



## Adjunct Faculty Academic Calendar

### December:

- 12 Regular Classes End
- 14-19 Final Exams
- 22 Grades due to Registrar by Noon
- 18-19 Commencement

### January:

- 6 Winter Open House for New Adjunct Faculty
- 11 Winter 2016 Classes Begin
- 11-15 Late Registration
- 18 Martin Luther King Day – No Classes
- 19-22 Late Course Adds
- 15 Last day to Withdraw with 100% refund

## Office Hours



Beginning December 21<sup>st</sup>, the Office of Adjunct Faculty Support Programs will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. From December 23<sup>rd</sup> to January 3<sup>rd</sup> our office will be closed for the holiday season reopening from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on January 4<sup>th</sup>. We will return to regular office hours (Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Friday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) on January 11<sup>th</sup>.

## Teaching First Generation Students

*"A postsecondary degree is increasingly necessary for social and financial stability and success. The benefits of a college degree are particularly relevant for historically underserved students, such as first-generation, low-income, and racial/ethnic minority students, given America's commitment to economic and social mobility" (IHEP, 2012).*

According to a report by the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) about a third of the undergraduate population tends to be first generation students. First generation students are characterized as being from low-income families, are more likely to be female, have lower college entrance examination scores, are less prepared academically for college, and perceive that they lack support from their family and friends. Such factors put first generation students at a disadvantage before they ever enter the classroom. Once in college, these students tend to have lower first-semester and first-year GPAs, are more likely to drop out after their first year, tend to encounter lower faculty expectations, have lower self-esteem, and are less likely to persist to graduation. They also come from families that have no experience with higher education so they lack the knowledge necessary to successfully navigate college life.

Not surprising, faculty tend to be key in helping these students find academic success and persist to graduation because faculty are the primary point of contact in the classroom.

According to Lohman (2015), there are five strategies that faculty can employ to help facilitate academic success for first generation students,

- 1) *Clarify your expectations* by using explicit language. Faculty can do this by providing examples of good work, using rubrics, communicating high expectations, and offering constructive criticism on students' strengths and weaknesses.
- 2) *Foster social integration* through the use of collaborative learning, and engaging them both inside and outside of the classroom.
- 3) *Promote student engagement and responsibility* through active learning, formative assessment, having students set personal goals, and demonstrating how the course material relates to their lives and goals.
- 4) *Encourage students to seek appropriate help* by putting support services in the syllabus, inviting support services to the classroom, and rewarding help seeking.
- 5) *Recognize and be mindful of the common challenges for these students* as outlined above.

If you are interested in learning more about teaching first generation students, you may register for the workshop titled, *Their Path Forward: Working With First Generation Students* on Friday, February 5 at 12:30 in SE203. You may register at [www.svsu.edu/workshops](http://www.svsu.edu/workshops).

### References:

- Institute for Higher Education Policy (2012, September). *Supporting First-Generation College Students through Classroom-Based Practices*. Accessed from: [www.ihep.org/.../issue\\_brief\\_walmart\\_msi\\_supporting\\_fgs\\_september\\_2012](http://www.ihep.org/.../issue_brief_walmart_msi_supporting_fgs_september_2012)
- Lohman, L. (2015, August 9). *22 Tips for Teaching First-Generation College Students at CSUF*. Accessed from: [www.csun.edu/afye/documents/Academic-Experiences-of-First-Gen-23-Apr-2009-Handout.pdf](http://www.csun.edu/afye/documents/Academic-Experiences-of-First-Gen-23-Apr-2009-Handout.pdf)

## Helping Your Students With their Reading

Whenever faculty get together and discuss their students, the conversation invariably turns to the problem of students and their lack of reading preparedness or, simply, their failure to read! Research has consistently suggested that an amazing 70% of college students do not complete their reading assignments (Hobson, 2014). Bean (1996) noted that college students are often bewildered by the density of their textbooks and the complexity of primary sources. As a result, he suggests that faculty need to work with their students to get them to read. He says, "We have to do more than take our students out to sea. We have to teach them to fish in the deep" (p. 133). So as you begin to think and prepare for next semester you should assess your assumptions regarding how much text is actually needed for students to be successful in your course, assess what required reading is actually manageable for your students, and finally, assess the audience, your students, and understand that each classroom consists of skilled to non-skilled readers...so helping students with their readings can be of great benefit to student success. The following are several recommendations to incorporate into your Winter course(s) to encourage more reading:

1. *Not every course is served by requiring a textbook*- if you cover material in lecture or other activities, if there aren't any texts which fit with the course, or if recommended reading can more easily align with course objectives...then don't require a textbook.
2. *Explain reading assignment relevance*- Many students, especially those requiring the most assistance with reading and comprehension need help in making the connection between the reading and course learning goals.
3. *Shape class activity to encourage reading*- Linking class activities to the readings will encourage student reading.
4. *Assign reading close to the date*- If students have a rationale for reading they will be more motivated to complete the reading assignments. Also, by assigning reading close to the date of a new topic, they will better understand why the reading is important.
5. *Teach reading strategies overtly*- Provide students with ideas for how to mark-up their texts, annotate their reading assignments, and demonstrate how they should be active vs passive readers.
6. *Use classroom assessment strategies (CATS) to assess reading compliance*- When faculty fail to monitor student reading assignments, students feel that this aspect of their learning is not required and is not a concern to the instructor. These same students will often leave whatever reading is assigned to the night before an exam effectually making their learning less deep.

Finally, it is suggested that most faculty are not reading specialists. The University does have a number of faculty who are reading specialists and would love to talk to you about helping your students with their reading assignments. As well, students can get support with their reading by going to the Center for Academic Achievement and working with a peer tutor.

#### References:

- Bean, J. (1996). *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hobson, E. (2014). Getting Students to Read: Fourteen Tips. Idea Paper #40. Accessed from: [ideaedu.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Idea\\_Paper\\_40.pdf](http://ideaedu.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Idea_Paper_40.pdf)

**Was your semester a challenge?  
Come and grab a slice and unwind!**

**Mingle** with other adjunct faculty,  
**Register** for upcoming workshops, &  
**Share** your teaching triumphs and woes!



Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-2:00 and Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 2:00

Please RSVP to [adjunctfaculty@svsu.edu](mailto:adjunctfaculty@svsu.edu)