Proposal for a First-Year Experience at Suffolk University’s
College of Arts and Sciences and Sawyer School of Business

Suffolk Seminar
Writing to Engage / Engaging the World

CONTENTS
1. Suffolk Seminar
2. Curricular Structure of the First Year
3. Learning Goals of the First-Year Experience Advantages
4. Challenges

1. All first-year CAS and SBS undergraduate students will take one course spanning the fall and spring semesters: Suffolk Seminar 1 (Fall) and Suffolk Seminar 2 (Spring).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>FALL SEMESTER</th>
<th>SPRING SEMESTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4       | Suffolk Seminar 1 + Lab (Writing to Engage)  
• Writing-intensive  
• Lab includes Ram Academy over Labor Day weekend | 4 | Suffolk Seminar 2 + Lab (Engaging the World)  
• Writing-intensive  
• Administers Writing Proficiency Assessment |
| 3       | Creativity & Innovation | 3-4 | Diverse Perspectives, SGCP Any approved DP course at 100- or 200-level |

CAS  
8 credits  
ENT 101 (3 credits)  
SBS 100 (1 credit)  
+ class (math?)

SBS  
8 credits  
STATS 240 (4 credits)  
SIB 101 (3 credits)

1.1. Suffolk Seminar would span the full first year, dovetailing with other elements of the First-Year Experience at Suffolk (CI, Perspectives, Advising, etc.). Both semesters of Suffolk Seminar will be writing-intensive.

1.2. Both Suffolk Seminar-1 and Suffolk Seminar-2 would include a Lab with TA to teach key academic and life skills and to foster learning communities, i.e. foster a cohort of students who collaborate on classwork. Full-time faculty, paired with a TA, will teach
PROPOSAL: Suffolk Seminar

December 2015

the full four-credit course (which includes a lab). TAs would provide invaluable peer mentorship.

2. **Suffolk Seminar: “ENGAGING THE WORLD”**
   
   2.1. **Theme reviewed yearly** through dialogue with the University community; theme may be repeated. **Themes reflect contemporary challenges**, from the local to the global. Examples: Climate Change; Immigrants and Refugees; Police, Race, & Community

2.2. **Themes to mobilize across the University, curricularly and co-curricularly.**

Example

**Police, Race, and Community:**

- *Social Science* (CAS): Effects of criminal justice system, education, economics on police-community relations
- *Humanities* (CAS): Literary traditions; philosophy of law and justice, etc.
- *NESAD* (CAS): Urban design, prison design, and their effects on individuals and communities
- *SBS*: Privatization of prisons; opportunities for economic development in neglected communities; etc.
- *Law*: Criminal law and the persistence of police-community conflict

3. **Curricular Structure of Suffolk Seminar**

3.1. **Suffolk Seminar-1: Writing to Engage, Fall Semester:**

- Common learning goals and coordinated structure
- Writing-intensive
- 50% shared texts and assignments, based on required summer reading
- Ram Academy
- Faculty otherwise free to design their own syllabi, readings, etc., consistent with overall Suffolk Seminar theme for that year
- This could allow faculty to promote individually themed sections, similar to existing Seminar for Freshmen, so long as they incorporate the overarching Suffolk Seminar theme and plenary lectures/presentations e.g., the Police, Race, and Community theme.
- Writing to Engage: Policing in Film and Literature; or, Science and Race — Fact and Fiction; or, The Sociology of Prison Reform.
- Shared plenary lectures, monthly
- Paired with Lab and TA, for life and academic skills, and learning communities

3.2. **Suffolk Seminar-2: Engaging the World, Spring Semester**

- Writing-intensive
- Learning goals linked to Writing Proficiency Assessment at the end of Spring Semester
- Shared syllabus among all sections, covering aspects of the year’s theme touching on expertise of all Suffolk’s schools
- Shared plenary lectures, monthly
- Paired with Lab and TA, for academic and life skills, and enduring learning communities
- Concludes with a First-Year Suffolk Capstone experience
## Learning Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goals</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the tools for academic success</td>
<td>Advance their ability to think critically, write, speak publicly, pursue independent research, and work effectively in teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop effective studying and learning strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify and engage academic resources on campus, including online tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use technology for innovation, analysis and communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop skills for personal success</td>
<td>Effectively advocate for themselves and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value and engage in healthy life choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Build and display self-confidence / self-efficacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand and demonstrate financial literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possess a better understanding of career planning and the value of lifelong learning</td>
<td>Clarify interests and values and how they relate to major and career choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate an attitude of inquiry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seize opportunities for experiential learning outside the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and utilize skills that support effective and responsible decision-making</td>
<td>Understand the importance of academic and personal integrity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify problems and solutions and understand accountability and decision ownership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the value of relationships within the Suffolk community</td>
<td>Identify and establish relationships with mentors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop strong social connections and a Suffolk identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understand respect and engage with diverse people and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participate in effective teamwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn to appreciate and engage in the wider world beyond Suffolk University</td>
<td>Participate actively in service learning and community involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a global perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate active citizenship.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>