

(Proposed) Learning Outcomes for the Freshmen Seminar

“The aim of a university education is not to fit students for this or that particular profession or career, to equip them with theory that will later on find useful applications to this or that form of practice. It is to transform their minds, so that the student becomes a different kind of individual, one able to engage fruitfully in conversation and debate, one who has the capacity for exercising judgment, for bringing insights and arguments from a variety of disciplines to bear on particular complex issues.” (MacIntyre paraphrasing Cardinal Newman on a university education.)

General Outcomes for Freshmen Orientation to College:

The Freshmen Seminar is intended to introduce the Ignatian heritage and mission of the University of Scranton, with a focus on the Jesuit pedagogy involving “Context, Experience, Reflection, Action, and Evaluation.” Loosely translated this implies the following desired outcomes:

- Students will become engaged in a mentoring relationship with the faculty member and the students in the seminar course;
- Students will develop the ability to acknowledge the complexity and richness of the life of the mind (including the uncertainty that implies) and will develop a comfort with that;
- Students will be able to gather and analyze information (recognizing that there are different approaches to this task);
- Students will develop an argument or the defense of a hypothesis;
- Students will be comfortable with and *eloquentia perfecta* in presenting information and argument (in oral and written form, using technology where appropriate);
- Students will handle and respond to criticism in a way that leads to improvement of his/her intellectual work;
- Students will understand and implement the task of reflection and re-evaluation of information and arguments;
- Students will engage in action resulting from reflection (action may be a presentation or a civic commitment) and begin the cycle again;
- Students will recognize that the life of the mind in the Ignatian tradition has its practical expression in becoming “men and women for others”.

To begin this process, the Freshmen Seminar as a course will:

1. Present and discuss some significant essay regarding the nature and purpose of Catholic, Jesuit education (chosen from a proposed list of essays);
2. Address the variety of methodologies the differing disciplines are based on or grow out of, and how the methodology of this particular seminar stands in relation to the rest of the methodologies available in the life of the mind;

3. Present and discuss the subject matter intended as the substance of the seminar as presented by the course description;
4. Use throughout the seminar strategies that introduce the student to the techniques and insightfulness of the Jesuit pedagogy of development through context, experience, reflection, action and evaluation;
5. Promote frequent student presentations and collegial discussion, taking full advantage of the seminar setting.