



The First Year Experience Community Update

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Cornerstone Faculty Feature



Dr. Brian Botts

Principal, Collegiate High School and Cornerstone Experience Instructor

What do you enjoy most about teaching the Cornerstone Experience course?

The overall experience of watching and helping students who are from very different places in life and heading in very different directions work together is very rewarding. It is rewarding to see how students are willing to give a kind of random set of experiences with strangers a chance to turn into something. In short, watching individuals grow and interact with each other is the best thing.

Why did you choose to teach SLS 1515?

The main reason I wanted to teach the class is that I wanted to see if any sort of structured program could help get a handle on the intangible skill of being “college ready.” As a long time high school administrator, this topic has presented challenges and rewards. So often this is kind of hoped for by both high school personnel, college personnel, parents, and students to see and help make positive contributions to a system that does this is fun.

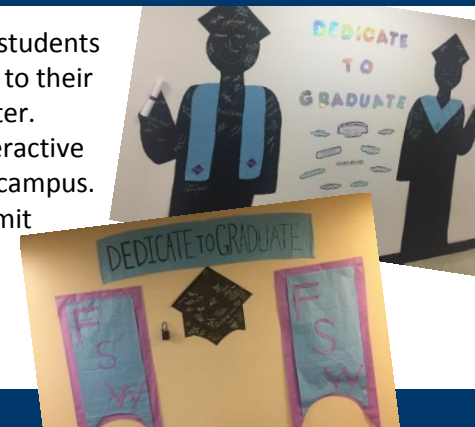
How did the course change you?

Having students from all walks of life, different motivational structures, different goals, and no real connection to each other all work together is encouraging. It kind of renews my faith in people in general because even when there is resistance or friction to the course or between participants, they always seem to find a way to put that behind them. It also reminds me that as a leader, people are always watching and wanting authentic interactions. I can't give a lesson on money management or setting priorities if there isn't evidence in my own life that those topics are priorities. I try to listen to my own lessons as much as I give them.

Dedicate to Graduate



The Office of First Year Experience is dedicated to supporting students journey towards graduation. We are helping students commit to their education and better define their goals within the first semester. Students are encouraged to sign the dedicate to graduate interactive hall decor outside the Office of First Year Experience on their campus. As part of the Cornerstone photo contest, students could submit a dedicate to graduate themed photo. One of Dr. Tawil's class photos in support of the theme is featured to the left. To see all Cornerstone class photos visit the FSW FYE Facebook or Instagram social media pages.





Modern Media: Changing the Landscape of Communication

Critical Thinking Lecture Series

This fall, FSW students have the opportunity to enjoy ten excellent presentations through the Critical Thinking Lecture Series. Featured above is a picture from the Modern Media: Changing the Landscape of Communication panel. Bill Barker and Mike Jung, publishers from Garnett, the publisher of Naples Daily News and Fort Myers News Press, served as panelists. Mr. Wayne Smith moderated the panel. Photos from Dr. Wendy Chase's session entitled "Act, Activism and the Pursuit of a Better Life" as well as Bill Frazer's "The Business of Beer" are below. Through the lectures, students are introduced to the importance of critical thinking in a variety of industries. Student participation survey data are shared below.

Student Participant Survey Data

91.67% of surveyed student participants "strongly agree" or "agree" that the speaker(s) were interesting and understandable.

83.01% of surveyed student participants "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that the topic was interesting and informative.

Student Testimonials

"I enjoyed the sunflower seeds section because I actually got to touch one of the 108 million hand crafted seeds. Very special moment."

"I loved it all; the presenters talked about opened my eyes to how important reading and paying attention to the news truly is in order to stay informed and knowledgeable about various subjects and issues."



Act, Activism and the Pursuit of a Better Life



The Business of Beer