

TOPICS OF THE FIRST YEAR
ТЕМЫ ПЕРВОГО ГОДА
School of Advanced Studies
Quarter 4, April 13 to June 11, 2020

Instructor/s: Andrey Shcherbenok a.shcherbenok@utmn.ru
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Available for consultation via pre-scheduled Zoom appointment

Course Coordinator: Andrey Shcherbenok a.shcherbenok@utmn.ru

Author of the syllabus: Peter Jones

Contact Hours: 48

Type of Course: Core course for the first-year students

Meeting Times: group 1: Wednesday, 17:40-19:10;
group 2: Wednesday, 19:20-20:50;
group 3: Tuesday 19:20-20:50;
lecture (asynch.): Saturday 19:20-20:50.

Course Description

As an opportunity to reflect on their studies in Year One at SAS, this course allows students to choose a specific topic or problem that grabbed their interest and explore it in more depth. The object of the course is to prepare a seven-minute final presentation, in English, developing an analytical take on an issue or question that has arisen from first-year classes. Students are required to connect their topic with themes, ideas, and insights from the other courses they have taken at SAS.

As well as an exercise in thinking about their educational trajectory and choice of major, TFY is designed to improve students' research and presentation skills. Alongside learning how to devise, frame, and deliver a presentation, students will learn critical skills in revising and reflecting on the readings they have done throughout the year.

Course Structure

The class will meet for 4 academic hours every week during 6 weeks of the quarter (Weeks 0–3 and Weeks 5–7). This will include one asynchronous lecture, and one synchronous seminar each week.

Lectures will introduce you to six essential aspects of making a successful presentation: choosing your topic and approach; researching and planning your talk; engaging with other

voices; building your argument; structuring the presentation; and incorporating visuals. Lectures will be asynchronous (i.e., pre-recorded), sent at the beginning of each week. Students will then be able to raise questions with the instructor and discuss issues via the discussion section on the course's Canvas page.

Seminars will involve a wider discussion, a troubleshooting session, and a chance to share feedback from the process of developing your presentations so far. Occasionally these seminars will include Zoom "breakout" meetings with one or two other classmates, for which you may be advised to prepare specific materials in advance to share with your partner(s).

Student Learning Goals

Students who successfully pass this course will be able to:

Learning goals	
Knowledge goal:	Refreshing and deepening knowledge of course material from the first year at SAS
Knowledge goal:	In-depth engagement with a specific topic of the student's choice
Practical skill:	<p>Presentation skills, including: Choosing a topic, Identifying an audience, Generating questions, Creating a thesis statement, and organizing an argument</p> <p>Research skills, including: Identifying and locating useful sources, and negotiating conflicting opinions on a topic</p>

Required Coursework and Evaluation Criteria

The final grade for this course is given at the final presentation. The course also has a blocking pass/fail component for the seminar participation: failing the seminar participation component of the course means not being allowed to do the final presentation and receiving 0 for the whole coursework.

The final presentation is graded collectively by a board.

This course DOES NOT employ the 7-average, as per exemption in Educational Regulations.

Presentation (100%)

- Only mandatory readings from courses taken by the student in Year One can be used in preparing the presentation.

- All notions and ideas (unless they are student's own) should be clearly referenced to the source. The standard SAS plagiarism regulations will apply to presentations, too.
- Materials from at least 3 different courses must be used (GB is considered one course). An open course (if a student auditioned it) can be used, too.
- It is very important to contextualize each idea in a work it has been taken from. For example, it is not enough to quote a line from Freud about the unconscious – Freud's notion of the unconscious should be contextualized in Freud's theory as it appears in the book it has been taken from (but not in other Freud's works, as students cannot use additional literature). Ideas without serious contextualization will not be counted towards "using a source"; having few contextualized ideas in the presentation will negatively affect the grade.
- Presentations must be completely in English. Any presentations using Russian will receive the grade of "0".
- Presentations should be spoken, not read; quotes on the slides may be read, but the total time of reading quotes during the presentation cannot exceed 60 seconds. If a student reads for more than 60 seconds total in the course of the presentation, they will receive the grade of "0".
- The fluency of English will affect the grade -- the board will assess how well you managed to get your message across to the audience, both during the presentation Q&A.
- Presentations cannot last longer than 7 minutes.
- The use of slides is recommended, although there is no penalty for not having them. There is no limit on the number of slides.
- Each presentation will be followed by Q&A. The main purpose of Q&A is to give the student a chance to clarify things which were not made sufficiently clear during the presentation and to give the panel an opportunity to form a better notion of the student's take on the topic.

Participation (blocking pass/fail)

Students are required to participate actively in seminars, both by making their own presentations and by contributing to the discussion.

Canvas and Other Course Resources

This course has a website on Canvas (<https://canvas.instructure.com/>). You should have received an invitation to join the course on Canvas two weeks before the start of classes. If you did not, double check your SAS email and then follow up with the instructor. All course readings, this syllabus, and any other course materials are available on Canvas.

All written assignments completed outside of class must be submitted via Canvas.

Course Literature

Here is a brief bibliography of literature that will assist you in crafting your presentation.

- Cicero, *On Invention: The Best Kind of Orator* (Harvard: Loeb Classics, 1968)
- Rolf Dobelli, *The Art of Thinking Clearly* (London: Sceptre, 2013)
- Nancy Duarte, *Resonate: Present Visual Stories that Transform Audiences* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2010)

Duarte is a useful general introduction to planning a talk and honing good speaking techniques, while Dobelli offers 99 inspiring examples of how to make a topic interesting, and how to take an original or unusual angle in your approach. Cicero is here as it has been a key text in rhetorical craft for the past two thousand years.

Course Policies and Expectations

Note Taking

Taking good notes is essential, and you are encouraged to use pens, pencils, laptops, ipads, or sketch pads. The only rule is that you pay attention to others who are speaking in class, and stay away from tech distractions.

Examination Format

Students who failed the participation component of the course or received a non-passing grade for the presentation must take the exam or fail the course.

The exam will consist of two parts. In the first part of the exam students will be given 90 minutes to write an essay (in class, in English) on one of the topics of the course lectures using ideas from both the lectures and the readings for the course. No materials can be used during the exam. The first part of the exam will be graded as blocking pass/fail -- failing the first part means failing the exam.

The second part of the exam is a 7-minute presentation governed by the same rules as the final presentation during the course. However, for students who have given the presentation(s) already, the presentation should be on a different topic and cannot use any of the quotes used in the previous presentation(s).

The same rules apply to any exam retake.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Activity	Topics & Readings	Assignments
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0	13.04	Lecture	Common Lecture: Andrey Shcherbenok	
	18.04 (asynch.)	Lecture	Topic, Audience, and Approach	
	14.04 (groups 1&2); 15.04 (group 3)	Seminar	Topic Brainstorm	
1	25.04 (asynch.)	Lecture	Researching and Planning	
	21.04 (groups 1&2)	Seminar	Reflecting on First-Year Classes	
	22.04 (group 3)			
2	2.05 (asynch.)	Lecture	Engaging with Conflicting Opinions	
	28.04 (groups 1&2)	Seminar	Finding a Gap	
	29.04 (group 3)			
3	4.05-10.05	-	(No class this week)	
4	11.05-17.05	-	(No class this week)	
5	23.05 (asynch.)	Lecture	Building your Argument	
	19.05, (groups 1&2)	Seminar	Thesis Statements	
	20.05			

	(group 3)			
6	30.05	Lecture	Structuring your Presentation	
	26.05 (groups 1&2)	Seminar	Detailed Plans	
	27.05 (group 3)			
7	6.06	Lecture	Using Visuals	
	2.06 (groups 1&2)	Seminar	Final Rehearsal	
	3.06 (group 3)			
8	9.06 (groups 1&2)		Final Presentations (the panel)	
	10.06 (group 3)			

SAS Policies for Online Courses

Please note the addition and updating of policies to reflect the realities of online teaching in Q4.

Technical Requirements and Responsibilities for Online Education

Professors and students are responsible for ensuring they have access to a computer and a stable Internet connection during all scheduled class meetings. This is to ensure that students get the most out of the online education format. If you have problems with your Internet, smartphones may be used as a backup option (as a wifi hotspot or to participate in class).

Course materials and all assignments will be made available on Canvas; all synchronous class meetings will be conducted over Zoom. All communication about the course and assignments must happen over Canvas or official email. The use of any supplementary platforms (discussion boards etc.) is at the discretion of the instructor.

Professors are required to post all resources for online teaching via Canvas before the start of each week. This includes: Any nonsynchronous lesson material, the invitations for individual Zoom meetings, and any other materials required to complete the course.

All synchronous classes will be recorded and made available via Canvas on the same day for a minimum of one week. These recordings are only for teaching purposes and should not be shared.

Etiquette for Online Classes

Professors and students should join Zoom a few minutes before class in order to have time to solve any technical problems. When you join a class, your microphone will be muted. Individual professors will decide how to run class discussions and whether to enable such features as chat. As a general rule of thumb, you should mute your microphone when you are not speaking.

In seminars, students are required to make themselves visible. If you have concerns about what is visible, then either take the time to “curate” your environment or consider using the background option in Zoom. During lectures, you are welcome to turn off your video.

Students should feel free to contact the professor or Head of Education (d.kontowski@utmn.ru) to discuss any concerns that may arise concerning online delivery of the course (i.e., technical issues, course material availability, access to apps, communication challenges, and changes to syllabus or schedule). Don't wait until course evaluations to draw attention to your concerns!

Technical Emergencies Protocols

Students who have difficulty getting online to attend a synchronous class or complete an assignment, should contact the professor immediately according to the specific instructions provided in the syllabus (i.e., via telephone, SMS, or email). Follow the below instructions concerning making up classes missed due to technical problems.

If your professor is not online for the start of a class session, keep Zoom open and check your email. If the professor does not come on-line or send a message to clarify the situation within 10 minutes after the official starting time, class is cancelled. Both the professor and a designated student should alert the Head of Education about the situation. Missed classes will be rescheduled; update class times to be shared via Canvas and Moodle.

Attendance and Absences

Zoom has an attendance feature that will be used to record attendance. Attendance is required for all synchronous classes or required online activities (i.e., designated asynchronous tasks, timed assignments, group work meetings, etc.) and will be recorded on a grading sheet. Students can miss up to two classes without an excuse; every further absence will see the final mark lowered by 1 point for each class missed (i.e., a student who misses 6 class meetings without prior approval or a valid excuse cannot pass a course). Missing more than 15 minutes of scheduled online class is considered an absence, unless the student has received prior approval from the Head of Education.

If you plan to miss a class due to a legitimate conflict (i.e. attendance of a student conference), you must apply to the instructor for an approved absence at least seven days in advance and CC Head of Education. Without advanced approval, it will count as a missed class.

If you are sick, email all your instructors and Alyona Bunkova (a.bunkova@utmn.ru) as soon as possible to notify them that you will be missing class. They will follow up with you with any necessary arrangements related to your illness.

If you need to miss a class due to something that arises at short notice (i.e., bureaucracy that needs to be dealt with, an emergency at home), email the instructor as soon as possible to notify them about your absence. Should a student have repeated problems with attendance, the instructor will notify the Head of Education.

Making Up Classes Missed for Legitimate Reasons

Students who miss a synchronous class session to a legitimate conflict, an emergency that arises at short notice, or a technical problem will be required to watch the recording of the class and submit a written summary of the key points of the class, including any questions that you have about the content. This should be sent to the instructor via email within 48 hours of the ending of the class in order to receive credit. If a technical problem emergency situation persists beyond 48 hours, an extension may be granted. Students who are sick should watch the videos of missed classes in order to keep up on courses, but they are not required to submit written summaries.

Extensions for Assignments

All assignments must be submitted by their due dates. Extensions will be granted only when ill health, death of a loved one, or personal difficulties of a serious nature near the due date prevent completion of an assignment. As the due dates for assignments are stated in the syllabus, the pressure of other university work or extracurricular activities will not be accepted as a reason for an extension.

If you require an extension, you must write to your instructor at least three working days in advance. Clearly explain your situation and provide any necessary documentation (such as a medical certificate) to Alyona Bunkova. Your instructor should reply to you within one day; you will be notified by email about whether an extension has been granted.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be penalized by a full grade deduction for each day of lateness. For example, an essay submitted three days late that received a mark of 7 would be reduced to 4. Late assignments will not be accepted once graded assignments are returned or after June 11. The acceptance of late assignments for minor assessments (worth 10 percent or less of the final mark, including minor tasks completed during class hours) is left up to the discretion of individual instructors.

Rescheduling of Classes or Substitution of Instructor

Should a course be unable to meet at its regular time, the instructor will liaise with Alyona Bunkova to approve the change and to find a different time that suits both the instructor and students. Should this occur, all involved will receive an email notification from Alyona Bunkova about the changed schedule and any schedule changes will appear in Moodle. If the instructor requires a substitute to replace them, students will be notified by email.

Grading

SAS uses a ten-point grading system. Grades from 0 to 3 are failing grades. Grades from 4 to 10 are passing grades. 10 and 9 are excellent grades given in exceptional circumstances.

In most courses, SAS faculty are obliged to follow the 7-rule. This may be calculated either as a "median" (the number of grades above 7 and the number of grades below 7 do not differ by more than 1) or an average (the average final grade for all students should fall between 6.50 and 7.49). The 7-rule may be applied to each assignment OR only to the final course marks. Exceptions to this rule are only granted by the Teaching Council.

Examinations

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Part 1 of the exam assessment criteria:

Pass	Fail
Adequate development of a thesis with sufficient supporting materials referenced	Inadequate development of a thesis without sufficient supporting materials

Part 2 of the exam assessment criteria:

0-3	4-5	6-7	8-10
The presentation has unsatisfactory references to the coursework, contextualization of the quotes and dialogue between disciplines involved	The presentation has satisfactory references to the coursework, contextualization of the quotes and dialogue between disciplines involved	The presentation has good references to the coursework, contextualization of the quotes and dialogue between disciplines involved	The presentation has excellent references to the coursework, contextualization of the quotes and dialogue between disciplines involved

Course Evaluations

Toward the end of the quarter, students will be asked to complete an anonymous evaluation of the course. The results of the evaluations will be reviewed by the instructor, the Head of the Education Office, and the Teaching Council in order to improve education at SAS.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with the SAS Academic Integrity Document (see English version [HERE](#) or Russian version [HERE](#)). Cheating, plagiarism, and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated and *must* be sanctioned by the instructor in accordance with the document. The use of any translation applications (Google Translate etc.) is highly discouraged. Students are required to cite any sources employed in written assignments using the citation style listed in the syllabus.

Online assignments will be "open book," meaning that you can look at course reading materials and notes while answering the questions. However, the Academic Integrity still applies. That means: You must not communicate with anyone; your answers will be your own work; and you will not use Google Translate. You are discouraged from searching the Internet for answers, as you will run out of time, may risk violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, and will likely do worse than if you simply answer with the knowledge you already have.

Date Syllabus Last Updated: 18.04.20