the common road blocks to those objectives of increasing connection and reducing isolation that may exist in college life. Each reflection can be either in a written format or posted as a FlipGrid video. If written, the text should be **at least 200 words; if video, it should be 2-3 minutes**. You and your Breakfast club could meet more to earn bonus points (2 points per bonus meeting/entry).

**Entry #1 is due by week 8 and Entry #2 is due before week 12. Each is worth 5 points.**

### Final Reflections (20 points)

In this activity, you will be called to integrate the various resources and tools you acquired during the course into a reflective assignment for the prompt: “How could the knowledge I gained in this class assist with my experience in COURSE XYZ?” Choose one course that you took during your first semester and reflect on question such as: How would I use my strengths to navigate lectures, studying and exams? How could resources (CSD, AAC, assistive technologies) help me improve my level of comfort with the class? Would I feel more confident taking the class with my new knowledge and why?

This assignment has two deliverables, with each piece worth 10 points:

1. A reflective piece delivered in any form that you choose: write up (essay, poem, short story), audio (narration, song), image (collage, drawing) or video.
2. Sharing your experience in a format of your choosing through an online showcase (recite your poem, play your audio piece, share your video). Online showcase will be followed by in-class feedback and discussion.

grading

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| **Grade Components** | **Total # of Points** | **Explanation** | **Grade Percentage** |
| In-Class Assignments / Participation | 30 points | 2 pts x 13 wks; 4 pts 1:1 | 30% |
| FlipGrid Reflections | 10 points | 2 point each. 1 for posts & 1 for engagement. | 10% |
| Resume Assignment | 15 points | 5 points for draft, 5 points for virtual critique and email confirmation, & 5 points for final draft | 15% |
| Critical Reflection Assignment | 15 points | Based on FYE Grading Rubric | 15% |
| Breakfast Club | 10 points | Two entries, with a group picture and video or reflection, 5 pts each | 10% |
| Final Reflection and Presentation | 20 points | Reflective piece and class sharing | 20% |
| **Maximum Total Points** | 100 points |  |  |

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| **Grading Scale** | | | |
| **A** = 93 – 100%  Points = (93.0 – 100) | **B** = 83 – 86%  Points = (83.0 – 86.9) | **C** = 73 – 76%  Points = (73.0 – 76.9) | **D** = 63 – 66%  Points = (63.0 – 66.9) |
| **A-** = 90 – 92%  Points = (90.0 – 92.9) | **B-** = 80 – 82%  Points = (80.0 – 82.9) | **C-** = 70 – 72%  Points = (70.0 – 72.9) | **D-** = 60 – 62%  Points = (60.0 – 62.9) |
| **B+** = 87 – 89%  Points = (87.0 – 89.9) | **C+** = 77 – 79%  Points = (77.0 – 79.9) | **D+** = 67 – 69%  Points = (67.0 – 69.9) | **F** = 0 – 59%  Points = (0 – 59.9) |

Course & University Policies

A key objective of this course is to encourage open, critical discussion. This is a credit-bearing course, and as such there are obligations to the University which must be upheld. Therefore, the following policies will be observed:

### Inclusivity Statement

As members of the INCLUDE program team, we aspire to create an inclusive learning environment in which all students can thrive.

**We value and celebrate the diversity of our learning community in all of its forms, including race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ability, age, or veteran status.** Emphasis is given to providing a strength-based approach to education that encourages students to identify, develop, and leverage their unique abilities with the intention of supporting students in reaching their potential and enhancing their personal wellbeing. This course was designed to address the varied ways of thinking and learning that neurodiverse students possess.

**\*\*\*We invite students to share their thoughts about ways in which we can build an inclusive environment for all students.\*\*\***

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, [(860) 486-2020](tel:8604862020) or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>.

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government.” (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from [Blackboard's website](http://www.blackboard.com/platforms/learn/resources/accessibility.aspx))

### Participation

Active and thoughtful participation is ***crucial and meaningful*** to your experience in this course. Effective participation consists of being prepared to discuss weekly topics, engage with class assignments and activities, and tie in any assignment reading materials to class discussions. Students must be present to participate therefore, absences will impede your ability to participate and thus having a negative impact on your achievement. If there are special circumstances causing absences, please contact me by phone or email. Students will be responsible for content covered in missed classes. If you know in advance that you will need to miss class we can work together to find a way to catch you up. If you miss class due to a genuine emergency or medical problem, please request documentation from Student Health Services after you visit, or contact the Dean of Students (860) 486-3426. They will look into the issue and send all of your instructors formal notification (a reason) if appropriate.

### Late Work Policy

All assignments must be submitted by the **listed due date** and **via HuskyCT**, unless otherwise noted. Please contact us in advance if you are having a problem with an assignment so that I can help. You can see me after class, during the listed office hours, or by appointment. If you are finding that time management is a problem, we can brainstorm ways to address this hurdle. Talk to us!

### Software/Technology Requirements

The software/technical requirements for this course include:

* HuskyCT/Blackboard ([HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement](http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Learn/Resources/Accessibility.aspx), [HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy](http://www.blackboard.com/footer/privacy-policy.aspx))
* [Adobe Acrobat Reader](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html) ([Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement](http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/products/reader.html), [Adobe Reader Privacy Policy](http://www.adobe.com/privacy.html))
* Google Apps ([Google Apps Accessibility](https://www.google.com/accessibility/), [Google for Education Privacy Policy](https://www.google.com/edu/trust/))
* Microsoft Office & Teams (free to UConn students through [uconn.onthehub.com](https://uconn.onthehub.com)) ([Microsoft Accessibility Statement](http://www.microsoft.com/enable/microsoft/mission.aspx), [Microsoft Privacy Statement](https://privacy.microsoft.com/en-us/privacystatement/))
* Mural (<https://app.mural.co/t/ndatuconn1405>) ([Mural Accessibility Statement](https://support.mural.co/en/articles/4831483-accessibility-statement), [Mural Privacy Policy](https://www.mural.co/terms/privacy-policy?utm_medium=paid-search&utm_source=adwords&utm_campaign=201101-Templates_-_Facilitator_Superpowers&utm_adgroup=Templates_-_Business_Model_Canvas&utm_campaign_id=11208697402&utm_content=&utm_adgroupid=110300560016&gclid=Cj0KCQiA4L2BBhCvARIsAO0SBdYnvSP25crSUF0f2LMezPzjLl9HL_PYDLHYFCONSahBCvfMjFAFprEaAvhPEALw_wcB))
* FlipGrid (<https://flipgrid.com/univ1810030>) ([FlipGrid Accessibility Statement](https://help.flipgrid.com/hc/en-us/articles/115004848574-Flipgrid-and-Accessibility), [FlipGrid Privacy Policy](https://legal.flipgrid.com/privacy.html))
* WebCam
* Dedicated access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).
  + You can test your internet speed quickly by Googling “Test Internet Speed” and click the blue button that says “run speed test” shown in the screenshot below:

Image of a Google search for "test internet speed." The image shows a blue button at the bottom right corner that says "Run Speed Test."


For information on managing your privacy at the University of Connecticut, visit the [University’s Privacy page](https://privacy.uconn.edu/).

**NOTE:** This course has NOT been designed for use with mobile devices.

### Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

* Use email and ability to open attachments
* Save files in commonly used word processing program formats
  + Please save files in Microsoft programs, Google Drive (make sure to allow permissions) or PDF,
    - DO NOT save files as **.pages**
* Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks
* Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously
* Open and access PDF files

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](http://geoc.uconn.edu/computer-technology-competency/) page for more information.

### Student Responsibilities, Resources, & Policies

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important [standards, policies and resources](https://onlinestudent.uconn.edu/learn--more/#POL), which include:

* [The Student Code](https://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code)
  + [Academic Integrity](https://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-appendix-a/)
  + Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
* Copyrighted Materials
* Credit Hours and Workload
* Netiquette and Communication
* Adding or Dropping a Course
* [Academic Calendar](https://registrar.uconn.edu/academic-calendar)
* [Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence](http://policy.uconn.edu/2015/12/29/policy-against-discrimination-harassment-and-related-interpersonal-violence/)
  + More information is available at [equity.uconn.edu](http://equity.uconn.edu/) and [titleix.uconn.edu](http://titleix.uconn.edu/).
* [Sexual Assault Reporting Policy](https://titleix.uconn.edu/)

### Resources for Students Experiencing Distress

The University of Connecticut is committed to supporting students in their mental health, their psychological and social well-being, and their connection to their academic experience and overall wellness. The university believes that academic, personal, and professional development can flourish only when each member of our community is assured equitable access to mental health services. The university aims to make access to mental health attainable while fostering a community reflecting equity and diversity and understands that good mental health may lead to personal and professional growth, greater self-awareness, increased social engagement, enhanced academic success, and campus and community involvement.

Students who feel they may benefit from speaking with a mental health professional can find support and resources through the Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health (SHaW-MH) office. Through SHaW-MH, students can make an appointment with a mental health professional and engage in confidential conversations or seek recommendations or referrals for any mental health or psychological concern.

Mental health services are included as part of the university’s student health insurance plan and also partially funded through university fees. If you do not have UConn’s student health insurance plan, most major insurance plans are also accepted. Students can visit the Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health located in Storrs on the main campus in the Arjona Building, 4th Floor, or contact the office at (860) 486-4705, or https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/ for services or questions.

### Accommodations for Illness or Extended Absences

Please stay home if you are feeling ill and please go home if you are in class and start to feel ill. If illness prevents you from attending class, it is your responsibility to notify your instructor as soon as possible. You do not need to disclose the nature of your illness, however, you will need to work with your instructor to determine how you will complete coursework during your absence.

If life circumstances are affecting your ability to focus on courses and your UConn experience, students can email the Dean of Students at dos@uconn.edu to request support. Regional campus students should email the Student Services staff at their home campus to request support and faculty notification.

### Finals

This class **does not** have a final exam. However, this information will help you to be successful in your other courses:

Finals week for Fall 2021 takes place from Monday, December 13th, through Sunday, December 19th. Students are required to be available for their exam and/or complete any assessment during the time stated in the Registrar's Office schedule.

If you have a conflict with your scheduled final or have “bunched finals”, you should read more about the possibility of rescheduling on the Dean of Students website: <https://dos.uconn.edu/finals-rescheduling/>

\*\*\*I reserve the right to alter this syllabus. However, if I do I will give you ample notice.\*\*\*