

UMST 401: First Year Seminar (2 credits)

Designing Your College Life – Fall 2025

Course Information

Instructor: Stephanie Kirylych (she/her)
Email: stephanie.kirylych@unh.edu
Office: Student Services Suite, 4th floor
Office Hours: Thursdays 12:30-1:30pm (walk-in or schedule in myWildcatSuccess “Meet with my faculty”)
Class Day Thursday
Class Time 10:10-11:30am
Room 380

Course Description

This two-credit seminar is part of UNH Manchester’s continued commitment to the success of first year students. The focus of this course is not on a specific academic subject or field of study; instead, **the focus is on YOU – the student**. This course is designed to help you transition into your first semester as a college student on the Manchester campus.

Learning Objectives

During the semester, you will:

1. **Transition Confidently to College Life:** Learn strategies to adapt successfully to the challenges and opportunities of college life at UNH.
2. **Connect with the UNH Community:** Engage with the campus community and explore ways to participate in events, organizations, and other activities.
3. **Build Academic Skills:** Develop effective study habits, time management techniques, and active learning strategies to succeed in your classes.
4. **Discover Campus Resources:** Identify academic, social, and emotional support systems available to you, including online platforms.
5. **Set Personal and Academic Goals:** Reflect on your values and aspirations to create meaningful goals and actionable plans to achieve them.
6. **Enhance Communication Skills:** Practice communicating professionally and collaboratively with peers, faculty, and advisors.
7. **Explore Your Major and Career Options:** Investigate potential majors and career paths that align with your interests and skills.

College is the perfect time to explore who you are and what you want to do with your life. This class will focus on the process of exploration through use of inventories, group activities and reflection. You’ll have opportunities to reflect upon who you are as a person, gain knowledge that will assist you as you transition to college and provide you with the tools you will need to incorporate well-being practice into your daily life.

Class Materials

Required Book: *Designing Your Life: How to Build a Well-Lived, Joyful Life*

Additional course materials will be available in myCourses: <https://mycourses.unh.edu/>

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Seminar Protocol

Every person in this class is charged with the responsibility of creating an environment conducive to open, honest, and respectful communication among all participants. To achieve this goal, regularly attend weekly class sessions and participate in activities and discussions. Your ideas, opinions, and personal knowledge are valuable resources for this class, and we encourage you to share them. As a courtesy to your classmates, please arrive on time, and treat each other with kindness and respect. **You should not be on your cell phone or computer or have AirPods/headphones in unless it is part of a class activity.** Inappropriate technology use during class may result in being marked absent for the day.

Students may not record class activities (including audio/photographs/screenshots of instructors and students) without express permission from their instructor and students whose image is captured. If permission is granted, student-initiated recordings may only be used for educational purposes in this class and only during the period in which the student is enrolled in the class; authorized student-initiated recordings may not be posted or shared in any fashion outside of the class.

UNH Credit Hour Policy

This syllabus reflects the federal definition of a credit hour, which entails a minimum 3 hours of engaged time per week per credit over a 15-week semester. Examples of engaged time include class time, assignments, examinations, laboratories, participation in course-related experiences (attending a talk or performance, speakers and events, fieldwork, etc.), conferences, and office hours. Student work reflects intended learning outcomes and is verified through evidence of student achievement. For more information, please see: [NECHE policy on Credits and Degrees](#).

Class Assignments

Assignment due dates are available in myCourses and must be completed through myCourses. **Assignments are due by 9am the morning of class unless otherwise noted. However, most assignments will take several days to complete and you should plan to work ahead.** Late assignments may be accepted but points will be deducted. **One point will be deducted for each day that the assignment is late up to one week or until you reach zero points. If you submit an assignment during class, you will receive zero credit.** It is better to submit it late after class than to complete your homework during class time.

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	REQUIREMENTS
Attendance & Class Participation	10	Students are allowed one absence and then points will be taken off for not attending class or actively participating. Points may be deducted for arriving late or leaving early.
Reading Prompts	10	For all assigned reading, students will respond to a brief prompt to prepare for class discussion.
Good Time Journal	5	Students will complete a Good Time Journal for five days.
Peer Advisor Meeting	5	Students will meet with their peer advisor for goal setting.
Wildcat Ambassador Workshop	5	Students will attend a workshop led by a Wildcat Ambassador.

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Getting Involved	5	Students will attend at least two approved campus events or activities (2.5 points each). Students can earn up to 3 extra credit points (1 for each additional event after the required two).
Odyssey Plans	15	Students will create three Odyssey Plans.
Prototyping Interviews	10	Students will interview a faculty member in their major or a major they are exploring.
Prototyping Experiences	10	Students will engage in another experience to further academic and career exploration (ex: informational interview, job shadowing)
Spring Advising and Registration Worksheet	5	Students will meet with a peer advisor to draft a possible spring schedule and submit it for feedback and approval by their advisor.
Research with the Library	5	Students will read an article and complete a quiz from the UNH Manchester Library.
Final Project and Presentation	15	This project will highlight what you learned during the past semester and future goals you have set for the next semester. Students will earn up to 7.5 points for submitting their final poster on time and up to 7.5 points for presenting at the Winter Symposium.

Participation and Attendance

Students are expected to adhere to the attendance policies specific to this course as outlined in the syllabus.

Participation and attendance are worth 10 points toward your final grade and more than one absence will result in loss of points. Do not attend class if you have any symptoms of illness. Inform your instructor, in advance, if possible, that you will be absent from a scheduled class meeting. It is ultimately your responsibility to keep up with all course expectations.

Class attendance is important for your learning. You are responsible for all course assignments and meeting all deadlines unless exceptions are agreed upon with the instructor ahead of time. Attendance in this course is required and attendance will be tracked for each class session. See the [Attendance and Class Requirements](#) policy in the undergraduate catalog.

In the event that a student needs accommodation for a religious or cultural holiday/observance, that student is encouraged to make that request as early in the semester as possible.

Weekly attendance is expected and missing class will impact your grade. You will lose points:

- If you miss more than one class.
- If you arrive to class late.
- If you don't actively participate during a class session you will be marked late or absent. Active participation means that you are engaged during class discussions, share, participate in class activities, and are an active listener.

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- If you are using your phone or other technology during class.
- If you don't attend class, you may receive partial or no credit for the following week's assignment.

To ensure a climate of learning for all, disruptive or inappropriate behavior may result in removal from this class. As a reminder, cell phone/tablet, etc. use, including text messaging, is not permitted in this class by Faculty Senate rule unless by instructor permission.

Final grades will be calculated based on the following guidelines:

A = 94-100	B- = 80-83	D+ = 67-69
A- = 90-93	C+ = 77-79	D = 64-66
B+ = 87-89	C = 74-76	D- = 60-63
B = 84-86	C- = 70-73	F = 0-59

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Students are required to abide by the [UNH Academic Integrity policy](#) located in the Academic Policies section of the Catalog.

Plagiarism is defined as “Use or submission of intellectual property, ideas, evidence produced by another person, including computer generated text or work outsourced to third-parties, in whole or in part as one's own in any academic assessment without providing proper citation or attribution. In some cases, reusing one's own previous work without acknowledging or citing the original work can constitute self-plagiarism.” (UNH Academic Integrity Policy)

If you have questions about proper citation you can contact me. Additional resources are located below:

- <https://cola.unh.edu/academics/plagiarism-tutorial>
- <http://libraryguides.unh.edu/unhmcitingsources>

Unless otherwise specified, the use of Automated Writing Tools, including ChatGPT and similar artificial intelligence (AI) tools, is strictly prohibited in this course, even when properly attributed. The use of automated writing tools is considered plagiarism (as defined by UNH's [Academic Integrity Policy](#)) and will be handled in accordance with existing policy.

To avoid concerns or misunderstandings, you're encouraged to:

- Complete all writing assignments using your own ideas and words.
- Turn on version history in Microsoft Word to demonstrate your iterative writing process.
- Ask if you're unsure whether a tool or method is acceptable for a given assignment.

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Course Schedule

**Please note: The instructor of this course claims the right to make additions and deletions to the syllabus and assignments. If this happens, an announcement will be made in class and changes will also be made via myCourses. All course assignments and requirements will be submitted via myCourses.*

Class Session	Topics Covered	Homework (due date in myCourses)
Week 1 8/25	Welcome to UNH Manchester & Design Thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course & syllabus overview • What is design thinking? • Introducing your support team • Week one tips from Wildcat Ambassadors 	Read Chapter 1 (not the Introduction) of Designing Your Life Write down questions you have throughout the week to discuss in week 2 (ex: My professor mentioned Webcat...what's that?)
Week 2 9/1	Start Where You Are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dashboard activity • Goal setting and SMART goals 	Read Chapter 2 of Designing Your Life Schedule your Peer Advisor goal setting meeting
Week 3 9/8	Building a Compass <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking • Academic integrity and values 	Read Chapter 3 of Designing Your Life Complete your Good Time Journal for one week
Week 4 9/15	Wayfinding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy mapping • Time management & prioritization • Building weekly schedules with Wildcat Ambassadors 	Read Chapter 4 of Designing Your Life
Week 5 9/22	Getting Unstuck <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mind mapping • Reading and note taking • How to study 	No homework
Week 6 9/29	SHARPP Center Visit to Class	Read Chapter 5 of Designing Your Life
Week 7 10/6	Designing Your Lives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting ready for spring advising and registration • Odyssey Plans 	Read Chapter 6 of Designing Your Life Complete three Odyssey Plans

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		Schedule a meeting with a Peer Advisor to select spring classes and submit your advising worksheet
Week 8 10/13	Prototyping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills • Evaluating sources with the Library 	Prototype Interview with a Faculty Member
Week 9 10/20	Prototyping in Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting involved with Wildcat Ambassadors • Accessing campus resources 	Read Chapter 7 & 8 of Designing Your Life Prototype Experience
Week 10 10/27	How Not to Get a Job & Designing Your Dream Job (Career and Professional Success Visit)	Read Chapter 9 of Designing Your Life
Week 11 11/3	Choosing Happiness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-being Wheel with Wildcat Ambassadors • Emotional Intelligence 	Read Chapter 10 of Designing Your Life
Week 12 11/10	Failure Immunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure Resume • Grit 	Read Chapter 11 of Designing Your Life
Week 13 11/17	Building a Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refining your support team (on and off-campus) • Working together and respecting differences • Navigating feedback 	Read Conclusion of Designing Your Life Prepare for Winter Symposium
Week 14 11/24	First Year Seminars will not meet this week. Other classes are held on Monday and Tuesday.	Think about your wellness during your break and focus on what you need to recharge and return! Complete the gratitude assignment for extra credit.
Week 15 12/1	Celebrating a Well-Designed Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course wrap-up and post-assessments 	

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UNH Manchester Resources

Academic Alerts

The University is invested in your academic success, and myWildcatSuccess is a tool to help you, your faculty, and your advisors communicate. If a faculty member is concerned about your academic behavior or performance, they may submit an academic alert -- particularly around Week 5 (September 23-27). Academic alerts **are not** punitive. The goal is to provide you with support and resources to support your success. If you receive an academic alert, you will receive an email to your UNH email address from my name in the format <Instructor Name> [Notification@GradesFirst.com] on behalf of <Instructor Name>. Alternately, find your Progress Reports under the Reports tab in myWildcatSuccess. To get to myWildcatSuccess, search for it under Tools in the portal <https://my.usnh.edu/dashboard> and save it to Shortcuts.

If you receive an alert, please meet with your faculty member or your advisor about the concern. The purpose of these alerts is to encourage you to visit the campus resources you need early on, so that you can get back on track for a successful semester.

Temporary Academic Supports for Extended Absences

If you are dealing with an unexpected, extenuating circumstance that will keep you out of class or affect your performance for more than a day or two, reach out to Lisa Enright, Assistant Dean of Student Success, at lisa.enright@unh.edu to request a letter be sent to all your faculty.

If you are required to miss significant class time, you will be provided temporary academic supports so that you can continue to make satisfactory progress in this course. Once I receive notification from Dean Enright, I will follow up with you about temporary supports. Possible options you may be provided in this class include:

- One-on-one meetings with instructor
- Lecture slides
- Handouts or other materials that are distributed

Accessibility Services

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended, 2008), each student with a disability has the right to request services from UNH to accommodate his/her/their disability. If you are a student with a documented disability or believe you may have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) located on the Manchester campus in room 417.

Accommodation letters are created by SAS with the student. Please follow-up with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of the identified accommodations in the letter. Faculty have an obligation to respond once they receive official notice of accommodations from SAS but are under no obligation to provide retroactive accommodations.

For more information refer to www.unh.edu/sas or contact SAS at 603.862.2607, 711 (Relay NH) or sas.office@unh.edu.

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Mental Health and Wellness

Your academic success and overall mental health are very important. In partnership with The Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester, UNH Manchester offers free mental health sessions for students. Students can schedule counseling sessions by [requesting an appointment here](#).

The [Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) provides 24/7, free and confidential support via phone or chat for people in distress, resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. **Call or text 988.**

- Callers who follow the “press 1” prompt are connected to the Veterans Crisis Line. A Spanish Language line is available by pressing 2 when calling 9-8-8, and more than 240 languages are supported through a Tele-Interpreters service. Callers now also have the option of following a “press 3” prompt to be connected to a counselor specifically trained in supporting LGBTQI+ callers.

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

The University of New Hampshire and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students and for the university as a whole. To this end, the university requires faculty members to report to the university’s [Title IX Coordinator](#) (Bo Zaryckyj, Bo.Zaryckyj@unh.edu, 603-862-2930/1527 TTY) or to the UNH Manchester/CPS Title IX Deputy Intake Coordinator (Lisa Enright, lisa.enright@unh.edu 603-641-4336, Room 236) any incidents of sexual violence and harassment shared by students.

If you wish to speak to a confidential support service provider who does not have this reporting responsibility because their discussions with clients are subject to legal privilege, you can contact the [SHARPP Center for Interpersonal Violence Awareness, Prevention, and Advocacy](#) at (603) 862-7233/TTY (800) 735-2964. For more information about what happens when you report, how the university treats your information once a report is made to the Title IX Coordinator, your rights and reporting options at UNH (including anonymous reporting options) please visit [student reporting options](#) . [The uSafeUS app](#) is also available for students to keep reporting options and resources easily accessible on their phones.

Help us improve our campus and community climate. If you have observed or experienced an incident of bias, discrimination or harassment, please report the incident by contacting the Civil Rights & Equity Office at UNH.civilrights@unh.edu or TEL # (603) 862-2930 voice/ (603) 862-1527 TTY / 7-1-1 Relay NH, or [visit the CREO website](#). Anonymous reports may be submitted.

Confidential Support Resources for UNH Manchester:

- SHARPP Extended Services Coordinator for UNH Manchester- room 417. Available in person Mondays 9am-4pm and by Zoom appointment year-round M-F.
- YWCA, NH – 603-668-2299(24hour), 72 Concord St. Manchester, NH
- The Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester: On campus mental health counselors are available by appointment during the academic year. Located in room 426.
- 24 Hour NH Sexual Violence Hotline: 1-800-277-5570
- 24 Hour NH Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-866-644-3574

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Curtailed Operations

If the university curtails operations due to weather, we will not hold in-person activities for our safety and the safety of others. As soon as possible, I will post an announcement on Canvas about due dates, any make-up work, and any online options that may make sense depending on where we are in the course. Please make sure you have access to the UNH Alert RAVE system. If needed, sign up for RAVE Alerts [here](#).

Financial Literacy Resources

All students benefit from understanding their mindset about money, how to build and use a personal budget, as well as understanding interest rates, loans, insurance, investing, and more. UNH has wonderful free resources for students in [Library Resource Guides](#). Find more information on the [Financial Wellness](#) site of Health & Wellness.

Land Acknowledgement

As we all journey on the trail of life, we wish to acknowledge the spiritual and physical connection the Pennacook, Abenaki and Wabanaki Peoples have maintained to N'dakinna (homeland) and the aki (land), nibi (water), lolakwikak (flora) and awaasak (fauna) that the University of New Hampshire community is honored to steward today. We also acknowledge the hardships they continue to endure after the loss of unceded homelands and champion the university's responsibility to foster relationships and opportunities that strengthen the well-being of the Indigenous People who carry forward the traditions of their ancestors.

Pronouns and Chosen Name

I will gladly honor your request to address you by your chosen name or pronoun. Please advise me of this at any point in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. If I accidentally use an incorrect gender pronoun when addressing you, please feel free to let me know, in whatever manner makes you comfortable, what pronouns you use so that I can make every effort to correct that error.

Library

The UNH Manchester librarians are available to assist you with the research process. Visit the library's website at <https://cps.unh.edu/library> to learn about library services and to search for reliable academic sources. You can contact the library at 603-641-4173 or at unhm.library@unh.edu.

The links below guide you to useful online library resources:

- Make a **Research Appointment** with a librarian: <https://libraryguides.unh.edu/remotearchive/researchhelp>
- Use the **Library Search Box** to find information: https://libraryguides.unh.edu/librarysearchbox_unhmanchester
- Reserve a **Study Room**: <https://cps.unh.edu/library/support-services>
- Discover resources for **Citing Sources**: <https://libraryguides.unh.edu/unhmcitingsources>
- Learn strategies for **Evaluating Sources**: <https://libraryguides.unh.edu/ENGL401UNHManchester/evaluatingsources>.

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Knack Tutoring

Knack is a Peer-to-Peer tutoring platform that is available to all enrolled students for all undergraduate courses in Durham and Manchester at no cost to students. Students looking for additional assistance outside of the classroom are advised to consider working with a peer tutor through Knack. UNH has partnered with Knack to provide students with access to verified tutors who have successfully completed this course. To view available tutors, visit unh.joinknack.com and sign in with your student account.

Wildcat Cupboard (Food Pantry)

UNH Manchester Wildcat Cupboard, located on the second floor, Room 290, is available to all UNH Manchester undergraduate and graduate students, staff or faculty who need access to free, nourishing food. There is an assortment of items including pasta, canned food, cereal, milk, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, which are purchased from the NH Food Bank through a grant or donated by members of the community. The Cupboard is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30-3:30 pm and Wednesdays from 3:00-6:00 pm. Walk ins are welcomed and no appointments are needed.

Wildcat Wardrobe

The UNH Manchester Wildcat Wardrobe provides students with access to new and gently used professional attire for interviews, career fairs, networking events, and the workplace. The goal of Wildcat Wardrobe is to remove financial barriers that may prevent students with the highest need from looking and feeling their best during the internship and job search process. Students can visit the Wildcat Wardrobe, located on the second floor in Room 288 (next to the Wildcat Cupboard) Monday-Friday from 9-5 pm. Items are completely free.

UNHM Security

Campus security officers are on duty during campus business hours. Campus security issues college ID's, coordinates campus parking and issues parking passes. Campus Security also coordinates the WalkSafe Service. This service is a walking escort service provided free of charge to members and visitors of the University community. They are located at the front entrance desk and can be reached at 603-641-4124. In case of an emergency call 911.