

Sophomore Colloquium
Indiana Academy – Fall 2025
Dr. Dain Kavars

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

Sophomore Colloquium is a discussion-oriented seminar where we will work to create a space for you to discuss your educational experiences as Academy sophomores. It has two interlinked goals: a place of practical concerns, where you can check in with your classmates and instructor about your time at the Academy, and a place of critical reflection on how we engage in respectful dialogue with others. Several weekly activities will engage students in working together to achieve a common goal.

Course Methodology

The first two weeks of the semester will focus on laying the groundwork, and the remainder of the semester will follow a specific rhythm. This course will be a common meeting point for all Indiana Academy sophomores. We will discuss your sophomore experiences, including opportunities to improve/build support systems. Other weeks will include readings, activities, and opportunities for deep discussion on how we as individuals can effectively communicate with others, including those with whom we disagree. At the beginning of the semester, students will have a voice in selecting readings and guiding the discussion topics. Occasionally, there may be guest speakers.

Assessments and Grades

1. Weekly Assignments – 50%

Most weeks, students will be assigned a weekly assignment to complete before the next week's class. Assignments will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class.

2. Weekly Participation/Discussion – 50%

Your in-class work will primarily consist of group discussions, including small-group and full-class discussions. If you are having trouble contributing sufficiently to the group and class discussions, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. We will develop a plan to assist you in classroom discussions.

3. Grading Scale:

A = 93 – 100

A- = 90 – 93

B+ = 87 – 90
B = 83 – 87
B- = 80 – 83
C+ = 77 – 80
C = 73 – 77
C- = 70 – 73
D* < 70

Tentative Fall 2025 Schedule

1. August 12, 2025 – Introductions, sophomore experiences, goals for the year, and brainstorming topics/activities connected to engaging in respectful dialogue.
2. August 19, 2025 – Free Speech – article and discussion
3. August 26, 2025 – Topic TBD
4. September 9, 2025 – Nature and Well-Being – Walk through Christy Woods (pending weather)
5. September 16, 2025 – Topic TBD
6. September 23, 2025 – Academic Support Check-in and Discussion
7. September 30, 2025 – Topic TBD
8. October 9, 2025 (Thursday) – Topic TBD
9. October 14, 2025 – Topic TBD
10. October 21, 2025 – Topic TBD
11. October 28, 2025 – Academic Support Check-in and Discussion
12. November 4, 2025 – Topic TBD
13. November 11, 2025 – Topic TBD
14. November 18, 2025 – Topic TBD
15. December 2, 2025 – Academic Support Check-in and Discussion
16. December 9, 2025 – Topic TBD

Titles and links to the selected readings will be added to Canvas as they are selected by the class.

Course Policies

1. Attendance – Regular and punctual class attendance is expected and required of all students. You will be marked tardy if you are not in class when it officially begins. If you arrive to class ten or more minutes late, you will be marked absent for the day.

2. Late Work – Late assignments will not be accepted without an in-person discussion and a clear plan for timely submission. If I do not have your assignment when it is due and have not discussed a submission plan with me, credit will not be earned. For a sudden illness, you are responsible for reaching out to me to arrange a plan to submit your assignment.

3. Technology – Please keep your cell phone silent and refrain from using it in class unless it is needed for a class activity assigned by the instructor. You may bring a laptop to class, but refrain from using it unless required for a class activity.

4. Academic Integrity – You are responsible for the integrity of your work, and you are required to produce work that is academically honest. This means that all your work for this course must be your own and must be created specifically for this course. Failing to maintain the integrity of your work will have serious consequences. Submitting someone else's work, including work you obtain online, as your own writing violates the Academy's Academic Dishonesty Policy (see the Student Handbook for full policy details). Attempting to take credit for someone else's words or ideas without properly citing them is plagiarism. Direct and indirect plagiarism is unacceptable and has serious academic consequences. If you are uncertain whether any part of your work is academically honest, contact me, and we can discuss it.

5. Beneficence Pledge - Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains outstanding faculty, staff, and students. Ball State is committed to ensuring that all members of the campus community are welcome through our practice of valuing the varied experiences and worldviews of the people whom we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as evident in our Beneficence Pledge. As a reflection of Ball State's commitment to respect, civil discourse, and the Beneficence Pledge, inclusiveness at the Indiana Academy emerges as one of the priorities of our living and learning community. We strive to exist together respectfully and compassionately, creating an environment where every member can thrive.

6. Disability Services – If you need course adaptations or accommodation because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. You may also contact Ms. Wright, Assistant Director of Academic Advising and Guidance (mewright@bsu.edu). Documentation of a disability needs to be on file with the Indiana Academy before any accommodation can be provided.