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## Calendars

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## Important Dates

- **May 15, 12:00pm** Brown Bag: Student Communications
- **May 21, 12:00pm** Brown Bag: Integrating the Library into the Curriculum
- **May 29, 12:00pm** Brown Bag: Working with the Peer Mentor
- **June 10, 12:00pm** Brown Bag: Learning Activities
- **June 24, 12:00pm** Brown Bag: Supplemental Workshops
- **July 2, 8:00am** Instructor Website Updated with Current Lesson Plans
- **July 2, 10:00am** Webinar: Canvas & Scheduler Training
  - **July 2, 10:00am Canvas & Scheduler Open**
  - **July 10, 11:00am Webinar: Required Curriculum, Part 1 (Time Blocks)**
  - **July 16, 11:00am Webinar: Required Curriculum, Part 2 (Threads)**
  - **July 17, 10:00am Webinar: Integrating Themes from *My Beloved World***
- **July 31, 11:00am Webinar: Pulling It All Together**
- **July 31, 5:00pm ESC Due (for those being paid through ESC)**
- **Aug 2, 5:00pm** Syllabus Due For New Instructors (3-day)
- **Aug 7, 12:00pm** Brown Bag: Follow Ups and Teaching Strategies
- **Aug 7, 5:00pm** Syllabus Due for Returning Instructor (3-day)
- **Aug 12, 5:00pm** Publish Canvas Course (3-day)
- **Aug 13, 12:30pm** Mandatory Training Lunch, TSC Ballroom
- **Aug 14, 5:00pm** Email a Welcome Message Students (3-day)
- **Aug 20, 10a-3p** Check-in for Students (2nd floor of TSC) (3-day)
- **Aug 21, 8:30am** Meet in the Spectrum for the 9:00am Welcome
- **Aug 21, 9a-4p** Connections Class (3-day)
- **Aug 22, 8:30am** Meet in the Spectrum for the 9:00am Convocations
- **Aug 22, 9a-4p** Connections Class (3-day)
- **Aug 22, 5:00pm** Last Day to Receive a refund (3-day)
- **Aug 23, 9a-4p** Connections Class (3-day)
- **Aug 23, 5:00pm** Last Day to Drop with W on Transcript (3-day)
- **Aug 23, 8:30pm** Meet in the Spectrum for the 9:00pm Luminary
- **Week of Sept 2** 1st Follow-Up Session (3-day)
- **Week of Sept 16** 2nd Follow-Up Session (3-day)
- **Week of Sept 30** Final Follow-Up Session (3-day)
- **Oct 7, 5:00pm** Submit Final Grades to Banner (3-day)
USU 1010 Connections Objectives

The Connections objectives have been framed as three Big Questions that students should be able to answer at the end of the course. Our intention is to help students become “intentional learners” who understand how to get the most out of their education and how to address challenges that may affect them as college students.

Big Question 1
Why am I here?
A. What is an educated person? How does an educated person contribute to his or her community?
B. What role does general education play in educating a person?
C. What role does the major play in educating a person?

Big Question 2
How do I best engage myself in the process of becoming an educated person?
A. What does an intentional student look like?
B. What competencies do I need to develop in order to succeed?
C. What resources are available to help me succeed?

Big Question 3
How do I become a fully engaged member of the university community?
A. What opportunities are there for me to have fun and to become more invested in the university community?
B. What is a learning community and how do I go about building one?
C. What are the benefits of a common literature experience?

Applying the Curriculum to the Big Questions
Everything taught and experienced during Connections must tie back to one or more of the Big Questions. By referencing assignments, workshops, and activities back to the big questions, we focus on the “whys” and “hows” of a university education. Every aspect of the course must support the Connections Objectives.

Supplemental Curriculum (70/30 Split)
You will be given a course schedule that includes your prescheduled workshops and meetings. The methods you use to teach the required curriculum topics are up to you. Instruction time is yours to design. In addition to the required curriculum topics (70%), you may spend up to 5 hours of your instruction time teaching additional lessons or doing activities that you feel will benefit your students (30%). Please be advised that these 5 hours must still tie back to the course objectives.
Rubric for Curriculum Topics and Workshops

Within Scheduler, you will find the following rubric. As you add your supplemental materials, you will need to place a checkmark to indicate which Big Questions you will be addressing with your supplemental lesson plans. This can be a valuable tool as you are planning your course. It will help you stay focused on the course objectives.

### Required Curriculum Topics

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<td>Resilience &amp; Overcoming Challenges</td>
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<td>Cultivating Habits of Mind</td>
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<td>Becoming a Learner &amp; the Purpose of a College Education</td>
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### Required Curriculum “Threads”

In addition to the blocks of curriculum and workshops shown above, there are certain topics for you to cover throughout the course. You will find more information about ways to do this on page 28 and also by tuning in to the Webinar: Required Curriculum, Part 2 (Threads) on July 16 at 11:00am. The following rubric will help you better understand how these threaded topics relate to the Big Questions.

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### Notes:


Common Course Syllabus
All sections of USU 1010: University Connections have a common syllabus. Each instructor will need to add their own contact information, etc. to the syllabus. Instructors are also free to add or customize information such as late work policies, participation policies, due dates, etc. The syllabus outlines the Big Questions and then refers to them throughout so that students can clearly see the correlation of the objectives to everything in the course (including the Honor Pledge, etc.) The next section contains the syllabus. It will also be pre-loaded into your Canvas section.

Connections Course Syllabus
Course Dates
- Pre-semester session: August 21-23
- Follow-up sessions: Weeks 2, 4, 6 of the Semester
- Coursework completed by: October 4
- Grades due: October 7

Required Texts (all provided to you at training)
- 2019 Common Literature Selection: My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor (students purchase this)
- USU General Catalog (online at http://catalog.usu.edu)
- Aggie Blue Book (given at Aggie Orientation)
- Becoming a Learner by Dr. Matthew Sanders (given at Aggie Orientation)

Course Fee
$50.00 (paid as part of course registration) – The fee provides students with convocation speakers, class and evening activities, refreshments, supplies, and a t-shirt.

Connections Objectives
Throughout the Connections course, students need to think about why they are engaging in the college experience. The objective is that by the end of the course, students can comfortably answer all three of the Big Questions below and have a better understanding of the university and their place within it. Each activity, assignment, workshop, and discussion at Connections is designed to help answer one of the three Big Questions. It is the instructor’s responsibility to guide students to understand how each assignment helps answer the following questions:

**Big Question 1: Why am I here?**
A. What is an educated person? How does an educated person contribute to his or her community?
B. What role does general education play in educating a person?
C. What role does the major play in educating a person?

**Big Question 2: How do I best engage myself in the process of becoming an educated person?**
A. What does an intentional student look like?
B. What competencies do I need to develop in order to succeed?
C. What resources are available to help me succeed?

**Big Question 3: How do I become a fully engaged member of the university community?**
A. What opportunities are there for me to have fun and to become more invested in the university community? (clubs and organizations)
B. What is a learning community, and how do I go about building one?
C. What are the benefits of a common literature experience?
Connections Assignments
All classes have a common syllabus and assignments. With over 90 different Connections sections, there are a variety of teaching styles and personalities among the faculty. The curriculum allows for a degree of instructor creativity to make each section unique. However, all Connections sections must include the following assignments, workshops, and discussions:

Honor Pledge
Upon admission to the University, students agree to abide by the Utah State University Honor System by signing the Honor Pledge, which reads: “I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity.” A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. He or she espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community (Big Questions 1A, 2A).

Classroom Civility
Civil discourse is a core value of the university because the university is meant to be a place where students confront a wide range of ideas and opinions. Confronting a wide range of opinions is essential to the task of learning how to think, for no one learns how to think well if they do not seriously engage opposing ideas and counter-arguments. In addition, confronting a wide range of ideas increases both self-understanding and understanding of others.

Having ideas challenged can, at times, be an uncomfortable thing for students. Students should embrace this but see in it also the importance of civil discourse. Civil discourse is intellectual engagement shaped by mutual respect. This atmosphere of respect is required for there to be any intellectual engagement or growth at all. For this reason, students need to remember that the university is a battleground of ideas, not a battle between persons. So, when students express themselves or disagree with someone else, they should avoid offensive language or personal attacks. Always keep the focus on the content of the ideas rather than the person making them.

Students have a right to a learning environment that is free of harassment and unlawful discrimination. If any classroom or learning venue is failing to live up to this standard, students should immediately contact the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs by phone at (435) 797-3731 or suzanne.thorpe@usu.edu. Students should learn their rights by visiting: https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/index (Big Questions 1A, 2A, 3B).

Grading Scale
Connections is a graded course worth two credits. The following is the grading scale used by all sections:

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<td>A-</td>
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<td>86-89.9</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>83-85.9</td>
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<td>330-349</td>
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<td>63-65.9</td>
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Accommodations
Students with documented physical, sensory, emotional, or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435) 797-2444 voice, (435) 797-0740 TTY, (435) 797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the course as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print, or digital) are available with advance notice (Big Questions 2C, 3B).

Attendance
Class sessions will start promptly and students are expected to participate during the entire class period. Early departure, as well as anticipated absences, will only be excused in cases of extenuating circumstances. Please, as a courtesy to all, turn off all cell phones before coming to class except in cases where cell phones are used in activities and/or instruction. If you have a situation requiring an adjustment to this policy, please discuss this with your instructor (Big Questions 1A, 2A).

Participation
Students will frequently ask: “Do I need to attend the entire class?” The answer is simply, “yes.” Much of your learning will occur as a result of your attendance and participation, and your grade is dependent upon it as well. Class participation includes asking appropriate questions and sharing comments with the class, bringing materials for in-class work, and attending the lectures (Big Questions 1A, 2A, 3B).

Late Work Policy
Missed class activities and assignments may only be made up in extremely extenuating circumstances at the discretion of your instructor. Late assignments are only accepted under unusual circumstances and your grade is reduced for each day your assignment is late (Big Questions 1A, 2A).

Course Evaluation
At the end of this course, students will complete a course evaluation. The Connections evaluation is slightly different than the evaluations students complete in other courses at USU. In most courses, students will complete something called IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction (IDEA Evaluations). Students will be expected to complete an evaluation for each of their classes, and in each class the instructor will explain how their selected IDEA “learning objectives” link to the course activities and objectives being pursued.

The feedback received through these evaluations is a critical aspect of refining the curriculum. They also inform decisions made by students, faculty, and administrators:

- IDEA evaluation results are available to all students who participate in the process: http://www.usu.edu/aaa/evaluations_all.cfm.
- IDEA evaluations are used by faculty members to improve their courses. There are many examples where instructors have changed materials, changed course structure and delivery, or changed student instruction as a direct result of IDEA evaluation results.
- IDEA evaluations are used by departments and colleges to make strategic choices about course offerings and content.
- IDEA evaluations are used to inform decisions about faculty hiring, promotion and merit.

End of Common Syllabus
Required Curriculum

The next section contains objectives and descriptions for each of the 7 required curriculum topics, 4 required workshops, and 4 required curriculum threads. Where applicable, the assignment is also outlined. These descriptions are organized to help instructors intentionally link the materials to the overall objectives of the course. Beginning June 1, lesson plans, materials, resources, and additional instructional ideas can be found on the instructor resource page at www.usu.edu/connections/instructors.

Faculty Responsibilities to Meet Objectives

It is the responsibility of each instructor to meet the objectives of the course. Assessment has shown a significant impact to student success when the instructor is deliberate and intentional in teaching the Big Questions and in drawing the attention of the students to the “why” of each lesson, discussion, and assignment. It is vital that there is equity across all sections in the attention given to the objectives.

Instructor Authenticity, Modeling, and Mentoring

Instructors who are authentic in their teaching of the objectives are the most impactful. Students respond well to hearing of your own journey to becoming a life-long learner, even if that includes some failures. It is also imperative that you model the habits, attitudes, and values of an intentional learner. Students will learn a great deal (for good or bad) through observing you, their first college instructor. As such, you should consider yourself a mentor to your students.

Make a Connection

Added to several of the descriptions are recommended ways to integrate the two required texts: Becoming a Learner and My Beloved World. These are not mandatory discussions but rather suggestions to help students make the connection between what they have read and what they are learning.

Teaching Blocks

There are seven required curriculum topics for which you will schedule blocks of time in Scheduler. While it is expected that you will spend at least the minimum amount of time on that topic, it is also expected that you will teach the curriculum in an integrated manner. That means referring back to past topics and showing the relationship between all topics in helping students to develop into educated persons.

The seven curriculum blocks include:
1. Common Literature Discussion – 30 minutes
2. Resilience & Overcoming Challenges – 45 minutes
3. Building a Learning Community – 60 minutes
4. Cultivating Habits of Mind – 60 minutes
5. Time Management – two 30 minute blocks
6. Designing Your Education – 45 minutes
7. Becoming a Learner & the Purpose of a College Education – 30 minutes

Lesson plans for each of these topics will be available beginning July 2. See: http://www.usu.edu/connections/instructors/resources/index

These lesson plans are suggestions only. You have the freedom to teach the curriculum in your own way as long as you are meeting the stated objectives. Tune in to the Webinar: Required Curriculum, Part 1 (Time Blocks) on July 10 at 11:00am for more information.
Common Literature Discussion

Objective
You will discuss *My Beloved World* with your students and help them explore the connection between the book and their own education. Use this common experience to help them connect with their peers. In addition, help orient students to college-level expectations with respect to reading comprehension, critical thinking, and writing. Although you should plan to use examples from the book throughout your course (a thread), you should also plan to spend a minimum of 30 minutes specifically devoted to the book either in preparation or reflection of the Convocation on Thursday morning.

Description
This lesson contains four parts:

1. **Common Literature Reading:** Over the summer students will read *My Beloved World* and *Becoming a Learner*.

2. **Common Literature Assignment:** Students will engage in an online discussion about *My Beloved World* and *Becoming a Learner*. This discussion will take place in Canvas and must be completed prior to the first day of class for 3-day sections and as determined by instructors for 7-week and 15-week sections.

   Students will be asked to select, and respond to, two of the following prompts for their online discussion:
   
   - What is an educated person and how does Sonia Sotomayor fit your definition? Share at least one point from *Becoming a Learner* to support your ideas. Discuss at least two examples of how she was intentional in engaging with mentors, peers, and scholarship to further define herself as an educated person?
   
   - Sotomayor referred back to the broad education and skills she gained through involvement with the Forensics Club. Provide at least three examples of how Sotomayor used the lessons learned in the Forensics Club in her later education and career. Select at least one quote from *Becoming a Learner* that speaks to the importance of engaging in a strong learning community.
   
   - Provide at least three examples of the learning communities Sotomayor was part of in her story and explain how they helped her, then discuss the importance of a learning community for those who seek to become lifelong learners. Select at least one point from *Becoming a Learner* to support your position.
   
   - Sotomayor experienced some challenges in her life. Identify a least three low points for her and discuss the characteristics, attitudes, and people that helped her be resilient in the face of these difficulties. Provide at least one quote from *Becoming a Learner* to support your position.

3. **Common Literature Integration:** Throughout the course, you will refer back to *My Beloved World* and *Becoming a Learner* and draw from them as you discuss the curriculum of the course.

4. **Convocation:** on Thursday morning, all 3-day and fall 15-week sections will participate in the Common Literature Convocation. In preparation for this, you may want to discuss with the class what questions they hope the speaker addresses. Conversely, you may want to have a class discussion after the Convocation.

**Instructional Time:** 30 minutes  
**Required Assignment:** YES  
**Points:** 50  

**Relationship to Big Questions:**

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<tr>
<th>Common Literature Discussion</th>
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Resilience and Overcoming Challenges

Objective
To have students reflect on the attitudes, people, skills, and resources they have utilized in both the trials and triumphs in their lives, to recognize their own resilience in overcoming difficulties, and to acknowledge the role personal responsibility plays in resilience and success. Students will also look forward and identify challenges that they may personally expect to face at some point in their college career and then identify the resources available at USU and within their personal support network to assist in meeting each specific challenge.

Description:
1. Resilience Activity: Each student will complete the timeline activity (in class or as homework and then bring to class). Guide students through a discussion of the timeline activity. This could be done in smaller groups or with the entire class. Use examples from your own life to illustrate the importance of not giving up when challenges occur.

![Timeline Activity Image]

2. Overcoming Challenges Assignment: Students will complete the Overcoming Challenges Assignment in Canvas.

Make a Connection:
Prompt students to consider the following:
1. Read the sections; “Character” pp. 15-16, “Learners are Courageous” pp. 41-42, and “Learning Requires Humility” pp. 43-44 in Becoming A Learner. Discuss with a roommate, parent, or friend how becoming more resilient impacts character and vice versa.
2. Consider creating a lifeline for Sonia Sotomayor using the events in My Beloved World.

Instructional Time: 45-90 minutes
Required Assignment: YES
Points: 50

Relationship to Big Questions:
Resilience & Overcoming Challenges

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Building a Learning Community

Objective
You will help students learn the importance of and strategies for building learning communities to help them make the most out of their time at USU. This includes working with professors; forming study groups; abiding by the standards of academic honesty and classroom civility; being prepared, awake, and attentive during class; and completing course IDEA evaluations.

Description
This lesson contains four parts:

1. **Learning Community Class Discussion**: Consider sharing your own experiences forming and participating in learning communities including study groups, academic research communities, informal learning communities, etc. Also, explain that Orientation Modules have been designed to assist students to transition into the USU learning community. Completing all five modules is an important aspect of becoming part of the learning community.

2. **IDEA Evaluations**: Educate your students on the purpose of IDEA evaluations and why participating in them makes them a contributing member of the USU learning community.

3. **Faculty Discussion**: Invite 1-3 faculty* into your classroom to answer questions and help students learn about how to engage faculty through email, office hours, during and after class, and by phone. Impress upon students that the faculty are a significant part of their learning community. (*if you are a faculty member, you may want to invite 1-2 additional faculty. If you are professional staff, please invite 2-3 faculty members. If you need assistance identifying willing faculty, please contact Heidi.)

4. **Campus Involvement**: Invite your peer mentor to explain Day on the Quad and the role campus involvement plays in building a learning community. Your peer mentor will also guide students through a discussion about the Aggie Passport program and then distribute the Aggie Passports.

**Instructional Time**: 60 minutes
**Required Assignments**: Yes
**Points**: Completion of Orientation Modules: 25 points  
Day on the Quad and Connecting to Campus Assignment: 25 points  
Course Evaluation: 10 points

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**Cultivating Habits of Mind**

**Objective**
During this assignment, students will learn about the important lifelong benefits of cultivating certain habits of mind while in college. The exercise uses learning practices of annotation, note taking, classroom discussion, and reflection to present habits of mind. Students will reflect on how developing these habits during their time at USU will benefit them throughout their life.

**Description**
In preparation for **Part 1**, students will be directed to read an essay, “Cultivating Habits of Mind.” You will lead a discussion about the essay and how college-level assessment (exams, etc.) may differ from assessments students have experienced in the past.

For at least two weeks prior to **Part 2**, students will practice the skills discussed and taught. You will then lead a discussion on how engaging in these practices will create habits of mind that have portable value to professional, civic, and personal life beyond college.

Reference the citizen-scholar page in the General Catalog and discuss how the direct objectives of the USU degree are met by cultivating the habits of mind you have been discussing.

**Make a Connection:**
Prompt students to consider the following:

1. After reading chapter 4: “Principles of Learning” in *Becoming A Learner*, discuss with a classmate how taking responsibility for your own learning is an important habit of mind.

2. What habits of mind did Sonia Sotomayor develop through her involvement with the Forensics (debate) Team? How did she rely on those habits throughout her higher education and career?

**Instructional Time:** 60 minutes (two 30-minute segments)

**Required Assignments:** YES

**Points:** Part 1: 25 points
Part 2: 40 points

**Relationship to Big Questions:**

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Time Management

Objective
You will help students practice time management skills and organizational techniques to help them successfully transition to the college academic environment. They will log and reflect on their use of time in order to manage and achieve their academic, social, and personal goals. (This can be assessed by PM.) You may want to make a connection between this assignment and Habits of Mind. You could point out that quality time management is a habit that will benefit individuals well beyond their college years.

Description
This lesson contains three parts.
1. For **Part 1**, you will show students a brief video emphasizing the importance of self-management in regards to planning and use of time. You will introduce students to the principles and skills of good time management.
2. In preparation for **Part 2**, students will estimate the number of hours needed to study outside of class for each course they are taking and create an "ideal" schedule outlining how they will spend their time during fall semester—class time, study time, work, sleep, extracurricular commitments, socializing, relaxing, and exercising. They will then plan their schedule and calendar all major quizzes, exams, and assignments for the semester. They will also reflect on the effectiveness and feasibility of their proposed schedules.
3. For **Part 2**, you will use time in a follow-up meeting to discuss the time management challenges students have experienced during the semester, what is keeping them from adhering to their ideal schedule, and what they plan to do to better manage their time?

**Instructional Time:** 60 minutes (two 30-minute segments)
**Required Assignment:** YES
**Points:** 50

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Designing Your Education

Objective
Students will learn the three distinct parts of the degree and see how the three parts are related.

Students will be exposed to the theories and tools that can help them more effectively and intentionally chart their course of study while at USU. They will be shown the Degree Works website, a tool to help them intentionally choose and plan which classes they desire and need.

Description
1. The Philosophy: Show students the three parts of the degree: general education, depth, and major courses. Guide a discussion about intentionally choosing courses that will help them find and complete a suitable degree. Emphasize the importance of starting now by exploring different degrees through general education courses. There is a video: Designing Your Education, about the parts of the degree, available to be assigned as homework or to view in class.

2. The Tool: Degree Works is the official degree audit system at USU. Students will be shown how to use this tool to plan and track their degree requirements. A 15-minute workshop can be scheduled with an Advisor who will lead the class through the tool and answer their questions about creating their own academic plan. See the Instructor Scheduling Page.

3. The Assignment: Students are required to complete and submit a one-semester plan in Degree Works. Completion of this assignment will be automatically graded in Canvas. The instructor does not need to assess or look at the plan. This assignment is worth 25 points.

Instructional Time: 45 minutes
Required Assignment: Yes
Points: 25

Make a Connection:
Prompt students to consider the following:
1. After reading chapter 5: “An Invitation” in Becoming A Learner, think about how your approach to designing your education will reflect your commitment to be a lifelong learner.
2. In what ways did Sonia Sotomayor design her own education? What was the role of general education in preparing her to become a lawyer and judge?

Relationship to Big Questions:

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Becoming a Learner and the Purpose of a College Education

Objective
You will expose students to the purpose and benefits of a college education as well as introduce them to the structure of a USU education. Have students explain the “why” of a college education and define/explain the parts of a university degree (general education, depth education, major courses).

Description
1. Understanding the “Why” of a College Education Discussion: Lead the class through a discussion of the Becoming a Learner text. Help the students see that becoming a LEARNER leads to also becoming an EARNER. You may want to draw their attention to the chart below outlining the learning priorities of executives and hiring managers. In addition to these purposes and benefits of a college degree, pay special attention to non-vocational benefits. Focus on the process of becoming a learner rather than being a graduate. Also share the Citizen Scholar objectives found in the USU Catalog.
   
2. If needed, refer back to the Designing Your Education video.

3. Purpose of a College Education Assignment: This should be used as the final for the course. Direct students to Canvas for the assignment prompt. They will submit their papers on Canvas. Educate students about Turnitin and let them know you will be using it to detect any plagiarism. This is a good opportunity to point out and review the Honor Pledge and principles of academic integrity.

Instructional Time: 60 minutes
Required Assignment: YES
Points: 100

Relationship to Big Questions:

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<th>Becoming a Learner &amp; the Purpose of College Education</th>
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Assignment Prompts

1. Why are you here? On page 49 of Becoming a Learner, Dr. Sanders invites you to “carefully consider the ideas I have presented and begin to create your own philosophy of learning, outlining the specific ways you will strive to become a learner. Doing so will help you make sense of higher education’s many opportunities and challenges.” Using his questions (on page 49) as a guide, please explain your own understanding of the “why” or purpose of a college education. Include at least three reasons why you are enrolled in higher education classes.

2. A university degree is composed of general education, depth education, and major courses. Define each of these three parts. Why is a university education structured in this way? Where are you on the path toward becoming a learner and how do these three parts of the degree help you as you become a learner? USU’s Citizen Scholar objectives in the General Catalog is a good resource for completion of this assignment.

Learning Priorities of Hiring Managers, 2018

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<td>Critical thinking/analytical reasoning</td>
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<td>Ethical judgment and decision-making</td>
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<td>Able to work effectively in teams</td>
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<td>Able to communicate effectively in writing</td>
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<td>Can apply knowledge/skills to real-world settings</td>
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Communication and Conflict Resolution Workshop

Objective
Accompany your students to your workshop location to learn more about the importance of communication and conflict resolution. Students are exposed to key skills and concepts in resolving conflicts in a variety of relationships: family, roommates, friends, and instructors.

Description:
Communication Workshop: Accompany your students to the workshop and participate as invited by the workshop presenters.

Workshop Presenters: Clair Canfield and Matthew Sanders from the Communications Studies Department

Workshop Time: 60 minutes
Required Assignment: NO

Relationship to Big Questions: 1A 1B 1C 2A 2B 2C 3A 3B 3C
Communication & Conflict Resolution

Designing Your Life Workshop

Objective
Students will be exposed to the concept that a life design is more than career planning, and that students can anticipate and prepare for inevitable changes to their life plan.

Description
This objective will be accomplished through a required workshop:
In this compelling 45-minute workshop, Career Services personnel debunk some myths about academic major choice and career/life planning. You and your students will practice using five design mindsets by: being curious, prototyping, reframing setbacks, expanding awareness, and building a support network. Based on a course offered at Stanford, these design mindsets, as used in career/life planning, are proven to help students design a life that works for them at each stage of their career.
Source: Designing Your Life, How to Build a Well-Lived, Joyful Life, Bill Burnett & Dave Evans

Workshop Presenters: Donna Crow and Career Services Professionals

Workshop Time: 45 minutes
Required Assignment: NO

Make a Connection:
1. Read the first paragraph in chapter 2 of Becoming a Learner. In what way does designing your life influence the way you approach your education?
2. In My Beloved World, how did Sonia Sotomayor design her life? How did her life design impact the decisions she made throughout her education and beyond? In what ways did she have to adjust and adapt her life design?

Relationship to Big Questions: 1A 1B 1C 2A 2B 2C 3A 3B 3C
Designing Your Life

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The Culture of Inclusion and Upstanding Workshop

Objective
Accompany your students to your pre-scheduled workshop location to learn more about USU’s culture of inclusion and how to be an Upstander on campus. Students will be exposed to concepts and skills to help them better navigate the educational environment and effectively engage with people from a variety of backgrounds different from their own.

Description
Accompany your students to the Culture of Inclusion and Upstanding workshop and participate as invited by the workshop presenters. Peer mentors will facilitate a follow-up session in class.

Workshop Presenters: Jennifer Grewe – Psychology and Jason Gilmore – Global Communication

Workshop Time: 45 minutes
Class Time: Peer mentors will lead a 30 minute in-class follow up session in which students will discuss various scenarios and practice Upstanding.

Relationship to Big Questions: 1A 1B 1C 2A 2B 2C 3A 3B 3C
The Culture of Inclusion & Upstanding

Campus Technology Lab Time

Objective
Help students understand campus technologies such as Canvas, the student portal, Banner, WiFi, print management, and so forth. Students will also learn about the resources offered through the open-access computer labs.

Description
Instructors have some latitude as to how they teach about campus technologies. Peer mentors will receive a list of technologies that their students need to know how to use. Instructors and mentors can then decide how and when to teach these. Some mentors will take a few minutes each day to introduce one or two things in the classroom, and some may elect to teach them all together in a computer lab. Each instructor should schedule time in one of the open-access computer labs. The class needs to stop by the lab during that time to receive a 15-minute presentation about the resources offered in the open-access computer labs, but after that the class is not required to stay in the lab. Instructors can use, or not use, the lab time at their discretion.

Note: Computer lab time is not automatically added to your schedule. You will need to use the Google Doc on the Instructor Scheduling page to book lab time. You can schedule between 15-90 minutes.

Instructional Time: 15-90 minutes
Required Assignment: NO, however, you may choose to combine this with the Designing Your Education assignment and allow students to complete their Degree Works assignment while in the lab.

Relationship to Big Questions: 1A 1B 1C 2A 2B 2C 3A 3B 3C
Campus Technology


Curriculum Threads

There are four topics that should be integrated into the curriculum but which do not have specific blocks of time devoted to them. These threads are:
1. College Writing
2. Student Resources
3. Connecting to Campus
4. Library Resources

If you would like to devote a block of time to any one of these topics, you should select “New Supplemental Activity” within Scheduler. For instance, if you want to do the Student Resources Jeopardy game, you would select “New Supplemental Activity” and rename it “Student Resources Jeopardy.”

While you will not be specifically accountable in Scheduler for the following threads, your students will evaluate how well they learned these themes so it is important that you teach them. Tune in to the Webinar: Required Curriculum, Part 2 (Threads) on July 16 at 11:00am for more information.

College Writing Thread

Objective
You will help students understand the necessity of college writing skills and help them identify ways to improve upon their individual skills.

Description
Find opportunities to lead your class through a discussion highlighting the importance of having good writing skills throughout college. Reinforce college writing and reading comprehension expectations.

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Student Resources Thread

Objective
You will help orient students to USU campus resources and discuss the need to use resources when challenges arise.

Description
These themes should be integrated into the rest of your curriculum. You may also choose to utilize one of the activities such as Jeopardy, Kahoot, or a campus scavenger hunt to reinforce these concepts. You can ask your peer mentor to help arrange and lead these activities.

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Connecting to Campus Thread

Objective
Help students recognize the importance of student involvement in co- and extra-curricular activities. Data shows that students who engage and connect with the university on multiple levels are much more likely to persist and be successful. These are also important opportunities to network, learn skills, and build resumes.

Description
Consider sharing your own experiences with co- and extra-curricular activities during your undergraduate education. Weave these ideas into conversations about Designing Your Education, Designing Your Life, the Purpose of a College Education, etc.

Make a Connection:
What role did co- and extra-curricular activities play in the education of Sonia Sotomayor? What are some of the movements, clubs, service organizations that she participated in? How did those involvements and experiences help her as she moved on to her career and post-college life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to Big Questions:</th>
<th>1A</th>
<th>1B</th>
<th>1C</th>
<th>2A</th>
<th>2B</th>
<th>2C</th>
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Library Resources Thread

Objective
Help students understand that the library and the librarians have a wealth of resources that are available to all students. Students will gain a level of comfort with library resources and in their ability to access those resources.

Description
You can schedule a supplemental workshop by the librarians. Weave information about the library and the librarians into discussions such as:

- Building a Learning Community: There are librarians specializing in every major. Find them here: https://library.usu.edu/librarians/. Also, show students how to schedule library study rooms as part of your discussion about study groups.
- Cultivating Habits of Mind: mention that librarians can help with these skills.
- Include the library if you are doing a campus scavenger hunt.

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<tr>
<th>Relationship to Big Questions:</th>
<th>1A</th>
<th>1B</th>
<th>1C</th>
<th>2A</th>
<th>2B</th>
<th>2C</th>
<th>3A</th>
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Supplemental Curriculum
Instructors often have additional topics they feel are important for incoming students to learn, or activities that they want to include in their section. Instructors have up to five hours of class time to cover whatever they feel is important for their students to make a good transition to Utah State. Some suggestions are listed below, but instructors are free to be creative with this time. Each supplemental curriculum item should be tied back to the Big Questions on the overall schedule and syllabus so the students understand how the time is relevant to the course.

Supplemental Workshops (you may select up to three supplemental workshops)
Several on-campus departments have offered to provide 30-minute workshops during Connections. In order to ensure students get enough face time with their instructor, each instructor can schedule up to three supplemental workshops. Supplemental workshops can be scheduled through the Schedule Builder. Descriptions for the workshops will be available on the Connections webpage. The topics for these workshops include:

- Healthy Eating 101
- Health and Wellness
- Parking and Transportation
- USU Police
- Sustainability
- Study Abroad
- Undergraduate Research
- NEHMA Art Museum
- Testing Center Tour and Practice Test
- Using the Library
- Paying for College

Team Building and Activities
Students love to get out of the classroom to get to know their classmates better and to become more familiar with campus or the local community. Many instructors choose to give students an orientation to the local recreation opportunities, or to have them further explore campus or Logan with a scavenger hunt. Past instructors are a great resource for ideas. Some previously successful activities include:

- Hiking
- First Dam Activities: Including Canoeing (schedule First Dam activites on the scheduling website at www.usu.edu/connections/instructors)
- Campus Scavenger Hunt
- CVTD Logan Scavenger Hunt
- Student Panel (peer mentor can set this up)
- Willow Park Zoo
- Area Parks Scavenger Hunt
- USU Geology Museum
- USU Sculpture Walking Tour or Scavenger Hunt
- USU Challenge Course (scheduled in Scheduler, there is a $5 per person cost)
- Volley Ball
Course Planning Resources

www.usu.edu/connections/instructors

At this site you will find:
The Instructor Resource Page lists each curriculum topic with links for resources, ideas, and teaching methods. The Webex links will be posted here as well.
The Instructor Scheduling Page is where you will find scheduling calendars, supplemental workshop descriptions, and logistical information.

Optional Webex Discussions
You are encouraged to tune in to these discussions. Many of our most successful Connections instructors have found these opportunities to learn and share to be very valuable. They will include:
- Canvas & Scheduler Training – July 2, 10:00am
- Required Curriculum, Part 1 – July 10, 11:00am
- Required Curriculum, Part 2 – July 16, 11:00am
- Integrating Themes from *My Beloved World* – July 17, 10:00am
- Pulling It All Together – July 31, 11:00am

Optional Brown Bag Discussions
You are encouraged to attend as many of these brown bags as you are able. Bring your lunch and join in the following informative discussions:
- Student Communication – May 15, 12:00pm
- Integrating the Library into the Curriculum – May 21, 12:00pm
- Working with the Peer Mentor – May 29, 12:00pm
- Learning Activities – June 10, 12:00pm
- Supplemental Workshops – June 24, 12:00pm
- Follow Ups and Teaching Strategies – Aug 7, 12:00pm

Instructor Mentor
New instructors will be assigned an instructor mentor, someone who has successfully taught the course previously.

Canvas Training
Your Canvas section will be pre-populated with the standard Connections curriculum. In addition to the Webex training, a tutorial will be posted to the website. You can also schedule an individual appointment with CIDI if you need further assistance: https://cidi.usu.edu/directory/index.

Videos
The Connections curriculum relies on several instructional videos designed to supplement the assignments and facilitate class discussion. Videos are listed with their associated curriculum topic at http://www.usu.edu/connections/instructors/resources, and are linked at http://www.usu.edu/connections/instructors/videos for easy in-class viewing.
Notes:

Aggie Blue Book
Each incoming student is given an *Aggie Blue Book*, this booklet contains information about the following:

- Preparing to attend Utah State
- Student resources
- Parking and shuttle information
- Academic policy information
- Semester dates and deadlines
- Important history and traditions of USU

Students are told to take their *Aggie Blue Book* to class, so feel free to reference it throughout your course. You will be given a copy of the *Aggie Blue Book* at the August Training.

General Catalog
The USU General Catalog is available online at catalog.usu.edu. The online catalog contains course descriptions, program requirements, calendars, and information about policies and procedures of the university.

THRIVE Website
A website devoted to student success, persistence, and degree completion, thrive.usu.edu has many resources available for students, faculty, and parents. You should introduce your students to this resource. You may also want to use one of the many video clips (1-3 minutes each) available on topics such as resilience, budgeting, and student engagement. See the media library at thrive.usu.edu/media-library.

Empowering Teaching Excellence Conference
**Wednesday, August 14, 2019, 9am - 4pm, Taggart Student Center**
This event will energize and inspire you as you begin the next teaching year. Presentations are faculty submitted, faculty led, and focused on teaching innovations that have worked well right here at USU. Topics and presenters span multiple disciplines and delivery formats. Invitees include all who teach USU 1010. Here are some things you can expect:

- Opportunities to network with other USU teachers.
- A chance to formally share your teaching ideas and innovations with others.
- Insightful breakout sessions.
- Showcase examples of well-built instructional products.
- Staff on hand to help you with questions about Canvas and other tools.
- Updates on the latest improvements in educational technologies.
- A free lunch!

For more information and registration see: https://empowerteaching.usu.edu/conference.
Course-Planning Logistics

Meeting Your Class for the First Time
All 3-day and Fall 15-week sections will meet in the Spectrum for the Welcome Meeting on Wednesday, Aug 21 at 9:00am. You are asked to be in the Spectrum by 8:30am. Many students are anxious and therefore arrive early. It is important that you are there to greet them. Many successful instructors have found this is a good time to be prepared with some get-to-know-you activities. You can ask your Peer Mentor to help with this.

Food
Many new students forget to think about bringing snacks or arranging to have food for lunch. They are excited and nervous about their first college experience and may forget this basic “adulting” necessity. You may want to use some of your budget to provide some snacks. You may also want to remind them to be well hydrated and fed because Connections classes keep a steady pace and they’ll need to be at their optimal energy level.

Lunch
Lunch is scheduled for all Connections sections from 12:00-1:00 p.m., with the exception of a few workshops scheduled at noon. Lunch times can be shifted according to what works best for your curriculum. You should plan on using some of your class budget to provide lunch for class on one day. You will use your own P-card or you may check out a P-card from Peggy Brown. There will not be any open purchase orders. Several local vendors have agreed to offer special pricing for Connections instructors. A list of these vendors will be provided in August.

Workshops
Your required workshops will be pre-planned for you in Scheduler. You cannot shift these. It is very important that you and your class arrive 5 minutes early to your workshops so that students are seated and ready to learn at the start time for your workshop.

Aggie Ice Cream
All classes will have the opportunity to get Aggie Ice Cream. USU staff and administrators will be scooping ice cream on the grassy area east of the library. We are calling this area the library Quad. You will select a time for your class to get ice cream (this will be done in the Scheduler). When you arrive at the Library Quad, you and your students will see large signs describing the flavor options. Once they have decided which flavor they want, they will get in the appropriate line. It is helpful if you pre-designate a place (away from the line entrances) for gathering after they each get their ice cream. Encourage your students to mingle and visit with other classes as they wait in line. You may want to help them think of things they can discuss (“what did you think of Taste of Logan?” or “what was your favorite part of the book?” etc.).

Evening Activities
Although you are invited to attend, instructors are not required to attend evening activities, with the exception of the Luminary on Friday night. Regardless of whether you choose to attend, please encourage your students to get engaged early by attending these activities. As you plan your homework load for each night, please consider the schedule of activities. Evening activities typically have included:

- Wednesday: Aggie First Scholars Welcome and Taste of Logan
- Thursday: College Activities and a Magician/Comedian
- Friday: Luminary and ARC After Dark

You and the students will be given a calendar with all activity dates, times, and locations.
Assignment Due Dates

One of the most difficult aspects of planning this course is finding the right balance for the due dates of assignments. Effective instructors tend to place a heavier load during August 21–23. Some assignments should be introduced early but require students to spend some time practicing new skills (e.g. Time Management). The following are suggested due dates for the Connections assignments. You can change these due dates to match your individual course needs and preferences.

Common Literature Discussion (on Canvas) ............................................................................................... August 21*
Resilience and Overcoming Challenges ................................................................................................. August 21-23
Designing Your Education .......................................................................................................................... August 21-23
Cultivating Habits of Mind Part 1 ............................................................................................................... August 21-23
Connecting to Campus .............................................................................................................................. Follow Up 1
Cultivating Habits of Mind Part 2 ............................................................................................................... Follow Up 1
Time Management .......................................................................................................................................... Follow Up 2
Orientation Module 5* ..................................................................................................................................... October 4
Becoming a Learner & the Purpose of a College Education (Final Paper) .................................................. October 4
Course Evaluation ............................................................................................................................................... October 4

*All pre-semester Connections students are told to complete the literature discussion in Canvas by August 21.
**Module 5 is not available until September 3.

Point Distribution and Grading Scale

Connections is a graded course worth two credits. The point distribution and grading scale that is used by all instructors is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homework Assignments</th>
<th>Pts:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resilience/Overcoming Challenges</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating Habits of Mind 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building a Learning Community</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designing Your Education</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of a College Education Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Lit Canvas Discussion</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Course</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>465–500</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92.9</td>
<td>450–464</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-89.9</td>
<td>430–449</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-85.9</td>
<td>415–430</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82.9</td>
<td>400–414</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-79.9</td>
<td>380–399</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-75.9</td>
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<td>70-72.9</td>
<td>350–364</td>
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<td>66-69.9</td>
<td>330–349</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-65.9</td>
<td>315–329</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-63</td>
<td>0–14</td>
<td>F</td>
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Assigning Participation Points

Students earn 100 points for attendance and participation. These points allow instructors to include additional in-class or out-of-class point-carrying assignments and activities that meet the course objectives.

There are a variety of activities and assignments instructors can use to assign points. The following is a list of common ways to utilize the 100 points:

- Attendance
- Timely attendance
- Individual meeting with instructor
- In-class quizzes
- In-class group project
- Campus scavenger hunt
- In-class writings/reflections
- Create questions for the faculty discussion
- E-Portfolio entries
- Student resources game/activity
Early-Alert/Outreach

Data and experience show that students who get below a B in USU 1010 are likely to struggle in college. It is important that we identify struggling students early so that appropriate interventions and outreach can be put into play. After grades have been submitted, students who earned below a B will be invited to meet with the Director of Student Retention & Completion. However, you may complete the Early Alert form at any time. The form is found in ServiceNow or can be accessed through thrive.usu.edu.

Follow Up Contacts

In order to assist your students to persist toward success, we ask you to reach out to your students throughout the first semester and into the second semester. Outreach may include:

- Checking in to see how they are doing.
- Reminding them to apply for FAFSA for the following academic year (October 1).
- Encouraging them to utilize academic resources such as: Supplemental Instruction, Math Tutoring, Writing Center, etc.
- Encouragement during mid-terms and/or finals.
- Reminding them to get to know their professors and to utilize office hours to visit with their professors.
- Suggesting they meet with their academic advisor in September or October in order to prepare for priority registration in November.
- Asking them if they have any concerns or questions that have come up since the last follow up (and then providing a referral when appropriate – if you are unsure where to refer students, please ask Heidi).
- Encouraging them to attend a variety of campus events and to get involved in extra- and co-curricular activities.
- Reminding them to apply for scholarships in January. This should be done at scholarships.usu.edu.
- Suggesting they meet with their academic advisor in February or March in order to prepare for priority registration (for fall) in April.
- Reminding them to get registered for fall semester before they leave campus for the summer.
Reporting a Student of Concern, or a Student Conduct and/or Code Violation See: https://studentconduct.usu.edu/reporting

Utah State University uses online reporting for many student conduct and Student Code violations, listed below. In the event of an emergency, please call 9-1-1.

Academic Integrity Violation Form
This form is used to report academic misconduct such as cheating, falsification, and plagiarism as defined in the Student Code - Section VI. This Academic Integrity Violation Form (AIVF) provides guidance to instructors and students, ensures minimum due process requirements are met, and allows tracking of repeat offenders at the University level. Please note that instructors who sanction a student for a violation (e.g. loss of points, etc.) must report the incident.

Student of Concern Reporting Form
Use this form to report a student’s behavior that rises to a level of concern that may lead to disruption of classroom or University activity, or that causes concern of threat to oneself or others. Remember, in an emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Conduct Violation Reporting Form
This form can be used to report general student misconduct or Student Code violations, including violations of USU Housing and Residence Life Policies. If you are unsure what type of student conduct or Code violation has been committed you may use this form to report any incidents.

Discrimination/Harassment Reporting Form
This form is used to report discrimination or harassment based on protected categories such as race, color, religion, sex/gender, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual misconduct (including harassment), pregnancy, sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, genetic information, or retaliation.

Sexual Misconduct Form
This form should be used by any person to report an incident involving an alleged violation by an active Utah State University student of the USU Sexual Misconduct Policy (sexual harassment, sexual assault, gender-based harassment, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and stalking). This report form can be utilized by students wishing to file a report on their own behalf or by anyone wishing to file a report on behalf of any person aggrieved by a current USU student.

Please note: Connection instructors and peer mentors are “responsible employees,” which means they must report instances of sexual misconduct or harassment.
Teaching Techniques

Team Building and Other Teaching Ideas

Students love to get out of the classroom to get to know their classmates better and to become more familiar with campus and the local community. Many instructors choose to give students an orientation to the local recreational opportunities, or to have them further explore campus or Logan with a scavenger hunt. Past instructors are a great resource for ideas.

Teaching Strategies

Promoting student engagement through active learning
Active learning requires students to participate in class, as opposed to sitting and listening quietly. Strategies include, but are not limited to, brief question-and-answer sessions, discussion integrated into the lecture, impromptu writing assignments, hands-on activities and experiential learning events. As you think of integrating active learning strategies into your course, consider ways to set clear expectations, design effective evaluation strategies and provide helpful feedback.

Flipping the classroom
A pedagogy-first approach to teaching in which in-class time is repurposed for inquiry, application and assessment in order to better meet the needs of the individual learners.

Leading dynamic discussions
While “good” discussions can be a powerful tool for encouraging student learning, successful discussions rarely happen spontaneously. Preparing ahead of time will help you delineate a clear focus for the discussion and set well-defined parameters. This will enable the class to address important topics from multiple perspectives, thus increasing students’ curiosity for, and engagement with, course content.

Source: https://www.washington.edu/teaching/teaching-resources/engaging-students-in-learning/

USU’s Journal on Empowering Teaching Excellence
See: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/jete/
Teaching Activities
Some teaching strategies that are particularly effective for USU 1010 include:

- **Ice Breakers**: low-stakes activities that help students build a learning community. Peer Mentors can design and lead these. It is not unreasonable to plan an ice breaker daily.
- **Think-Pair-Share**
- **Reflection and In-class Writing**: post a question on the board at the beginning of class (or after lunch). Give the students five minutes to reflect and write about that topic.
- **Index Cards**: use index cards as a way to account for participation. You can have them pose questions, answer questions, write short reflections, etc. This keeps the students engaged and allows you to easily assess their attendance and at least a measure of their thoughtfulness and engagement.
- **Group Presentations**
- **Jigsaw**: students are put into small groups to solve or address one piece of the “problem.” As solutions/insights are found for the individual pieces, students come together to put the whole solution together. See: http://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/jigsaws/index.html
- **Collaborative Learning (group work)**. See: https://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/engaging-students/collaborative-learning.html
- **Four Corners**: hand out a “quiz” with four subjective answers to each question. Label each corner of the room and have students go to the corner that corresponds to their answer. This promotes movement and student discussion. Have students move to their next “corner” and discuss again.
Connections Peer Mentor

Peer mentors are undergraduate orientation leaders hired to help ease the college transition for incoming students. The position is intended to provide academic focus and support for freshmen throughout their crucial first year beginning with Aggie Orientation and Connections and following through with electronic correspondence and mentor office hours during fall semester. Most peer mentors are members of the orientation staff called the A-Team; others are Honors Fellows or students who have applied and interviewed for the position. All peer mentors sign a similar work contract and are trained to mentor the incoming freshmen.

Your section will be assigned a peer mentor in April. Mentors are expected to make contact with you shortly after receiving their assignments and meet with you prior to the end of spring semester to discuss their involvement in the Connections course. Peer mentors will be prepared with possible ideas and suggestions, and they can be a great resource when planning the course. They are also a significant part of the retention efforts. It is critical that you utilize them in planning and executing your course.

Connections Instructor Responsibilities

The following responsibilities must be fulfilled by the instructor and should not be assigned to the peer mentor:

- Attend all mandatory training sessions.
- Read My Beloved World (Sonia Sotomayor) and Becoming a Learner (Matt Sanders) and incorporate the themes into your class.
- Communicate with students about due dates, course requirements, etc.
- Refer any students who are struggling to the Office of Student Retention & Completion.
- Properly report students of concern and/or student conduct or code violations.
- Grade assignments, maintain grade book in Canvas, and export final grades to Canvas by Oct. 7 for 3-day sections and 72-hours after the last class for 7-week and 15-week sections.
- Respond to emails from students after grades are submitted to resolve any grading questions or disputes.
- Spend your budget money in accordance to guidelines given in training, and submit itemized receipts to the Box Folder created by Maren Seamons and Peggy Brown as directed.
- Publish your final Connections syllabus and schedule by August 2 for new instructors and August 7 for returning instructors. All syllabi and course schedules are reviewed by the Connections Faculty Advisory Committee.
- Customize Canvas section with due dates, instructor information, etc., and publish course by August 12.
- Email your students prior to Wednesday, August 14 to introduce students to yourself and the Connections course.
- Teach the course Wednesday, August 21 through Friday August 23 and three 75- minute follow up meetings during weeks 2, 4, and 6 of fall semester.
- Plan and provide lunch for your class one day between August 21 and 23 (budget provided).
- Complete instructor course evaluation via email in September.
Instructor Responsibilities for Working with Peer Mentors

- Talk with your peer mentor in advance to discuss the schedule and their specific responsibilities. If you think it would be helpful, give your peer mentor a written list of your expectations for them.
- Give your peer mentor a hard copy of your schedule.
- Introduce the peer mentor to the class and involve them in discussions as appropriate.
- Be responsive to communications from your peer mentor. Let them know your preferred method of communication (text, email, etc.).
- Give constructive feedback to your peer mentor.

Peer Mentor Responsibilities

As part of the course, all peer mentors are expected to do the following:

- Abide by the code of ethics and FERPA restrictions outlined in their training.
- Know each student by name and ask questions that will help the mentor give personalized advice.
- Assist the student in learning the skills and resources to persist and succeed at USU.
- Attend pre-meetings each morning prior to class to receive relevant updates and announcements.
- Give daily announcements in class regarding evening activities, etc.
- Communicate with the instructor to receive responsibilities for the course, preferably in writing.
- Follow through with all assigned responsibilities.
- Answer questions, as appropriate, regarding class assignments, meeting times, etc.
- Hold three office hours during the first six weeks of fall semester. Office hours will be held on weeks where follow-up sessions are not held.
- Send a weekly email (and copy the instructor) on Monday of each week during the first semester of classes.
- Assist students with registering for spring semester, making an appointment with an academic advisor, filing a leave of absence, or filing a complete withdrawal when needed.

Possible Additional Peer Mentor Roles

- Prepare and present a lesson, discussion, or activity on a topic such as roommates, academic integrity, campus resources, student involvement, history and folklore of USU, etc.
- Lead icebreaker, teamwork, and/or leadership activities.
- Accompany you and your class on hikes, canoeing trips, excursions to First Dam, etc. (peer mentors are not allowed to lead the class off-campus without your presence).
- Organize a panel of current students to answer questions and share experiences.
- Lead Q&A sessions at the end of class periods.
- Give a tour of campus or the Taggart Student Center.
- Assist with and monitor discussions on My Beloved World. Peer mentors must read the book during the summer.
- Help photograph class activities and/or create social media for the class.
- Facilitate a Jeopardy game. Quiz bowl buzzers and white boards are available on a first-come, first-served basis by reservation on the instructor scheduling page.
Peer Mentor Restrictions
As part of appropriate involvement in the course, peer mentors **CANNOT** do the following:

- Manage the overall grade book or Canvas course; this is the responsibility of the instructor.
- Determine overall grades or grant exceptions to the attendance policy.
- Instruct the course for more than a total of two hours, collectively.
- Be left alone with the class during workshops or regular class time, except in cases where the instructor leaves so the peer mentor can do an “honest Q&A” session.
- Ask the instructor to be allowed to miss a part of the course or the follow-ups. Peer mentors with extremely extenuating circumstances may first approach the Connections program coordinator, and if approved, the coordinator will consult with the instructor.
- Grade subjective assignments. However, due to the non-subjective content, peer mentors **CAN** grade the following:
  - Time Management
  - Attendance

The role of the peer mentor is a paid position. Instructors should hold peer mentors to the highest standards of professionalism. It is inappropriate for instructors to expect peer mentors to run excessive errands, organize large segments of class, or to grade assignments (other than Time Management). Peer mentors should be treated with respect. Please familiarize yourself with the peer mentor contract and Code of Ethics.
Connections Mentor Contract
The University Connections course is a key part of the USU retention plan. Connections mentors are expected to attend and participate in the entirety of the course. Their main objective during this time is to assist the Connections instructor in teaching the course objectives, and to get to know the students on a personal level, so the students feel comfortable coming to them with questions later in the semester. Because of the short duration of the Connections course, and the potential impact that a Connections mentor can have on the course, Connections mentors will only be selected from students who are able to completely commit to the following MANDATORY dates:

- **Connections Mentor Training**: Tuesday, August 13, 8 a.m. -3 p.m.
- **Connections Pre-Semester Session**: Wednesday, August 21, 7 am-4 p.m. Thursday, August 22, 8am-4 p.m. **Friday, August 23, 8 a.m.** - 4 p.m.; 8 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.
- **Connections Follow-Ups**: Each pre-semester Connections section holds three 75-minute follow-up sessions during the first six weeks of the semester. Follow-ups are typically held on weeks two, four, and six of the semester. It is extremely important that mentors are able to attend each follow-up. Connections mentors will be matched with instructors whose follow-up sessions they are able to attend, and should treat these three follow-up sessions as unmovable commitments in their calendars.

Fall Office Hours
Each Connections mentor will hold an office hour during weeks one, three, and five of fall semester. The office hour will be held in the Connections office, TSC 105. This office hour can be scheduled at a time convenient for the peer mentor, and it will be selected in August. Since students are less likely to take advantage of the office hour if it moves around each week, mentors are expected to select a time and stick to it. Peer mentors are welcome to hold additional office hours during and after the first six weeks of the semester if needed. Peer mentors are encouraged to use the orientation office for individual meetings with their students as well.

Office hours are used to help retain and assist their students. One on ones should be scheduled with each member of the Connections mentor’s class to meet during the office hours.

Weekly Logs
Peer Mentors will submit a weekly log outlining their efforts made to help their students. As part of this weekly log, peer mentors will have the opportunity to suggest events to be added to the weekly email for the following week.

Weekly Emails
Each Connections mentor will send a weekly email to their Connections students each Monday of the fall semester. The mentor will receive a template from the Connections office each Monday, and will personalize the template before forwarding it to their class and instructor. It is recommended that Connections mentors block out time in their schedule each Monday morning to send the email.

Individual Emails
Each Connections mentor will compose an individual email to check in with their students approximately six weeks into the semester. This can be done during office hours.

Accountability
To maintain accountability among Connections mentors, a point system will assess compliance to office hours and weekly emailing. Connections mentors who accumulate 3 points during fall semester will be immediately dismissed from the position and unable to apply as an A-Team member or Connections mentor in subsequent years.
0.5 points - Sending Weekly Email Tuesday or Wednesday (excluding weeks with a Monday holiday) 0.5 points - Moving Office Hour Time during One of the First Six Weeks 0.5 points – Submitting weekly log after Friday 1 point – Sending Weekly Email Thursday or Friday 1 point – Submitting Weekly log of a week after Sunday of the next week 2 points – Not Sending Weekly Email 2 points – Missing Office Hour during the First Six Weeks 3 points – Missing Any Portion of Connections Class or Follow-Ups (except for cases of illness or other extremely extenuating circumstances such as a death in the family)

Training
Peer Mentors are required to attend one in-person new-hire meeting on April 16 from 5-6 p.m., April 17 from 2-3 p.m., or 18 from 8-9 a.m., as well as complete an online Canvas training course prior to August 13. This Canvas course will be published mid-June, and mentors will receive an email when it is available. This course teaches important university policies and resources that will help mentors be effective in their job. Mentors’ official first day of work is the August 13 training session, and mentors will be instructed on how to submit hours at that time.
In addition to the pre-summer meetings, and Canvas training course, Webex training meetings will be held on dates listed below. Instructions on how to attend these online meetings will be given upon hire.

Webex Training Meetings
Wednesday, May 15, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 12, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 17, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, September 18, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 16, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 6, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Peer Mentor Code of Ethics

1. By accepting this position, you have made a commitment to the University. It is expected that you will arrange your schedule as needed to attend each training and class session, and to accomplish the job responsibilities as outlined in the application.

2. Each peer mentor will take quizzes on material covered in the Canvas training. A passing score of 80 percent or higher must be received on each quiz.

3. Each peer mentor is primarily responsible to all members of Student Orientation and Transition Services professional, student, and clerical staff, as well as to all professional and clerical staff of the University.

4. A peer mentor is a representative of USU and the administration. You must not encourage participation in questionable activities during Connections, training sessions, or any other university event. In order to provide quality performance while on duty, the orientation staff members must not drink alcoholic beverages or use any non-medicinal controlled substances during the 24 hours prior to or during Connections sessions.

5. Peer mentors must not promote the use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs directly or indirectly. When chaperoning/facilitating orientation activities, any discovery of alcoholic beverages or illegal drug use should be reported to campus police.

6. The peer mentor must remain in his or her area of responsibility. Please do not leave for any reason (e.g. library, class, parties, study, etc.).

7. Absence from training sessions or class can only be excused by the program coordinator, and will only be excused in extremely extenuating circumstances after consultation with the instructor. Mentors cannot directly ask their instructor to be excused from any part of the Connections class, as the mentor has already committed to attend.

8. As representatives of the university, peer mentors should be careful about their reactions to what new students or parent say. Do not use extreme words or phrases, and do not complain about faculty members, staff, or any university policy. Refer students or notify appropriate staff to follow up if needed.

9. When a student asks you which clubs to join, promote all organizations with words such as: your interests, your choice, everyone is different, many great opportunities. Remember, while you can wear USU gear, don’t wear organizational paraphernalia as it unfairly promotes specific organizations.

10. Peer mentors should make the appropriate referrals. The students should see his or her advisor for academic advising. Do not recommend specific instructors; let the new students make educated decisions. You may give your opinion based on your experience. Only describe a professor’s lecture and test style.

11. Respect the confidentiality of student records and other records in this position as outlined in the FERPA training. Inappropriate and unauthorized disclosure of student records or data is grounds for immediate dismissal.

12. Do not make inappropriate social and/or sexual advances toward new students. Be acutely aware of how your actions are perceived by others, and establish appropriate boundaries. Do not sexually harass new students, staff, or faculty members. If a peer mentor is made aware of any sexual misconduct, they must report it immediately using the red “File a report” button in the top right corner of https://www.usu.edu/sexual-assault/.

13. Offensive language, jokes, behavior, or activity will not be tolerated at any function. Such activity has potentially degrading and divisive effects, and is not acceptable in the context of the relationships among peer mentors, or between peer mentors and students, faculty, and staff.

14. Peer mentors found guilty of infractions will, on the first infraction, have a consultation with the Program Administrator. On the second infraction, the mentor is subject to dismissal.

15. Peer mentors must follow through on their assigned responsibilities, be punctual, present, and alert at all required Connections sessions.

16. Peer mentors may only use electronic devices only for job-related responsibilities during their time on the clock. This is mainly done on the honor of the peer mentor since it is impossible to monitor cell phone usage.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I understand and will abide by the above ethical code of conduct.

__________________________
Signature

__________________________
Date
Money Matters

Budget
Your budget is based on the number of people in your class (including instructor, peer mentor, and students).
- $8.00 per person (i.e. Instructor - 1; Peer Mentor - 1; Students – 28 = 30 @ $8.00 = $240)
This budget should be used to provide lunch one day as well as activities and classroom incidentals. This is your total budget. Monies for this budget come from the course fee and must be used responsibly and within all USU policies.

Purchase Options
Departmental Pcard: Use a Pcard in your home department that you have access to:

1. Pre-order your food when possible - advance notice is often appreciated.
2. Purchase food or incidentals (DO NOT PURCHASE GIFT CARDS).
3. Inform Cashier this is a USU purchase and that it must be tax exempt.
4. Confirm nontax total and swipe/insert your card (Tax ID# is on the card).
5. Obtain your copy of the itemized receipt and sign it.
6. Write Index # and account code on top of receipt  (A01724  714500)
7. Follow your departmental procedure for processing a receipt and M&E Form (include class list).
   Hint: snap a photo of your signed receipt and then submit it electronically. This is easier than keeping track of paper receipts.
8. Add information to your tracking sheet found in BOX.
9. Scan receipt into Connections “Receipts” BOX folder.

Check-Out a P-Card from the Connections office – Contact Peggy 797-1931

1. You must complete USU P-Card Training.
2. Leave a form of ID w/Peggy when you pick up a Pcard.
3. Pre-order your food when possible - advance notice is often appreciated.
4. Purchase food or incidentals (NO GIFT CARDS).
5. Inform Cashier this is a USU purchase and that it must be tax exempt.
6. Confirm nontax total and swipe/insert your card (Tax ID# is on the card).
7. Obtain your copy of the itemized receipt and sign it.
8. Write Index # and account code on top of receipt  (A01724  714500)
9. Return receipt to Peggy along with the Pcard.
10. Receipt will be processed using Peggy's home departmental procedure for processing receipts.
11. Peggy will scan receipt into the Connections “Receipts” BOX folder.
12. Enter this expense onto your tracking sheet found in BOX.

Tracking your Budget
A Box folder “Connections 2019-20” has been created, inside you will find:
• Tracking Sheet – for your use to assist you in tracking your budget.
• “Receipts” folder – place a copy of all receipts here.
  o Title as: Vendor $ Date (i.e. Macey’s $24.98 8.29.19)
• M&E Form – you can choose to complete the form in Box or complete it in Service Now.
  o Either way your class list must be attached.
Budget Sharing

If you are sharing budgets, and or joining another class for your meal, each instructor needs to note it on their tracking sheet. Please list your share of the receipt on your tracking sheet and note the total amount of the receipt in the description section. Each instructor is responsible for his or her own budget.

Only one of you needs to scan the receipt in the Connection “Receipts” BOX folder. If you are not scanning it in, make sure you know who is going to scan it in.

Contact Information

Peggy Brown  797-1931  peggy.brown@usu.edu
Maren Seamons  797-9828  maren.seamons@usu.edu

Reminders and Tips

- Do not purchase gift cards using your Connections budget.
- Please do not use your personal credit/debit cards or cash.
- Tipping is appropriate, but never more than 18%.
- Purchases should always be tax exempt – make sure no tax is charged.
- Please stay within your budget!
- If a student misses an activity where food or other items were provided through the budget, you cannot “make up” for them missing it by providing them a gift card or other commodity.
FYI: Emergency Chain of Command

1. In the event of an immediate emergency, please dial 9-1-1 first, and the USU Campus Police:
   - Ambulance, Fire, and Immediate Response 9-1-1
   - USU Campus Police 435-797-1939

2. After 9-1-1 and the Campus police have been contacted, and to report other minor injuries and mishaps, call:
   - Heidi Kesler
     Office: 797-8087, Cell 435-230-2466

3. If Heidi cannot be reached immediately please call the Student Orientation and Transition Services staff next:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Cell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Simmons</td>
<td>435-797-1125</td>
<td>435-760-9356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peggy Brown</td>
<td>435-797-1931</td>
<td>253-227-0352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Van Den Akker</td>
<td>435-797-1398</td>
<td>435-654-8601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nate Jensen</td>
<td>435-797-7557</td>
<td>435-225-2927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kylee Hopkin</td>
<td>435-797-5541</td>
<td>214-606-7856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Office Phone</td>
<td>435-797-0283</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Should the injury be serious enough that emergency contacts need to be notified, Heidi and Lisa will collaborate with USU Administration to determine who should reach out to emergency contacts.

Campus-Wide Emergency

In the event of a campus-wide emergency, such as an active shooter or earthquake, instructors and peer mentors can exercise all necessary judgment for the immediate safety of themselves and their students. Peer mentors are trained on crowd management strategies in case an exit from the Spectrum is necessary. If communications are slowed or not available in the aftermath of an incident, the Quad is the overall meeting place where instructors can gather their classes and meet the Connections staff.
FAQ: Transportation To and From Activities

Every year we have frequent questions about transportation. Outlined below are general guidelines but please contact Heidi or Lisa regarding specific questions that are not addressed here.

Any class activities that occur off-campus require the student to provide his or her own transportation. Some classes may use the zero-fare CVTD buses for transportation to and from short distances away from campus. For longer distances, students are usually able to find a ride with a classmate. As with any USU course or activity, students sharing rides in personal cars assume all liability as drivers or passengers. Occasionally, the Connections office receives complaints from parents and students with regard to having students find rides to off-campus activities. Everything in Connections is a learning opportunity, and instructors can help by addressing two typical issues upfront:

- Some students complained that they felt pressured to give other students rides because they were one of a few students who owned cars. In each situation, the student wasn’t comfortable telling other students no, and in at least one circumstance the student felt they should have been compensated for gas money (this was on a longer trip to Hyrum Dam). Instructors can help students understand that it is okay to tell their peers no if they don’t feel comfortable driving, and that they can communicate about things like gas money with those who ride with them (Connections objective 2b). Students who own cars will likely have many friends and acquaintances ask for rides during their first year, so it’s great for them to learn this lesson in Connections.

- Some students felt uncomfortable riding with students they didn’t know or speaking up if they didn’t have a ride (especially when it seemed like everyone else did and cars were full). Instructors can give the class time at the end of a day to arrange their own rides amongst themselves, and task the class with making sure everyone in the learning community feels comfortable with their ride situation (Connections objective 3b). The instructor can stress the importance of communication, speaking up, and looking out for others in the Aggie Family.

The Cache Valley Transit District (CVTD)

CVTD is a zero-fare system. All passengers ride for free throughout the system. This is a great resource for students. CVTD has several online resources to assist its patrons. These include:

- Ride Planner (cvtdbus.org/ride-planner/): choose a starting point, destination, and date for all options.
- Routes & Schedules (cvtdbus.org/routes)
- Bus Tracker App (available at the App Store and Google Play)

How to Ride

The Intermodal Transit Center (ITC) is located at 150 East 500 North - all routes pass through the ITC. This is the easiest location to make a transfer. Many of the buses meet at the ITC on the hour and half-hour to simplify transfers. This building has an indoor seated waiting area, information booth, public pay phones, restrooms, vending machines, and drinking fountains.

Follow the directions of the drive; he or she is authorized to ask passengers to leave Transit property for misbehavior. To make the trip more enjoyable for all passengers, refrain from raise voices, eating or drinking on the bus, or playing music without using earphones. Note also that passengers may not smoke, spit, use obscenities, or litter on the bus or Transit property. Vandals will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.
Checklists

Pre-Summer Checklist

- Read the instructor manual to familiarize yourself with the required curriculum.
- Meet with your peer mentor.
  - Discuss your teaching philosophy and expectations.
  - Ask for suggestions and input about the course schedule.
  - Schedule a time to meet with your peer mentor prior to the end of the semester and again over the summer (via Skype or Facetime if you or your mentor are out of the state).
- New Instructors: Meet with your instructor mentor.
  - Discuss your questions and/or concerns.
  - Ask about successful ways to schedule and manage the course.
  - Ask about teaching techniques.
  - Receive help with the Scheduler and Canvas.
  - Share ideas about supplemental curriculum (no more than five hours).

Summer Checklist

- Read *My Beloved World* (Sonia Sotomayor).
- Read (or re-read) *Becoming a Learner* (Matthew Sanders).
- Begin the process of scheduling and customizing your Canvas course. *(Available July 2)*
- Sign the electronic Extra Service Compensation form. This will be sent via DocuSign.
- Check your work email for occasional Connections updates and questions.
- Complete an initial schedule for your course using the Scheduler. *(Available July 2)*

Pre-Connections Checklist

- Attend the optional brown bag discussions.
- Attend the final required instructor training on August 13 from 12:30-2:30 p.m. in TSC Ballroom.
- Publish your Canvas section and schedule by August 9.
- Email your students to introduce yourself and the Connections course by August 14.
- Meet with your peer mentor to finalize assignments and expectations.
- Pre-order your lunch for Connections week using vendors on the scheduling page.

Connections Week Checklist

- Explain syllabus and due dates to your class, as well as your late work policy.
- Plan and provide lunch for your class one day.
- Sign all receipts and collect them in your box folder.
- Set default grades to 0 in Canvas after each assignment’s due date.
- Make sure every student has completed the waiver before class starts on Wednesday. You may consider having them do it in class Wednesday morning if they have not done it prior to that.

Post-Connections Checklist

- Hold follow-up sessions in weeks 2, 4, and 6 of the semester (these are scheduled in Banner).
- Finalize your box receipt folder after your last follow-up session and update your tracking sheet.
- Ensure all default grades are set to 0 in Canvas before submitting grades.
- Submit grades to Banner by 5:00pm on October 7.
- Complete instructor course evaluation. This will be emailed to you in September.
Connections Faculty Advisory Committee
A sub-committee of the General Education Committee.

Peggy Brown
Staff Assistant: Student Orientation and Transition Services
435-797-1931, peggy.brown@usu.edu

Jennifer Grewe
Lecturer: Psychology Department
435-554-1218, jennifer.grewe@usu.edu

Maureen Hearns,
Associate Professor: Director, Music Therapy Program
435-797-3009, maureen.hearns@usu.edu

Heidi Kesler
Director: Student Retention and Completion
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Harrison Kleiner
Assistant Professor: Dept. of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication
Associate Vice Provost for General Education
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Dennis Kohler
Director: Academic Success Center
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Matt Sanders
Associate Professor: Dept. of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication
Associate Dean: College of Humanities and Social Sciences
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Lisa Simmons
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Chad Simons
Associate Professor: School of Accountancy
Academic Director: Huntsman Scholar Program
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Denise Stewardson
Director: Utah Agriculture in the Classroom (USU Extension)
Extension Associate Professor: Agricultural Literacy
435-797-1592, denise.stewardson@usu.edu