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CONSTRUCTING COMMUNITY IN THE FRESHMAN SEMINAR: FOSTERING AUTONOMY IN AN ERA OF ACCOUNTABILITY

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Using the Syllabus to Construct Community: The Instructor Perspective

In 2003, I engaged Sociology 101 students in a syllabus construction exercise that required them to decide collectively upon the assessment framework for the class (Hudd, 2003). Shortly after my experience with this exercise was published, I stopped teaching Sociology 101. The exercise was shelved as I was assigned to teach upper-level courses where this more open-ended approach to designing class assessments was less of a fit in the context of a more specific set of learning outcomes.

Enter stage right: QU 101, “Individual in the Community,” Quinnipiac University’s freshman orientation course required for all incoming students. This seminar-based course is a mix of both content and process: it orients students to the rigors of university-level academic work (e.g., using readings such as Socrates and Rousseau) and educates them on the processes of identity development and community formation while at the same time, it incorporates required assignments that foster the development of skills which enhance their chances for success in college. Students in QU 101 learn about the theoretical concept of community, while they are simultaneously encouraged to become engaged as community members both in and out of class. Because the class theme seemed to be a perfect fit, I “dusted off” the syllabus construction exercise for another run.

Enter stage left: Alex Wile, the second author on this piece and currently a junior at Quinnipiac. Alex and I met when she was a freshman enrolled in my QU 101 course. She agreed to join me for a second time in the course, this time as a sophomore and peer catalyst (PC). In brief, PC’s are Quinnipiac University’s alternative to Teaching Assistants. Serving only in QU 101, the PC functions as both a role model and a resource to new freshman as they integrate at college. Together as professor and PC, Alex and I met weekly to discuss lesson plans for the class and to evaluate students’ learning experience on an ongoing basis. In addition, we met every other week with other teacher-PC pairs to dissect our experiences and troubleshoot difficulties we encountered in teaching the class.

Here, we will articulate the lessons we learned as we applied the syllabus construction exercise in QU 101 during the fall of 2013. We were excited by the opportunity to try to shift students’ mindset about this required course. Our thinking was simple: if we could encourage students to participate more deeply in a required seminar that, on its surface, offered little room for creative engagement, we hoped that this would set them on a path of active academic involvement in their classes that would ultimately enhance their chances for success in college overall. In this “behind-the-scenes” description of our experience, we will highlight the pinnacles and pitfalls that await adventurous instructors like us who are willing to “let go of the reins” a bit during the process of course design.

Creating Assignments: Balancing Innovation and Mission

Both of us are drawn to classroom environments that are less structured and that offer opportunities for open discussion, creative application and debate. However, the learning outcomes for the QU seminar are “handed down” from the central administrative staff that oversees the implementation of QU 101. And so, while we were oriented to providing opportunities for students to use their imaginations, we also needed to keep an eye to fulfilling the intended goals of the course.

The QU 101 seminar is framed around a set of guiding questions: What defines and locates an individual and a community? How are individual identity and a sense of community sustained? How are conflicts between personal interests and community norms resolved? How do perceptions of individual difference and diversity affect community? Early on, we recognized the potential of the syllabus construction exercise as a means for providing students with the opportunity to simultaneously study and experience the conflicts that are inherent in community formation, and so this became our underlying focus as we adapted the exercise.

In its original format, the syllabus construction exercise was intended to provide introductory students in SO 101 with the opportunity to understand themselves as learners (i.e., create an assessment plan that played to their strengths), while at the same time socializing them to take an active role in the class and enabling them to become acquainted with their classmates. Because QU 101 includes a number of assignments that are common to all sections of the course, however, we were forced to adapt our approach by making sure students understood the parts of the course that were *not* negotiable, namely: the assigned texts, two required videos, mandatory attendance at selected college events and three written assignments (a summer paper, a “personal success plan” that articulated their goals for college and a common final exam). This written work comprised roughly ten pages of the 20-25 pages of writing that this writing-intensive course requires.

Instead of highlighting these requirements, we designed a summary sheet that emphasized what we saw as a “window of opportunity”—places in the course where students could assert their preferences for assignments and classroom policies. We hoped that this guide would encourage students to focus on the many aspects of the course that could be adapted to suit their interests. Our assignment sheet outlined broad grading criteria for the course (e.g., informal writing, intellectual presence, etc.) and offered prompts to facilitate small, group discussions related to the development of assignments (e.g., Should informal writing be graded? How should participation be graded?) In Appendix A, we include both this summary sheet which describes our *process*, as well as the final syllabus (i.e., the *product* that the students ultimately created).

We assigned the students to groups and each group designated a person to record minutes that were turned in at the end of each of the first few classes. Between class sessions, we compiled an overall summary sheet that condensed their suggestions so students could observe and discuss further the entire range of ideas regarding possible assignments. Our summary sheet of minutes was divided into sections: potential classroom behavior policies (e.g., cell phone use, attendance) and potential assignments. As our work on the syllabus progressed, and we

solidified specific elements of the course, these were fitted into an overall framework that reflected a traditional course syllabus structure.

In all, it took about two weeks before a final version of the syllabus was issued. While our first week of class was largely devoted to syllabus design, we were also able to incorporate several assigned readings into our discussions. This allowed students to witness the relationship between the exercise and the wider purpose of the course. For example, in the first week of class, students completed a reading (Hudd, 2007) which encouraged them to consider the ever-present tension between process and product in their learning experience. During the second week, we plunged further into the subject matter of the course (e.g., reading and discussing an excerpt from Putnam's *Bowling Alone*). Thus, as we deliberated the syllabus structure we were also simultaneously considering the theoretical foundations of community.

In sum, the first weeks of class allowed the students to both experience and intellectualize community, while they simultaneously worked to craft the parameters within which our classroom community would abide. The predominant theme in their approach to designing assigned work, if there is one, is flexibility. For example, the students agreed that the remaining ten pages of writing required for the course should be completed by writing either one ten-page, two five-page or three three-page papers. Likewise, their policy on participation allowed for the fact that anyone can have an "off day" and should not be penalized for it. This sensitivity to individual concerns provides tangible evidence of the underlying tension between individual and community that the course is intended to reify.

The Hidden Curriculum in Syllabus Construction: Shifting the Locus of Control

Because the syllabus construction exercise requires an attention to process—e.g., making sure that all students feel included in the discussion, we recognized that we would need to focus carefully on the informal classroom environment, most notably our listening skills. Real changes in our daily practice constituted an important first step to encouraging open conversation and mutual respect among the class members and between us and the students. A simple example of the type of dialogue we were seeking to engender occurred around the development of a class cell phone policy. Here, we observed a clear disconnect between the students (who view the ability to check their cell phones as essential) and Hudd (a "dinosaur," who walked the planet long before the advent of perpetual contact). This was clearly a matter that was important to the students. By listening carefully, asking questions and contributing thoughtfully to the dialogue surrounding this issue, we were able to agree upon an approach (presented in the excerpt below) that created a shared sense of responsibility for sustaining a productive classroom environment.

Classroom Behaviors

Our classroom is grounded in mutual respect. This underlying principle will guide our behavior as we interact with our professor and fellow students in the QU 101 classroom. We will express our unique needs as individuals, while at the same time we understand that our unique preferences may not be completely fulfilled as they are balanced with the concerns of other individuals in our classroom community. Despite our differences, we

have come to an agreement that we will abide by the following rules when we spend time in class together.

Technology

We will allow the respectful use of technology (e.g., a quick glance at a phone, or quick response to someone who is concerned about us). We will not accept routine texting during class.

We will allow use of laptops in class, for students who prefer this, to take notes and to perhaps bring information into class that is relevant to our discussion. We agree that “Facebooking,” shopping and other distracting activities are not acceptable during class time.

Civility

... We agree that we are *all responsible* for enforcing the rules outlined above. As fellow students in the classroom, we will gently remind each other when we see these rules being violated (e.g., “You left crumbs on your desk,” or “You need to stop texting now,” or “Your shopping during class is distracting to me.”) Our environment of mutual respect also means we can get up to use the rest room without asking for permission. We will discuss these rules periodically in class (e.g., once a month) with the goal of modifying, adding or subtracting from them.

This policy, grounded in acknowledgement of our competing concerns, helped to create a shared sense of responsibility for “policing” phone use, while at the same time, it addressed a critical issue for freshman: separating from home. Perhaps most importantly, the decision-making process around this issue allowed students to witness the theoretical principles of social contracts and obligations to community that are articulated in their assigned course readings in practice.

Our goal in shifting the locus of control on both big and smaller issues like these was to create a shared sense of ownership up front that would ideally create a kind of “collective conscience” within our classroom community. While the notion of a “required freshman seminar” seems to beg a “what must I do to be successful” response, we expected that by engaging the students in the course structure up front, we would set a “precedent for objection,” reminiscent of the “question authority” mantra that was popularized in the 60s. We were also hopeful that the presence of a peer leader, who would encourage them to take nothing for granted, would further extend this “take charge” approach. As both a PC and Resident Assistant who lived with freshman in the dorms, Alex was often sensitive to nuances of the adjustment to college that could, on any given day, influence what happened in the classroom environment. By, on occasion, raising such issues for discussion, she allowed students to acknowledge the important, but often unseen factors outside of college life that could influence the quality of their overall experience and perhaps, impede their adjustment.

Constructing the Syllabus in a Millennial Classroom: Unforeseen Complexities

Despite the great pains we took to carve out a space for students to be creative within this somewhat standardized seminar, we were not wholly successful in sustaining a high level of engagement. Perhaps most startling among the challenges we encountered—mid-way through the second week of class, when the students were still in the thick of generating ideas, more than one student suggested to one of us that it might be best if Hudd simply made the final decision regarding the assignments and class policies. Clearly for some of the students, the process of deliberation and compromise required all too much thought and effort. In comparison to what we anticipated—excitement and engagement—some students experienced only frustration and fatigue. We wondered why.

For Alex, the thought process went something like this: Why did this assignment, which I might very much have appreciated as a student, lead some members of the class to become disengaged? For Sue, this experience led to a more historical analysis: Were students in the contemporary era so used to receiving templates and rubrics for completing their work that they could no longer envision a place for themselves in it—even when that place was clearly demarcated and they were encouraged to take charge? We both wondered how it was that an idea that presented so many opportunities for enlivening and liberating students (and had in fact done so only a decade ago when Hudd first tried it) had now become tedious, or even worse, perhaps a bit overwhelming?

What we observed, upon reflection, is that there were actually two underlying conflicts that were inherent as we constructed the syllabus: the tension between individual and community, and the tension between product and process. Within both of these dyads, students have more experience, and thus, familiarity with the former, and so by placing our emphasis on the latter—achieving a community consensus on our classroom practice and through a collective process—we had inadvertently forced students further out of their comfort zone than we had imagined without being explicit about this expectation.

Certainly, in an era where standardized tests (leading to standardized curricula) are the norm rather than the exception, it is possible that rather than allowing students to feel liberated, the call to engage them in crafting basic protocol for the course could in fact be threatening to students in ways that neither of us could fully understand. Perhaps we should have issued a “trigger warning” (Hoover, 2014) to the students in advance. It might have read something like this: warning, this course will require you to be creative and speak your mind, but it will also require you to listen carefully to the opinions of others. The ability to take risks emanates from a foundation of mutual trust and respect that might have been established more quickly had we done one simple thing: explained to students *why* we believed this shift in control was necessary (Barbezat and Bush, 2013). Ironically, as the learning process has come to be overwhelmingly characterized by compliance, opportunities for rebelliousness, while they are not readily seized, may be more important than ever.

Using the Syllabus to Construct Community: The Student Perspective

When I was preparing for my first year of college, friends and family who have gone before me gave me all the details for what my experience was going to be like. I received warnings saying professors would be difficult, mean and probably would not even know my name. They also said the homework was going to be hard, and there would be no one to ask for help. My experience in QU 101 with Dr. Hudd was immediately different than I expected, and frankly, all my other classes were too. I was so relieved! Fast forward to the end of the semester, Dr. Hudd became my advisor and we were working on our first project together, and soon, I had become a peer catalyst, working side by side with Dr. Hudd to improve the course.

Being a PC was eye opening. I learned a lot about the QU 101 experience and the desired outcomes for the course. I also learned a lot about myself, especially regarding patience, explanations and being a good role model for the class. For the students in QU 101, I was a living example of what this course was designed to accomplish. In my role as a Peer Catalyst, I found that many freshman do not have a person to look up to or just a person to ask the “small” questions to. This is particularly true when it comes to the academic side of college. I wanted to be that person for these freshmen, because I know how intimidating the first few weeks of college are.

Constructing the syllabus gave me a greater appreciation for professors and other classroom leaders. It can be challenging in front of the class! Engaging students can be especially hard in a required class or on a quiet day when the class is disengaged, perhaps because some other part of the transition to college has overwhelmed them. I now understand the pressures of being in front of the class: one has to be engaging, knowledgeable and there is no place for “stage fright.”

In my experiences in QU 101 and then as a PC for the same class, I have lived the transition from individual to community that the class and this exercise are about. I arrived at Quinnipiac focused on my personal experience, worried about how I would make way. The path through my fears, much as the QU 101 class and syllabus construction experience intended, was to immerse myself in the campus community. The QU 101 experience gives students a common foundation when they arrive at QU and it helps them to understand that the college community can help them to grow if they are willing to let go of a part of themselves for the sake of the whole. Hopefully, after designing the syllabus in our class, the students realized that not all college courses are like those I was warned about before arriving, and that even the most structured requirements can offer them a chance to understand themselves and the institution more deeply.

References

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Syllabus.” *Teaching Sociology* 31, 2, 195-202.

Hudd, S. (2007). “Practice...Or Perfect?” *Encounter: The Journal of Education and Social Justice* 20, 3, 25-27.

Putnam, R. (2001). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*.
New York: Simon and Schuster.

Appendix 1:
Syllabus Construction Assignment and Final Course Syllabus

Guide Sheet for Syllabus Construction



Parts of the QU 101 class that we must retain:

1. The texts (QU 101 Reader, The Other Wes Moore, The Laramie Project, QU Student Handbook excerpts and QU IMAginE plan -- assigned).
2. The videos *Digital Nation* and *My Journey from Evil to Heroism*.
3. The summer writing (already done! 3-4 pps)
4. The PSP revision, due in early October (3-4 pps)
5. The final (a common essay exam applying the readings 4-5 pps)

Parts of the class we have control over:

1. Grading criteria:
 - . Intellectual presence (about 20%) – how will we define this?
 - . Attend five community activities (about 10%) – how will we measure this?
 - . Annotation of readings – graded or ungraded? (If graded, what %?)
 - . Informal writing – graded or ungraded? (If graded, what %?)
 - . 20-25 pps of formal writing (12 pages accounted for already)
 - About 50% of the grade – with sources or without? How many?
 - Rather than pages – what would you like to write about? What kinds of written work would be beneficial in context of course goals?
 - . %'s – and think about other types of work – group work, community service, oral presentations, etc. you might enjoy
2. Additional class materials you would like to include – videos, exercises?
3. Attendance policy – what should ours be?
4. Assignment policies regarding late work?
5. Policies regarding: cell phones, laptops, food, other things?

QU 101 The Individual and the Community

Suzanne S. Hudd, Ph.D.
314

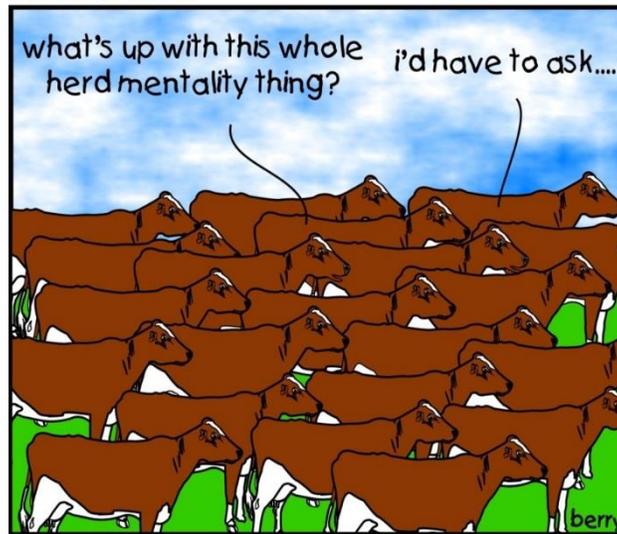
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Office: CAS1, Room

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This first semester interdisciplinary seminar introduces you to Quinnipiac University and challenges you as an individual to read, write and speak critically and to become an engaged member of this academic community. In order to achieve these goals, you must first understand yourselves – your values and beliefs as primary sources of motivation that guide your actions. And so, we'll spend much of the course getting in touch with these, but also examining them in the context of fundamental questions about human nature, the formation of your individual identity (what makes you “tick?”) and your common inheritances (what values and traits do you share with your classmates?) We will also explore the meaning of community. What does community mean and how is it formed and sustained in the context of the ongoing interplay between individual rights and responsibilities? QU 101 lays the groundwork for considering how you can extend your roles and responsibilities as a member of the University community. It is also intended to prepare you for later courses where you will explore your position in the national and global communities beyond QU.

COURSE QUESTIONS

Our class, like all sections of QU 101, is framed around six questions. These are the questions that will drive our reading, writing and discussion.

1. What defines and locates an individual?
2. How is individual identity formed and sustained?
3. What defines and locates a community?
4. How is a sense of community formed and sustained?

5. How do individuals deal with tensions and conflicts between personal interests and community interests?
6. How do perceptions of individual difference and diversity affect community?

Throughout the semester we will use the course questions to help us think about the texts we read and we will use the texts we read to help us answer the course questions.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, through full effort and participation in the activities and experiences related to QU 101, you will be able to:

1. Participate effectively in class discussions through strong, focused reading and annotation of required texts;
2. Speak publically in a clear, cogent and logical manner in representing the ideas and positions raised by the common course questions, required readings, and the observations of your peers;
3. Advance and support findings and opinions in speaking and in writing – with evidence from a range of academic experience – textual, social and interpersonal;
4. Work effectively in small group discussion by assuming both leadership and collaborative roles;
5. Analyze and reflect upon your commitment to helping build a strong sense of community engagement across the campus with the goal of lifelong learning;
6. Provide, defend and apply an extended and sophisticated definition of concepts including “identity,” “individuality,” “responsibility,” “diversity,” and “community”

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- 1) Moore, Wes. 2011. *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*. Spiegel & Grau.
- 2) Duffy, Dansdill and Shahverdian. 2012. *The Individual in the Community*. Boston: Pearson.
- 3) Kaufman, Moises. 2001. *The Laramie Project*. New York: Vintage.

All of the above are available at the bookstore. In addition, selected short readings, including a section of the QU Student Handbook will be distributed in class. There are also online case studies. Most readings come from the Duffy book. I have labelled these with a (T) so you know where to find them. Other readings are posted under “course materials” on Blackboard.

GRADED WORK

Intellectual Presence: Annotation, Attendance and Participation
Points

20

In order to be part of our classroom community, we must be physically and intellectually present. Our presence will be graded based upon three things: 1) our intellectual engagement with the readings, 2) our physical presence in the classroom and 3) our willingness to share our thoughts about the readings during class discussions.

Our intellectual presence will be graded in the following ways (the 10 points will be roughly equally divided between these three categories):

- 1) **Annotations:** Professor Hudd will periodically spot check our texts (which we will bring to class each day) for annotations at five different points during the semester. She will give us a grade of 0,1 or 2 (0=inadequate, 1=average and 2=above average). As per our discussion in class surrounding annotation, this part of the grade will be based largely on the quality rather than the quantity of the annotations. Quantity will only come into play when students are providing minimal written comments/questions consistently across several readings. Quality annotations are annotations that show connections to other courses, thinking beyond the reading at hand, or identifying questions that the reading evokes. We are annotating so that we will recall what struck us in a reading – where the points of entry in our thinking are at the time we read each reading. When we return to these readings at the final, our annotations will help us decide upon their relevance the learning we have experienced as a part of this QU 101 class. Annotations will be worth 10 of the 20 participation points. Professor Hudd will calculate the % of total available points we received (i.e., 5 checks x a maximum of 2 points each) and will give us a grade out of 10 based on the points we accumulate.
- 2) **Attendance:** Professor Hudd will take attendance every day. We are allowed 3 unexcused absences (no questions asked), and additional excused absences (with documentation such as a doctor’s note). For every additional unexcused absence in excess of three, Professor Hudd will deduct a point from our participation grade. In addition, points can be deducted for excessive tardiness. In terms of tardiness, occasional lateness will be tolerated (e.g., the “alarm didn’t go off”). Professor Hudd will determine when lateness becomes disruptive to the individual and our class, and she will discuss her concerns with the student and deduct points from their grade. Attendance is not actively factored into the grade – it is assumed. A point will be deducted for each class missed beyond the allowable number of absences.
- 3) **Participation:** Everyone is allotted a couple of “off days,” i.e., days where we can approach the Professor and indicate our unwillingness to participate. Other than these exceptions, Professor Hudd may call on any of us at any time. Professor Hudd will record a participation grade for us at the end of each class (a “0” is used to indicate failure to participate, while a “1” will indicate active participation). Professor Hudd will calculate the percentage of active days, and multiply it times the 10 points to calculate the points that get factored into our grade.

Periodically a person can become sick for an extended period (e.g., mono). We trust Professor Hudd to assess the needs of individual students, with a mindfulness toward fairness to all students in the class, and to modify the above grading procedures accordingly when life events occur for individuals.

Community Involvement Fair Assignment

10 points

We will write a paper that summarizes our experiences with the Quinnipiac community, and the ways in which those experiences have both affirmed and challenged our individual identities. This paper will be based upon either attendance at the Involvement Fair or attendance at 2-3 organizational meetings on campus. It will be due in class on September 12, and graded in accordance with the assignment sheet given out in class.

Writing Assignments

50 points

There will be five writing assignments in this class. Each writing assignment will be worth 10 points. Two of the writing assignments – the final exam (10 points) and the PSP (10 points) – are prescribed by guidelines for the course. The PSP will need to be 2-3 pages (12 pt. font) and the final will need to be 5 pages long. Prompts for these assignments have been uploaded in Blackboard.

The remaining three writing assignments will be written by Professor Hudd, and she will provide an assignment sheet and grading grid for each one. These other three papers can be any length, and students can choose to do one, two or all three of the papers, however, their remaining writing must total 10 additional pages. All papers will be uploaded to the student portfolio, and a hard copy turned in to Professor Hudd on the date it is due. Failure to complete the additional 10 pages of writing will result in a 5 point deduction from the student's overall grade. If a student chooses to skip a paper, then the 10 points for that paper will be added to the next available paper (i.e., skipping Paper #1 means Paper #2 is worth 20 points, skipping paper #2 means that Paper #3 is 20 points, and skipping Paper #3 means that Paper #1 is worth 20 points). Skipping two papers means that the one paper written is worth 30 points.

Additional Work

20 points

We agreed that we would like the opportunity to participate in a community service project, and that we would like the opportunity to do something visual (e.g., collage or Powerpoint to represent the learning we experience in this project.

Accommodations

We understand that individual students learn differently. The coordinator of learning services, John Jarvis, works directly with students who choose to disclose a disability. While Quinnipiac does not have a specialized program for students with disabilities, Professor Hudd will work with students who choose to disclose the nature of their disabilities. She will honor both the spirit and the letter of the laws that apply to students with disabilities. Disclosing a disability and arranging any reasonable accommodations are best done early in the semester, perhaps even before the semester begins.

Academic Integrity

Our classroom is grounded in mutual trust. We are freshman. We are human. Life happens sometimes, however, we recognize that there are alternatives to plagiarism. We understand that we can consult with Professor Hudd whenever we encounter difficulties meeting deadlines or understanding our assignments. We expect that our Professor will be fair in deducting points for lateness of work that is turned in late, and that she will carefully consider the life circumstances surrounding our inability to meet the class deadline.

We agree to abide by University policy: all the work we submit will be our own, and when we use information from other sources, we will cite these sources appropriately. We understand that the failure to follow the University policy on plagiarism can result in a failing grade for the assignment, and possibly the class, depending on the nature of the violation.

Classroom Behaviors

Our classroom is grounded in mutual respect. This underlying principle will guide our behavior as we interact with our professor and fellow students in the QU 101 classroom. We will express our unique needs as individuals, while at the same time we understand that our unique preferences may not be completely fulfilled as they are balanced with the concerns of other individuals in our classroom community. Despite our differences, we have come to an agreement that we will abide by the following rules when we spend time in class together.

Technology

We will allow the respectful use of technology (e.g., a quick glance at a phone, or quick response to someone who is concerned about us). We will not accept routine texting during class.

We will allow use of laptops in class, for students who prefer this, to take notes and to perhaps bring information into class that is relevant to our discussion. We agree that “Facebooking,” shopping and other distracting activities are not acceptable during class time.

Food

We will also accept appropriate eating: food that is smelly, messy or disruptive in any way to those who are not eating it will not be allowed. Any student who eats or drinks during our class will be respectful to the next group of students by cleaning up after themselves.

Civility

We agree that learning from our fellow students is equally important as learning from our professor. We will listen with an open mind, and we will allow for appropriate disagreement and the discussion of alternative viewpoints. We understand that the goal of our time together is not necessarily to change each other’s views (although this may happen), but rather to enrich our individual understanding of how and why we develop and hold our opinions. We agree that we are *all responsible* for enforcing the rules outlined above. As fellow students in the classroom, we will gently remind each other when we see these rules being violated (e.g., “You left crumbs on your desk,” or “You need to stop texting now,” or “Your shopping during class is distracting to me.”) Our environment of mutual respect also means we can get up to use the rest room without asking for permission. We will discuss these rules periodically in class (e.g., once a month) with the goal of modifying, adding or subtracting from them.

CLASS SCHEDULE

PART I: The Community

What defines and locates a community?
How is a sense of community formed and sustained?

Academic Experience as Community

Tues 8/27: No Assigned Reading

Thurs 8/29: For today, read “What do I want?,” “Practice or Perfect” and review class texts

Cohort as Community

Tues 9/3: Syllabus Under Construction (con’t)
Readings: Linda, Frank and Doss (T)

Thurs 9/5: Reading: Bauerline and Putnam (T)

College as Community

Tues 9/10: Reading: Mills and Boyer (T)

Thurs 9/12: Reading: English (in Reader) and David Brooks *On Paradise Drive*, “Growing”

. Bring PSP to class **INVOLVEMENT PAPER DUE**

The Virtual Community

Tues 9/17: Reading: Gould (T)

Thurs 9/19: Reading: “When Roommates Were Random” and “Virtual Friendship and the New Narcissism”

Community Definitions of Success

Tues 9/24: Reading: “What if the Secret to Success is Failure?” NYT and Peer Review

Thurs 9/26: Reading: Syed, *Bounce*, Ch. 4 “Mysterious Sparks and Life-Changing Mind-Sets”

Summary – Principles of Community and Alternative Frameworks

Tues 10/1: Reading: Tumin – Principles of Stratification (Peer Review of PSP)

Thurs 10/3: NO READING – **Revised PSP Due in Class today! PAPER #1 (min. 3 PAGES)**

Tues: 10/8: Reading: Rousseau (T) and Excerpts from the QU Handbook

PART II: The Individual

What defines and locates an individual?

How is individual identity formed and sustained?

Individuals, Identity and Valuing Diversity

Thurs 10/10 Reading: Maalouf (T) – **PAPER #2 DUE HERE**

Tues 10/15: Reading: Wade “Do Unto Others” and Pinker (T)

Thurs 10/17: Reading: Barry, Douthat and Stephens (all T)

Tues 10/22: Reading: Wollstonecraft (T) pp. 5-20

Thurs 10/24: Reading: Larson (T) and “Sex on Campus”

Tues 10/29: Reading: King: “Conquering Self-Centeredness” (T)

Thurs 10/31: Reading: Re-read a selection from *The Other Wes Moore*
PAPER #3 DUE HERE

Part III: The Individual in the Community

How do individuals deal with tensions and conflicts between personal and community interests?

How do perceptions of individual difference and diversity affect community?

Belonging and Integrating in the Community

Tues 11/5: Reading: Plato, “Selections from the Republic” (T)

Thurs 11/7: Reading: Zimbardo (T)

Community Alienation

Tues 11/12: Reading: Laramie Project

Thurs 11/14: Reading: “What It All Has to Do with Us” and “How to Fight Binge Drinking”

Bring your PSP to class!!

Community Values: The Hidden Impact of Consumerism

Tues 11/19: Reading: Shipler (T) and “Income Inequality”

Thurs 11/21: Reading: Lawson (T) and “Habit Formation” from Schorr **PAPER #4**
DUE

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14: Successful Community Membership

Tues 12/3: Reading: “Purposes of a College Education” by Bok and Light (T)
Community Service Project Visual/Write-up Due Here

Thurs 12/5: No Assigned Reading – Review and Discussion of Final

PAPER #5 – THE FINAL EXAM, DUE ON DATE OF FINAL EXAM IN CLASS (min. 5 PAGES)