

## Welcome to SUU's College Connections Program

Welcome to SUU's Academic College Connections Program. Your choices and habits in prior semester/s have placed you in College Connections.

The Program is confident that nearly all students can excel academically if they practice the habits of the academic community. The Program seeks to identify baseline habits, thoughts and choices as a matter of identifying and monitoring what *is*, then support you to adjust them so that you achieve optimal performance and experience in the academic arena and can self-direct to create acceptable academic standing. You are the only person who can create another outcome in your circumstance, and the work we do in this class intends to support and direct your personal journey.

Having students in College Connections is expensive to everyone involved. The student, the University and the taxpayers supporting Higher Education in America face numerous extra and undue expenses due to one's College Connections status.

List expenses related to having students in College Connections.

Unlike high school, university is not compulsory. Instead it is an extra investment that the taxpayers make to insure quality among America's professionals and citizenship. A cornerstone of American ideals, education is essential to effective democratic unions.

Because of the expense associated with having students in College Connections, the University works to insure effective arrival at academic success in each student. Its primary method for doing that is the UNIV 1000 Seminar course. Thus, this course will work closely in conjunction with that class.

Beyond the Seminar course, the University supports the College Connections Program which directs you to create more effective habits by completing the attached modules and in-class activities to direct your awareness and choices toward effective academic standing, and/or to demonstrate your readiness to self-direct.

**Southern Utah University**

**College Connections Program**

**Modules and Reflection Journals**

**for**

**Working Your Way Off of College Connections**

**2009-2010**

## Module One, Part One: Why You?

You have placed yourself in College Connection due to habits and choices of the past that led you fall below SUU's normally accepted admissions standards.

If you recently graduated from high school, what was your GPA?

What was your ACT/SAT score?

What is required to be in good standing at SUU?

If you are unaware of any of these details, use your university catalogue and personal resources to learn about your responsibilities regarding this matter. Record your findings here:

In knowing about these expectations and responsibilities, consider the choices you made that brought you to the College Connections Program. Complete the sentence stem below with five to ten answers. Work to answer quickly. Do not labor in thought or wonder what the *right* answer is. Simply respond quickly.

I am on College Connections because...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## Self Awareness and Direction

Now that you have listed the habits that landed you in College Connections, re-examine the responses. Did you use assertive, directive and specific language? What pattern/s of choices led to this outcome?

### FIRST

Look at each response and label it as:

- 1) **NC** for **Not in my Control** when a statement blames a person or situation out of your control

OR

- 2) **IC** for **In Control** when a response names something in your control

### SECOND

Look at each response and list habits and choices that you could develop to overcome each ineffective habit:

### THIRD

After taking time to complete the above, set your notes and ideas aside for at least twenty-four hours. Then come back and re-read your responses. Change or add to any ideas that you feel are incomplete. Complete the sentence stem.

After reflecting on my choices and habits, I realize that I am in College Connections because...

### Academic Time Card #1: Weekly Accounting of Academic Work

Each week you will present the time cards on the following pages.

Week Two	Day & Time	Place	Accomplishments or challenges (be specific about active learning)

Week Three	Day & Time	Place	Accomplishments or challenges (be specific about active learning)

Week Four	Day & Time	Place	Accomplishments or challenges (be specific about active learning)

Week Five	Day & Time	Place	Accomplishments or challenges (be specific about active learning)

Week Six	Day & Time	Place	Accomplishments or challenges (be specific about active learning)

Week Seven	Day & Time	Place	Accomplishments or challenges (be specific about active learning)

## Module One, Part Two: Getting Started

### Habits of Academic and Professional Communities

Though learning may seem complicated, it is really quite simple though admittedly time consuming. How *much* time depends on a number of variables. These *Modules* will begin to direct you to APPLY brain-based learning habits in your course work to insure or expand efficient learning.

Recall that higher education is not a requirement. It is an expensive choice and privilege. Unfortunately, industrial designs have done little to encourage thoughtful consideration about students' ethical responsibility for the cost of education. Start facing that implicit responsibility by mastering the habits measured and detailed in the *Modules*. Mastery in each will allow you to balance your work and play time and insure timely completion of this expensive endeavor.

Some of what you are reading here may not make sense. Work to be aware of when the information you are reading or hearing makes sense or not. Work to think about your thinking and be curious about learning information that is unfamiliar.

### Demonstrate Public Expectations and Boundaries

Throughout time, humans have considered ways to improve (and destroy) human relationships and civility. Families encourage children to share and be polite. Governments create law and order for civility. Religions urge followers to rise above our humanness and follow a universal code of conduct to do no harm.

Higher education's historical and implicit goal seeks to achieve the art of true democracy as noted by Alexander Meiklejohn: Democracy is the art of thinking independently together. No matter the origin of the effort to relate, one truth seems universal. Communicating about agreements and expectations from the start of any relationship helps people choose to obey. Consider these recognized standards for large group behavior. Though focused on lecture hall settings, many will also be expected in small classes, concert halls, or a theater.

Find yourself resisting expectations for public standards? Consider a simple fact: more people, more rules. In the privacy of your own home, you may choose many behaviors that could have you ticketed or arrested in public. In communities of higher education, as in other educational or professional institutions, community members agree both implicitly and explicitly to certain modes of conduct and personal boundaries.

Complete this contract by agreeing or disagreeing, then signing and dating below.

### Classroom Manners

Circle Yes or No for each item.

1. YES NO I will attend all classes and arrive on time.
2. YES NO I will arrive prepared to participate, having completed assignments.
3. YES NO I will focus on class expectations and activities.
4. YES NO I will turn off my cell phone.
4. YES NO I will sit alertly, listen attentively and participate actively in class.

5. YES NO I will look at my syllabus on a regular basis.
6. YES NO I will move around and talk out loud when I study.
7. YES NO I will think about how my choices impact instructors' lives.
8. YES NO I will get my money's worth and give taxpayers their money's worth.
9. YES NO I have read and understood the items on this contract.

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Name

Date

### Active Learning and Engagement

Brain-based learning applauds any form of talking because, at a minimum, it represents active learning, which can be proven through MRI's which record increased brain activity when learners talk or write.

If your instructors or institution do not allow active discussion, create it yourself. Work to connect what you are learning in your courses to real-world information in the news, to professional-world expectations in career development and to civil discussion in small study groups. Using material from courses or elsewhere, agree to meet regularly with your colleagues to:

1. Allow time and space to develop habits in conversing about academic or social topics.
2. Prime your mind for active, authentic learning.
3. Practice and enhance collaborative learning.
4. Speak assertively to practice wellness and reasonable civility.
5. Consider the value of effective questions for nurturing discussion.
6. Seek connections between seemingly unrelated information.
7. Value conversation, as opposed to pure memorization, to form neural connections.
8. Realize the habits of democratic societies.

### Develop Professional Relationships

No one knows where the future is going to come from. Work to connect with people at all levels to build a team of players in your education (and life). Your future could come from someone next to you right now or in an hour.

If you are shy, realize that many people are. Realize that moving past shyness is simply a matter of getting out there and creating relationships. The more you do it, the more comfortable you'll feel.

Think of classmates and faculty as colleagues. If you see faculty only as people who reward or punish you with grades, you'll miss opportunities for learning, collegiality and professional connection. If you see classmates as competitors or fellow drones, you'll miss opportunities to actually ENJOY learning! Work to develop collaborative, relational habits, rather than being purely competitive or subservient.

Varying levels of formality and informality constantly shape who we are, and how we introduce ourselves is relative to the moment's degree of formality and the definition of formality according to the environment. Imagine all the layers of and diverse definitions for protocol on the globe!

Work to relax and introduce yourself to others including your faculty as a habit. Simple manners leave a positive impression, and professionalism with colleagues improves the ability to learn. Remember you do not have to be friends with or marry the people you work with. Work to be genuine about your thinking and open to others' differences and similarities. Consider these simple guidelines for effective formal American introductions.

1. If one person is sitting and the other standing when an introduction begins, the person sitting stands.
2. During introductions, make eye contact, smile and offer your hand to shake.
3. Speak clearly, saying first and last names. Listen to and repeat the person's name to improve memory.
4. Awkward with small talk? People like to talk about themselves, so ask questions that are public and formal.
5. As you part company, say, "\_\_\_\_\_, it was nice to meet you," as a stock phrase.
6. Relax. Direct thoughts and feelings for the outcomes you want! Rather than thinking, "I hate meeting people. I never have anything to say," tell yourself, "I am capable of smiling, making eye contact, asking questions and relaxing."

### Meet Colleagues

In the work world, you might be attending office retreats, workshops or presentations at a conference or other gathering of people who belong to your community of professionals. There you would be exchanging business cards for future contact. Mimic those professional habits by introducing yourself to three new people in classes or campus support offices. Write their name and information here.