

# EXPLORATORY STUDIES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS (ESAP)

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Department Web Site URL (<https://www.sru.edu/offices/exploratory-studies-and-academic-progress-office/>)

## ACADEMICS SUPPORT RESOURCES

### COLLEGE SKILLS WORKSHOP

During the fall, the Tutorial Center offers an array of workshops designed to help students succeed in college. All students are eligible to participate in the workshops on such topics as managing time, taking effective class notes, reading texts, building a strong memory, and increasing test-taking skills.

### TUTORIAL CENTER

Slippery Rock University's Tutorial Center provides undergraduate students with academic support through free peer individual and group tutoring services. Tutoring is offered for most Rock Studies Program courses. Tutorial services at Slippery Rock University are personalized and tailored to individuals' academic needs.

Tutoring services also include the proactive Supplemental Instruction (SI) model for academic assistance. Students hired as leaders attend assigned classes and work closely with enrolled students to assist with course content. Leaders facilitate group-tutoring sessions emphasizing cooperative learning activities.

Individual tutoring sessions for students are scheduled by appointment or on a drop-in basis, whereas group and SI sessions are scheduled to accommodate the greatest number of interested students.

## ADVISEMENT RESOURCES

### ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Academic Advisement is perhaps the most important faculty/student relationship outside the classroom. The University's academic advisement system is comprised of two primary organizational structures that include First Year Studies advisement and upper-class student/transfer student advisement.

### ADVISEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Exploratory Studies and Academic Progress is responsible for developing adviser and student advising resources, conducting adviser training and first year student advising informational workshops, and maintaining its involvement in retention-related and first-year research activities.

### FIRST YEAR STUDIES (FYRST) ADVISEMENT

The mission of the first-year student experience is to provide personalized support by ensuring that every student receives a high standard of academic advisement services from pre-enrollment to orientation, and throughout the student's first year.

During the student's enrollment in FYRST seminar, he/she should develop a more thorough understanding of his/her own purpose and goals in college as well as those of the university. If a new freshman has declared a major, advisement will be provided by a faculty member selected from

the major department. If no major has been declared, the student will be actively involved in the Exploratory Program and advised by a selected faculty member who has volunteered to work with students. First-year student academic progression will be assisted by the faculty adviser; however, it is the student's responsibility to see that he/she meets all requirements of the degree granting college so that upon completion of the first year of study, the student has attained the minimum number of credits, the specified courses and the minimum grade point average required by the major department.

## UPPER-CLASS STUDENT/TRANSFER STUDENT ADVISEMENT

If an upper-class student has declared a major, they will receive advisement from a faculty member in their major department. If an upper-class student has not declared a major, they will receive advisement from an Exploratory Studies and Academic Progress faculty member, who will help them in their academic progression toward fulfilling their degree requirements and will assist them in declaring an academic major.

Upon entrance into the university, new transfer students are assigned academic advisers from their major program.

## EXPLORATORY (UNDECLARED) PROGRAM

Incoming first-year and transfer students who are undeclared will participate in the Exploratory Studies Program. These students are advised by faculty members in the Exploratory Studies and Academic Progress Department as part of this program.

The Exploratory Studies Program includes engaging activities and support, such as:

- College Success Workshops
- Majors & Minors Exposition
- Designing Your Life and Major Exploration with Career Education and Development
- Developmental Advisement
- Assistance with Transition to New Major

## FRESHMAN SEMINAR (FYRST SEMINAR)

The FYRST Seminar is a one-credit hour course designed especially and exclusively to assist the first-year student with adjusting to college life at Slippery Rock University. This course provides, you, the student, with an opportunity to become integrated into the university's community of learners by exploring the purpose and value of higher education, addressing academic, personal and social transition issues, utilizing campus resources, refining academic skills and learning strategies, developing academic and career goals, and implementing strategies for maintaining personal wellness and overcoming barriers to success.

## LEARNING COMMUNITY CLUSTERS

The university implemented a learning community cluster program which includes a freshman seminar for the purpose of improving students' academic and social integration and establishing an educational environment that maximizes both student-student interaction, student-faculty and student-professional staff interaction. The transition to university life can be challenging and even stressful. The academic and social advantages provided by joining a learning community cluster and freshman seminar initiative can help reduce that stress. By enrolling in the same classes, students are encouraged to meet new people, make

friends easily, form study groups, participate in class discussions, and become engaged with their professors.

Research has shown that the more students connect to the university, the more successful they are in their college experience. Our research shows that by enhancing a student's sense of community and involvement, the freshman seminar and learning community clusters contribute to higher retention rates. Because both freshman seminars and learning communities promote active learning and foster collaboration and cooperation, students who participate are higher achievers and more involved in their classes.

## FACULTY

### Christa Brahler

Instructor  
Exploratory Stud & Acad Prog  
M.A., Slippery Rock University  
B.A., Indiana University

### April Carter

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Exploratory Stud & Acad Prog  
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### Amber Hamilton

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M.Ed., University of North Carolina  
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### Susan Kushner

Associate Professor  
Exploratory Stud & Acad Prog  
M.S., Columbia University  
B.S., University of Pittsburgh

## COURSES

### ESAP 101 - FYRST Seminar

The FYRST Seminar provides students with an opportunity to become integrated into the university's community of learners by exploring the purpose and value of higher education, participating in the teaching/learning process, addressing academic and social transition issues, utilizing campus programs, services, and technology, and developing academic skills and learning strategies during the student's first semester at Slippery Rock University. This course is a one credit hour course designed to especially and exclusively assist first year students in their adjustment to college life at Slippery Rock University. No prerequisite. Enrollment by advisement. Open to first year students only. The credit earned in this course counts for graduation requirements.

Credits: 1

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered Fall & Spring Terms

### ESAP 102 - Learning Strategies

Students will develop effective learning strategies, goals, and decision-making skills with a view toward implementing a plan to remove their probationary status and become a student in "good academic standing." This course is primarily for students on academic probation (other students may enroll with the permission of the instructor). Credits earned count for graduation as an elective.

Credits: 1

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

### ESAP 103 - Major and Career Exploration

This course will examine various decision making models as they are applied to choosing an academic major and/or career. Through a variety of in-class and out-of-class activities students will integrate self-knowledge and knowledge about majors and the world of work.

Credits: 1

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

### ESAP 109 - Developmental Mathematics

This course covers basic arithmetic skills necessary for successful completion of basic algebra. Topics include basic operations using whole numbers, fractions and decimals, ratios and proportions, percents, and solving equations. Students not exempted from ACSD 109 must successfully complete this course before enrolling in ACSD 110. Students must pass a standard proficiency exam to pass this course. Course grading: A, B, C, or NC. Credit earned in this course will not count toward the university's 120 credit hour minimum required for graduation.

Credits: 3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

### ESAP 110 - Beginning Algebra

An overview of introductory algebra concepts, this course covers topics such as: simplifying variable expressions, solving equations and applications problems, simplifying polynomials, factoring, algebraic fractions, graphing linear equations, solving systems of linear equations, and simplifying radical expressions. Students who are placed into this course are expected to possess certain minimum competencies in arithmetic skills, and they must pass a standard proficiency exam to pass this course. Course grading: A, B, C, or NC. Prerequisite: ACSD 109 or exemption from ACSD 109. Credit earned in this course will not count toward the university's 120 credit hour minimum required for graduation.

Credits: 3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered Fall, Spring, & Summer

### ESAP 111 - Designing Your Life: Building a Life and Career with Meaning and Purpose

What if there were a class to help you explore the bigger issues of finding your way to a career and life you'll love. The Designing Your Life course offers a framework, tools, and a community of peers and mentors where we'll work on these issues through a design thinking approach. All students, regardless of your plans, interests, or goals, can benefit from this constructive, creative, and effective approach to finding and designing your life and vocation.

Credits: 3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered Spring Terms

**ESAP 121 - Freshman Research and Mentoring**

The FRAME Seminar introduces students to academic research skills. Students will collaborate with faculty mentors, peers and professionals to develop skills in methodologies, analyses and dissemination of scholarly work. The seminar course is intended for second semester freshman.

Prerequisites: INDS 101<sup>D</sup> or ESAP 101<sup>D</sup>

<sup>D</sup> Requires minimum grade of D.

Credits: 1

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Enrollment limited to students with a semester level of Freshman 1 or Freshman 2.

**ESAP 139 - Foundations of Academic Discovery**

Foundations of Academic Discovery serves as the entry point to the Rock Integrated Studies Program. With its strong faculty-student interaction, the course promotes intellectual inquiry, critical and creative thinking, and academic excellence. Through varied content, the course introduces students to academic discourse and information literacy while exploring topics such as diversity and inclusion and global awareness. This course will set students along the path to becoming engaged with issues and scholarship important to a 21st century education while they learn about themselves and their place in the world.

Credits: 3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Enrollment limited to students with a semester level of Freshman 1 or Freshman 2.

Enrollment limited to students with the ROCK STUDIES 2 STUDENT or ROCK STUDIES STUDENT attributes.

**ESAP 190 - Experimental**

A unique and specifically focused course within the general purview of a department which intends to offer it on a "one time only" basis and not as a permanent part of the department's curriculum.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

**ESAP 195 - Workshop**

A workshop is a program which is usually of short duration, narrow in scope, often non-traditional in content and format, and on a timely topic.

Credits: 1-6

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

**ESAP 198 - Selected Topics**

A Selected Topics course is a normal, departmental offering which is directly related to the discipline, but because of its specialized nature, may not be able to be offered on a yearly basis by the department.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

**ESAP 290 - Experimental**

A unique and specifically focused course within the general purview of a department which intends to offer it on a "one time only" basis and not as a permanent part of the department's curriculum.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

**ESAP 295 - Workshop**

A workshop is a program which is usually of short duration, narrow in scope, often non-traditional in content and format, and on a timely topic.

Credits: 1-6

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

**ESAP 298 - Selected Topics**

A Selected Topics course is a normal, departmental offering which is directly related to the discipline, but because of its specialized nature, may not be able to be offered on a yearly basis by the department.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

**ESAP 390 - Experimental**

A unique and specifically focused course within the general purview of a department which intends to offer it on a "one time only" basis and not as a permanent part of the department's curriculum.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Students with a semester level of Freshman 1, Freshman 2 or Sophomore 1 may **not** enroll.

**ESAP 395 - Workshop**

A workshop is a program which is usually of short duration, narrow in scope, often non-traditional in content and format, and on a timely topic.

Credits: 1-6

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Enrollment limited to students with a semester level of Freshman 1, Freshman 2 or Sophomore 1.

**ESAP 398 - Selected Topics**

A Selected Topics course is a normal, departmental offering which is directly related to the discipline, but because of its specialized nature, may not be able to be offered on a yearly basis by the department.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Students with a semester level of Freshman 1, Freshman 2 or Sophomore 1 may **not** enroll.

**ESAP 490 - Independent Study**

Independent Study courses give students the opportunity to pursue research and/or studies that are not part of the university's traditional course offerings. Students work one on one or in small groups with faculty guidance and are typically required to submit a final paper or project as determined by the supervising professor.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Students with a semester level of Freshman 1, Freshman 2 or Sophomore 1 may **not** enroll.

**ESAP 495 - Workshop**

A workshop is a program which is usually of short duration, narrow in scope, often non-traditional in content and format, and on a timely topic.

Credits: 1-6

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Students with a semester level of Freshman 1, Freshman 2 or Sophomore 1 may **not** enroll.

**ESAP 498 - Selected Topics**

A Selected Topics course is a normal, departmental offering which is directly related to the discipline, but because of its specialized nature, may not be able to be offered on a yearly basis by the department.

Credits: 1-3

Term(s) Typically Offered: Offered as Needed

Students with a semester level of Freshman 1, Freshman 2 or Sophomore 1 may **not** enroll.