**IDS 142: Living a Life of Significance Fall 2022**

**Instructor: Dr. Walter E. Turner II**

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**Philosophical Statement:**

* Employers frequently list critical thinking amongst the most desired skills in workers. Accordingly, my main goal in this class is to encourage a heathy skepticism through critical thinking.
* I regularly consult educational research and seek the advice of colleagues and students to examine my biases towards teaching and welcome any input from members of this class.
* One of my passions is equity in education, which recognizes that socioeconomic standing, race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, age, nationality, etc. can disadvantage students and aims at compensating for these factors to ensure that all students can attain the same educational success.
* Asking for help is not a sign of weakness.

**Statement of Inclusion & Equity**

IDS 142 supports an inclusive learning environment where diverse perspectives are recognized and respected. As outlined in the Birmingham-Southern mission, the College challenges students to engage in their community and the greater world, to examine diverse perspectives, and to live with integrity. Assignments outlined in the course syllabus will address diversity consideration for communities, why those communities exist, who they serve, and how their practices reflect their values.

**Accessibility Statement**

Students with a disability that qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and require accommodations should be registered with BSC’s Accessibility Office. If you are registered for academic accommodation, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any accommodation that may be necessary. During this discussion you are not expected to disclose any details concerning your disability though you may do so at your discretion. If you have a disability but have not yet registered, please contact Dr. Sandra Foster, Assistant Director of Accessibility Services and Resources, at 205-226-7909 (x1909) or smfoster@bsc.edu, or visit Norton 228. Keep in mind that no accommodation will be made unless and until the instructor receives official notification from the College

**Title IX**

Birmingham-Southern College is committed to the creation and maintenance of a safe learning environment for students and the campus community. The College forbids any type of sexual or gender-based misconduct among its students, faculty, and staff. The College encourages all members of the academic community to report suspected sexual and gender-based misconduct to the appropriate authorities so that it can be investigated, remedied, and eliminated. BSC forbids retaliation against any person who has opposed, reported, or participated in an investigation concerning sexual or gender-based misconduct. See the BSC Title IX website (www.bsc.edu/titleix) for more information, including an online report form. If you or a peer have experienced such misconduct, there are faculty and staff members who are trained in supporting students by answering questions and helping them navigate this process. The list of advocates can be found along with other helpful resources on the Title IX website.

**Our Mission**

Birmingham-Southern states as its mission to prepare students “for lives of significance.” As an institution, we assert that, “The College fosters intellectual and personal development…by challenging students to engage their community and the greater world, to examine diverse perspectives, and to live with integrity.” And yet, no specific definition or prescription for living a life of significance is provided. What exactly does it mean to live a life of significance? How does one craft such a life? By what criteria does one assess the achievement of significance? How and in what ways does one engage the community, examine diverse views, or live with integrity? How do the learning experiences and choices in college relate to crafting and living a life of significance? These questions—about the meaning, purpose, and aims of schooling and life—are age old questions, confronted by each generation, each person, and each community. This course takes up these questions as a way of exploring the implications of joining a community of learners at Birmingham-Southern who prioritize living a life of significance. By the end of this course, you will have articulated for yourself what it means to live a life of significance and identified specific strategies for creating that life.

**Overview**

The course is divided into three units, each of which adds to and builds on what it means to live a life of significance. Unit 1 explores what living a life of significance means to you based on your own experiences and your analysis of interviews, podcasts, and other materials. Unit 2 further investigates how others have lived their lives and by implication how they have defined living a life of significance. In the third unit, we evaluate the extent to which specific communities support or constrain the possibility of living a life of significance. As part of this unit, you craft a flexible curricular and co-curricular plan for your time at BSC and living a life of significance.

**Learning Outcomes**

*in this course we will:*

* Frame useful questions about learning and living a life of significance
* Draw inferences based on experiences and observations
* Compare, analyze, and synthesize across different examples and cases
* Evaluate and critique situations based on justifiable criteria
* Make short-term and long-term plans for effective learning and living a life of significance, including how to:
  + read, study, and manage time effectively
  + reflect on curricular and co-curricular engagement choices
  + identify and access mentors and mentoring relationships
  + engage responsibly, respectfully, and critically with a community of learners
  + articulate the relationships between learning in college and subsequent career and professional achievements and civic contributions

**Communication with me:** I encourage you to check your Birmingham-Southern student email account as email will be my primary means of communicating with you. Email is the best way to contact me, but be aware that I may not get an email the same day that it is sent if you send it late in the day. I will get back to you the following business day.

**Extra Help**: You should attend all class periods during the week. You should also take full advantage of my student hours or schedule an appointment. Student hours are times when you can meet with me to discuss the material being presented in class or other interests you have. Example of student hour discussions include but are not limited to asking for extra help, seeking clarification of material presented in class, and following up on aspects of the class you find compelling. In addition, students also discuss majors and programs of study, and graduation requirements, as well as summer internships, graduate schools, campus events, and much more. Asking me questions is not bothering me! If you do come to my office, however, please be prepared with what you want to talk about and have work to show me your work on the assessment. I can tell more from the types of mistakes that you make and where you get stuck than I can from the statement “I don’t understand what we are doing in class”. I encourage using the librarians as well as the professors and students at the Writing Center to help with your assessments. There is no substitute for practice and hard work!

**Attendance Policy:** Students are responsible for all material covered during the class periods. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain the material covered when they miss class. I will only accept late work from students with excused absences. As instructor, I will make the final decision as to the validity of an excused absence.

**Moodle**: This course will make regular use of the Moodle course website. Problems with your computer or this software should be directed to the IT Helpdesk, as they are the best able to help you. Documents related to the course will also be posted on Moodle. Please do not use the email inside of Moodle to contact me; it is a separate system from the standard Birmingham-Southern email. Use the address at the top of the syllabus.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Please arrive on time and be ready to participate at the start of class. If you cannot avoid being a few minutes late, please enter quietly, causing as little disturbance as possible. Maintaining academic integrity includes respecting others and learning how to disagree without being disagreeable. I encourage students to maintain an atmosphere of acceptance, respect, and engagement in the classroom. This includes not being disruptive or performing distracting behaviors such as texting or using electronic devices for non-class purposes.

**Grading**

Each Responsibility and Assessment is described in full in the Description of Responsibilities and Assessments Document on Moodle.

Responsibility 1: Mini-Assignments for Formative Feedback on Main Assignments 15%

Responsibility 2: Attendance, Participation, & Engagement 16%

Assessment 1: Defining the Life of Significance 12%

Assessment 2: Interview Project 15%

Assessment 3: Group Synthesis Presentation 12%

Assessment 4: Significance in Community 15%

Assessment 5: Curricular and Co-Curricular Plan 15%

**Grade Scale:**

≥ 93.3 A, 93.2-90.0 A-, 89.9-86.7 B+, 86.6-83.3 B, 83.2-80.0 B-, 79.9-76.7 C+, 76.6-73.3 C, 73.2-70.0 C-, 69.9-66.7 D+, 66.6-60.0 D, 59.9 and below F

**Tentative Due Dates**

Assessment 1 September 25th

Assessment 2 October 16th

Assessment 3 October 24th

Assessment 4 November 22nd

Assessment 5 December 7th

**COVID-19 Protocols**

If you cannot attend due to medical reasons, please email me as soon as feasible so that I can get you the course materials. I will do my best to assist you if you have an excused medical absence. You will still be expected to turn in work on-line and are responsible for information presented in class. Our class will be mask optional. However, if you are at all sick or symptomatic, I request that you wear a mask. Accordingly, you should still bring a mask to class every day in case you are requested to wear one.

**Honor Code**

Much of the work in this class will be collaborative in nature so it is expected that you will discuss assignments with your classmates. However, when you turn in work as your own, you need to be sure that what you have written is your understanding of the concept and not simply copied from another source. You must properly cite and reference all sources. If you are unsure how to do this properly, please reach out to me. If you are found in violation of the Honor Code by the Honor Council, you will receive no credit for the assignment, test, or quiz in question.