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Section 1: Introduction, and Taking the Training Course

What does it mean to be a peer facilitator for the Honors first year experience? What are your responsibilities, and where do you start? From training assignments to lesson planning, this handbook has it covered. For additional, super-up-to-date information, you can also visit the Beyond George Street peer facilitator website at https://sites.google.com/site/bgspeerfacilitatorhandbook/. Welcome to the team!

Training

To begin your peer facilitator experience, there is a semester-long training course, as outlined below:

Training Agenda

Week 1: Introductions, team building, and learning outcomes review
Week 2: Team building, class protocol, and assignment review
Week 3: Responsibilities and impact of the PF
Week 4: Advising and academic planning
Week 5: Blog and OAKS technology
Week 6: Guiding and grading the reflective writing process
Week 7: Grading responsibilities (Know the News, participation, portfolio)
Week 8: Advising group activities (City Tour and campus engagement)
Week 9: Book discussion and service learning
Week 10: Models of student development
Week 11: Boundaries and professionalism

Goals of Training

Goal #1: To build relationships and a sense of cohesion and respect among the leadership team
Goal #2: To lay out the responsibilities of team members
Goal #3: To learn the logistics and policies of teaching a course
Goal #4: To equip PFs with the tools and resources to be effective mentors and advisors
Goal #5: To discuss the art and science of advising students and assessing their work
Goal #6: To provide training on the technology required to manage the course
Goal #7: To encourage the development of effective leadership and public speaking skills
Goal #8: To develop personal portfolios to use as models for students
Goal #9: To read together the College Reads! book
Goal #10: To organize schedules and activities for Fall
Goal #11: To discuss the professional nature of the PF role and the responsibilities that define that professionalism

Expectations of Training Participants

- Attendance at each training session
- Preparation for each training session
- Full and enthusiastic participation in each training session
- Respectful, inclusive, and sensitive communication with team members
- Honest, mature, and constructive input regarding course development and team member participation

Responsibilities of Peer Facilitators

1. Attend fall, spring, and winter retreats
2. Respond to emails from supervisor and other BGS staff within 24 hours
3. Attend all classes – arrive 30 minutes before, plan to leave 30 minutes after
4. Prepare thoroughly for all classes
5. Encourage participation of students in advising group
6. Maintain a positive attitude about BGS, the Honors College, and CofC
7. Grade attendance weekly
8. Grade participation weekly
9. Grade Know the News
10. Attend all supervision meetings
11. Turn in updated grading binder weekly at supervision meeting
12. Record receipt of submissions to OAKS dropbox and blog posts
13. Respond to blog posts and other assignments within a week
14. Attend all team/section meetings
15. Hold 2-3 individual advising appointments per student
16. Plan and make all arrangements for City Tour
17. Recruit panelists for the study abroad and internship panel
18. Read the College Reads! book and prepare discussion guide
19. Schedule 3-5 outside of class events with advising group
20. Support Literacy Outreach Initiative as requested
21. Serve as consultant at 3 writing workshops
22. Complete employee documentation and timesheets in a timely manner

Professional Development Skill Assignments: Training

As peer facilitators, you will be expected to have and utilize a set of professional skills that are critical to your success as a teacher and mentor to freshmen entering the Honors College. These skills include the ability to write and speak clearly, the analytical ability to plan strategically for the future, and the personal courage and discipline to engage in self-reflection that supports your own development as a scholar and professional.

Assignment 1: Portfolio Development: Each of you needs to be armed with a well-constructed version of each piece of the portfolio that we will require of our students.

A. Four-Year Navigator
B. Personal Essay
C. Resume
D. Portfolio Consultation

Each of you should schedule an individual appointment to review the elements of your portfolio.

Assignment 2: City Tour Proposal: As a group, you should prepare a proposal for the City Tour that includes sites to visit, faculty to invite, and consideration of available time and a back-up for inclement weather.

Assignment 3: Advising Group Activities Proposal: As a group, you should prepare a proposal for ways that PFs might engage the members of their advising group outside of the classroom. Include in the proposal details such as the goal of the activities, how many activities should be expected of each PF, and any costs associated with the activity.

Assignment 4: The College Reads! Discussion Plan: All of you should read The College Reads! book for this fall. Together, you should prepare a discussion guide that can be used with advising groups and with a faculty co-leader.
Beyond George Street Course Syllabus

Beyond George Street
Honors First-Year Experience

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM:

Dr. Trisha Folds-Bennett (FoldsbennettT@cofc.edu)
Associate Dean, Honors College

Dr. Anton Vander Zee (vanderzeea@cofc.edu)
Honors Faculty Fellow and English Department Visiting Assistant Professor

Christina Mahan (mahanc@cofc.edu)
Graduate Assistant

PEER FACILITATORS: (List updated PFs)

COURSE INFORMATION AND CONTACT:

BGS Website: http://blogs.cofc.edu/bgs/
BGS email: bgs@cofc.edu
BGS Peer Facilitator Office: Room 106 Hawkins - 953-4364

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course is offered exclusively to first-year Honors students to provide a dynamic, interdisciplinary introduction to the life of a scholar-citizen. Students will discuss topics and experience events of broad intellectual and practical import as they meet outstanding faculty from across the campus and discover the many opportunities and resources available to them at the College of Charleston and beyond. In addition to attending their individual BGS sessions, students will partner with a broad coalition of academic and community leaders to participate in a large-scale, four-week community engagement project called the Literacy Outreach Initiative.

Through a series of reflective exercises and specific writing tasks, students will formulate their ideas and strategies regarding potential majors, career paths, and life goals. This work will culminate in a final portfolio of crucial documents and representative work that students will continue to develop throughout their college careers. Offering students the opportunity to bond as a living-learning community through collaborative assignments, small-group discussion, and meaningful community engagement, BGS promises to be a stimulating, helpful, and compelling introduction to life in the Honors College!

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

• To welcome students into the tradition of liberal education, which includes the pursuit of learning as an end in itself, and the earnest participation in an intellectual community of scholars.
• To expose students to a dynamic range of multi- and inter-disciplinary views on important issues.
• To have students engage in a series of reflective exercises that help them identify and express their unique core competencies and values.
• To enable students to understand the significance of community impact through shared outreach.
• To make clear the academic purpose and expectations of the Honors College.
• To integrate students into the intellectual and social life of the Honors College.
• To encourage students to develop strong mentoring relationships amongst their peers and faculty as early as possible in their college career.
• To produce a professional portfolio in which students sketch out a map for their academic career; plan for opportunities such as study abroad, internships, research, and nationally competitive awards; and demonstrate a clear understanding of the tools required for successful pursuit of various competitive opportunities.
• To prepare students for the professional world by exposing them to employer perspectives and guiding them as they develop important tools and strategies for self-presentation.
• To expose students to the resources and opportunities available to them through the Honors College and the broader College community.

**COURSE MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES:**

Almost all the printed materials for the course will be provided to you through the course website. For your portfolio, you should purchase a professional-looking binder and dividers. You may also want to purchase clear sheet protectors for components of your portfolio that you do not want to hole-punch. You should create a dedicated folder or flash drive on which you store and manage the multiple, ongoing assignments associated with this course.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Attendance** is required. Many activities and assignments will be completed during scheduled class periods; your successful completion of these activities will be dependent on your attendance as the resources made available during class will not necessarily be available outside of class. You are allowed one absence, whether excused or unexcused. Use it only when you need it. Any absences beyond the first will result in your grade being lowered incrementally: from an A to an A-, for example, or from a B- to a C+. While this attendance policy remains firm, we will be flexible in cases where excessive absence is due to unavoidable issues involving personal health or family crises.

**Class Engagement:** Participation in all aspects of class is essential. You are expected to actively engage in class activities, to contribute meaningfully to discussions, and to display dedication and effort in exploring the class topics and tasks. We will do some sort of reflective writing in most class periods; you should view these as serious assignments that contribute meaningfully to your intellectual development. Your level of participation in class activities will impact your overall grade in the course.

**Individual Consultation Meetings:** In addition to meeting in small advising groups during BGS sessions, you will be required to sign up for a few additional meetings outside of regular class sessions with your peer facilitator throughout the semester.

**Blog Posts:** You will be given a series of four reflective writing exercises focused on the identification of core competencies and values, and the compositional skills required to bring those core competencies and values to life. Some work on these exercises will be done in class, but the primary writing will be done outside of class. You will post these reflections on the Beyond George Street blog by the due dates specified on the course schedule.
**Portfolio:** Throughout the semester you will create a portfolio that will represent your accomplishments across your college and professional career. While there will be several required documents for your portfolio (described below), we encourage you to add to your portfolio according to your needs and interests. You might include slides from a studio art class, for example, or a substantial research paper from a political science course. Because the portfolio is a semester-long project, it will go through several revisions in response to peer edits, in-class workshops, outside input from Academic Writing instructors and Writing Lab staff, and feedback from PFs and class leaders. You will have the option of submitting a physical version of the portfolio or of creating an e-portfolio. Your portfolio will include the following documents:

- **Four-Year Navigator:** Every first-year honors student must complete and take a 4-year navigator to your appointments with your honors advisor (either Dr. Ganaway or Dr. Folds-Bennett). The navigator assists students in preparing for their four years at the College of Charleston. We will spend time in class discussing the best methods for long- and short-term planning on the navigator.

- **Academic and Community Engagement Plan:** The Literacy Outreach Initiative will introduce you to best practices in community engagement, and to the ways that you might become involved in the Charleston community beyond the first semester. Meetings with College of Charleston faculty and exposure to various faculty research projects and campus-wide leadership opportunities will give you a strong sense of the research-based and extra-curricular opportunities that await you. As your commitment to the Honors College and the broader CofC and Charleston communities goes beyond a single semester, this action plan will encourage you to think about ways that you might contribute throughout your time as a student at the College of Charleston and beyond.

- **Resume:** You will generate a professional resume that captures your academic, professional, and community achievements to date. You will spend both class time and individual consultation time working on your resume.

- **Personal Essay:** Near the end of the semester, you will submit a one-page, single-spaced personal essay that reflects, in the form of a narrative, your emerging intellectual identity, academic aspirations, and plans for the future. This essay will emerge from a series of reflective writing exercises assigned throughout the semester. For those of you in Honors Academic Writing, the personal essay will also be submitted as a final assignment in that class worth 10% of your HONS 110 grade. For those of you not in Honors 110, Dr. Vander Zee and Dr. Folds-Bennett will provide feedback and grades for this assignment.

**Literacy Outreach Initiative:** All of you will participate in a community engagement project called the Literacy Outreach Initiative (LOI). In the training for your role in this project, you will learn about best practices in community engagement, as well as the specific skills necessary to carry out your role. You will have an opportunity to learn more about the various organizations involved in the LOI during the second week of class. For all assignments, we will provide transportation and the materials needed to carry out your role.

**Additional Assignments:** BGS includes a few dedicated assignments that, while not included in your final portfolio, will be crucial to your success in the course even as they encourage you to expand your academic network, actively engage in current social and political debates, and develop your writing abilities. These assignments include:

- **Meet a Professor:** You will be asked to meet with one faculty member to discuss her/his work as a scholar and ways that students participate might participate in it. For your portfolio,
you will write a one-page summary of the faculty member’s interests and ways that you might become involved in his or her research.

• **Know the News:** You will deliver a 5 minute oral presentation during an assigned class period in which you will summarize the content of an article from the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, or *Scientific American*. You will then lead a brief discussion on the major points of the article. You should bring a copy of the first page of your article to turn in for full credit.

• **Experience Campus Life:** There is a lot going on at the College of Charleston! During the semester, we ask that you take advantage of the various offerings by attending two special events: one athletic or social event (e.g. volleyball game or dance marathon), and one academic or cultural event (e.g. a poetry reading or scholarly talk). After you attend each event, please compose a brief reflection on how you enjoyed the event and e-mail it to your PF.

• **The College Reads! Book:** If you have not done so already, you should complete *Eating Animals* by the third week of class. We will give you a set of discussion questions and will hold book discussions both during and outside of class.

**GRADING CRITERIA:**

• Class Engagement: 20%
• Individual Consultation Meetings: 5%
• Portfolio: 20%
• Additional Assignments:
  o Know the News: 5%
  o Blog Posts: 20%
  o Meet the Professor: 5%
  o Experience Campus Life: 5%
• Literacy Outreach Initiative: 20%

**STATEMENT ABOUT LAPTOPS:**

Since we will provide very few hard copies of handouts, we encourage you to bring your laptops to class so that you might access the course website. This is not an invitation to access any other websites, read email, check Facebook, or to do any work that is not related to the content of class on any given day. Any student who abuses the privilege to bring laptops to class will lose that privilege.

**HONOR CODE AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved. Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the
The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board. Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor. Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php.

Section 2: Pedagogy, or How do I teach?

When teaching a course, it is important (although frequently ignored) to consider one’s beliefs about pedagogical style. In other words, how do you think a teacher should teach? How do you think an advisor should advise?

Some critical readings to inspire your own teaching philosophy are included in the appendix, so take a moment to reflect before walking into the classroom. Some basic teaching tips and a list of “Dos and Don’ts” are included in this section. Additionally, there are a few ideas to guide you while advising students for their educational future.

Teaching Tips and other such things

A Few Tips to Get You Started…

- Be prepared!
- Have a back-up plan and a flexible attitude.
- Get to class early.
- Do your research… anticipate student questions.
- Introduce your students to the College of Charleston and the city of Charleston.
- Go over the syllabus in depth, and remind them to keep track of their due dates.
- Make copies ahead of time.
- If you’re using electronics, set them up in advance.
- Keep your binder organized; only keep things you need.
- Don’t fall behind on grading.
- Keep a calendar and warn students of upcoming due dates.
- Be available for questions.
- Mix up the student groups.
- Learn your students’ names.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Be confident; you were hired because you can do it!
Advising… or “How do I know what my students need?”

You don’t know what students need, but you can help them figure it out. As a Peer Facilitator for Beyond George Street, you will be put in a unique position as an academic advisor for your students. Here are a few tips and guidelines to keep in mind while meeting with students about their academic futures.

Advising Pointers

- The Four-Year Navigator is your friend.
- Keep a list of Honors requirements next to you in the meeting… and use it.
- It is always a good idea to hold advising appointments next to a computer with internet access. See the advising website help below.
- Follow guidelines for the major according to the current course catalog.
- Remember that students MUST consult an Honors faculty member about their choices. If they do not, their hold will not be removed for early registration.
- Remember FERPA! Do not share a student’s information with anyone. Ever.
- Pay attention to prerequisites! Sequencing of courses could be the difference between graduating on time or not.

Important Advising Questions for Students

Freshmen
1. Have you sent your AP/IB scores to the college? Have you filled out the AP decline form if you are retaking a science or calculus course?
2. Are you meeting the requirements for the First Year Experience?
3. Do you plan to study abroad at some point?
4. Are you on track to make progress in at least three of the following four areas (writing, math, science, foreign language)?
   *If they indicate they are on a pre-med track, they should take at least one semester of chemistry freshman year.
   *If at all possible, students should take two honors courses beyond HONS 110 and HONS 100. This is often satisfied by an honors science sequence.

Sophomores
1. Are you enrolled in Western Civilization?
2. Have you completed Calculus? For humanities and art majors, Honors Math Appreciation can suffice for the 200-level math class.
   *Students must declare a major in their sophomore year (after they have 45 credits).

Juniors
1. Have you signed up for an interdisciplinary seminar?
2. Have you arranged an independent study with a faculty member in your discipline?
*Juniors should be encouraged to think about how the independent study can lead into a Bachelors Essay. They may want to begin their essay junior year rather than senior year.

Seniors
1. Have you identified a faculty member to direct your Bachelors Essay?
2. Have you made an appointment for a degree audit with Ms. Richardson?
3. Have you filled out the paperwork for graduation?

Help on the Website

The best tool during an advising appointment is the college website. Here are a few places that can help:

• To access the basic advising tools (DegreeWorks, General Education Requirements, Degree Worksheets)
  1. www.cofc.edu> Site Index> Academic Advising
  2. Choose from the left sidebar.
• To access the Honors College advising site
  1. www.cofc.edu> Honors College> Life in Honors
  2. Click Honors College Academic Advising.
• To access details about Honors requirements (Bachelors Essay, Independent Study, Western Civilization)
  1. www.cofc.edu> Honors College> Life in Honors> Honors Courses
  2. Click the desired topic.

Basic Advising Strategies “Check List”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Advising Strategies</th>
<th>Freshman Year</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Semester</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONS 100 - BGS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continue with Science as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONS 110 - Academic Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continue with Foreign Language as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Other Honors course (science, hum, soc sci)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continue with Math as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address at least two of the following:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Honors elective?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Math 2) Science 3) Foreign Language</td>
<td></td>
<td>General education course or Major course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Sophomore Year | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Fall Semester  | | Spring Semester |
| HONS 120       | | HONS 130 |
| Continue Foreign language as necessary | | Continue Foreign language as necessary |
| General Education course as necessary | | General Education course as necessary |
| 1/2 courses in Major/minor | | 1/2 courses in Major/minor |

| Junior Year | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| Fall Semester | | Spring Semester |
| Honors Interdisciplinary Course | | Independent Study |
| Complete remaining gen ed course | | Complete remaining gen ed course |
| 2-3 courses in major/minor | | 2-3 courses in major/minor |
### Finding Your Voice through Public Speaking

As a facilitator, you will need to speak to your group of students weekly (obviously). The biggest way to fight nervousness while teaching is to be prepared: show up early, know your topic, and plan your lesson using notes and outlines. You are the authority figure, and your students will assume you have authority. If you feel less confident than desired, “fake it ‘til you make it” and the students will never be the wiser.

From the famous Toastmasters, here are a few suggestions for speaking to a large group:

**10 Tips for Public Speaking**

1. **Know your material.** Pick a topic you are interested in. Know more about it than you include in your speech. Use humor, personal stories and conversational language – that way you won’t easily forget what to say.
2. **Practice. Practice. Practice!** Rehearse out loud with all equipment you plan on using. Revise as necessary. Work to control filler words; Practice, pause and breathe. Practice with a timer and allow time for the unexpected.
3. **Know the audience.** Greet some of the audience members as they arrive. It’s easier to speak to a group of friends than to strangers.
4. **Know the room.** Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and any visual aids.
5. **Relax.** Begin by addressing the audience. It buys you time and calms your nerves. Pause, smile and count to three before saying anything. ("One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand. Pause. Begin.) Transform nervous energy into enthusiasm.
6. **Visualize yourself giving your speech.** Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident. Visualize the audience clapping – it will boost your confidence.
7. **Realize that people want you to succeed.** Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They’re rooting for you.
8. **Don’t apologize for any nervousness or problem – the audience probably never noticed it.**
9. **Concentrate on the message – not the medium.** Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience.
10. **Gain experience.** Mainly, your speech should represent you — as an authority and as a person. Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking.

**Evaluation: Tips on an incredibly difficult part of being a PF**
Remember that your grading suggestions are only suggestions; the final grade is assigned by the BGS faculty member.

**Empathy is okay; Giving unearned grades is not**
It is okay to give a student an A if they earn it.
It is okay to give a student a C if they earn it.
If a student is sick and has a note, be understanding.
If a student fails to turn in work because they went to a party, tough love is best.

**Being consistent in your standards**
- If you deducted 2 points for texting, deduct the same for other students.
- Being fair is a fine line, and the best thing you can do is try to stay on it.
- If a student is a habitual problem, don’t hesitate to talk to them about it.
- Additionally, don’t hesitate to talk to your supervisor about habitual issues.
- PFs should also be consistent across sections.

**Avoiding bias**
- We, inevitably as people, will not “like” everyone we meet.
- Do not let this dislike affect your attitude toward a student.
- Equally, if you “like” someone, do not give them points they do not earn.
- Remember that you are the professional in BGS.

**Recording marks**
- Record your impressions immediately after class.
- Turn in your updated grades weekly (in your binder) by the date due.
- Take notes during in-class student presentations.
- Grades must be assigned in a timely manner. (Preferably by the following class)
- Exceptions to grading policies can only be made by a faculty member.

**Students deserve respect, consistency, and thoughtfulness in grading.**

“Batching” grades or making exceptions to grading policies is cause for disciplinary action, up to and including job termination.

If you ever have questions about grades or students, please discuss them with the BGS coordinator or faculty member.
Section 3: Technical Support: Is it plugged in?

Although we live in an age of laptop-toting 6-year-olds, there are still a few aspects of technology used in BGS that must be addressed. How should you sign your e-mails? What do you do about Facebook requests? Where are instructor-things located in OAKS?

Simple Answers First

1. How should I sign my e-mails?
   Sign with your full name, title, and class section. (See example.)
   John Doe
   BGS Peer Facilitator
   Thursday Class Section

2. What is the policy on friending people on Facebook?
   While Facebook is a personal preference, our suggestion is that you wait until after final exams to add your students to your friend list, or that you make certain to utilize your Facebook account as a professional tool.

3. What is the blog address? The e-mail address? The website?
   http://blogs.cofc.edu/bgs/
   bgs@cofc.edu
   https://sites.google.com/site/bgspeerfacilitatorhandbook/

4. Are there rules for laptops and electronics in class? What are they?
   Yes. Students are not allowed to have laptops, iPads, iPods, etc in class unless they are asked to bring them for a specific class activity. Facebook, e-mail, texting, and other personal means of communication are always off-limits.

5. How often should I check my e-mail?
   Twice a day during the work week, and be sure to respond right away. Try to check it at least once a weekend.

Beware the Blog (…although it’s quite harmless)

The BGS blog is crucial to the program. How do you access it? How do your students access it? Where do you get technical support for the blog? Remember that actual blog prompts are included in the “Assignments” section of this book.

Basic Technicalities… like “logging in” and “posting”

First, some lingo: the Dashboard is the website’s administration panel— that’s where all the mechanics happen. You will access the Dashboard to compose blog posts and check your user stats and display options.
How do I access the blog?

1. From http://blogs.cofc.edu/bgs/ > Click Log in on the Sign in sidebar.
2. Enter your CofC User Name (what is before the @ in your CofC g-mail address).
3. Enter your official CofC password. Note: When you change your CofC password, this password changes as well.
4. Once you are logged in, you will see the Dashboard. If you aren’t immediately routed to the Dashboard, click Site Admin on the right sidebar.

From the PF Perspective: FAQs

What happens if my students cannot sign in? Usually, the problem can be fixed easily. First, the student should make certain they are using the proper User ID and Password. If they are, they can right-click “Log-In,” then click Open in New Window. Usually they are able to log in from the new window. If that does not work, refer the student to tech support.

My student has submitted a post, but I do not see it. Where do I find missing posts? If the student has posted a blog, but you do not see it, you can check by clicking Posts on the left sidebar. If you still do not see the post, remind your students that they MUST click Publish for their work to be submitted.

What if my students mislabel their posts? How do I move their posts to my BGS section? View the post you would like to move, then click Edit. In the right “Categories” sidebar, deselect the incorrect checkbox. Select the proper BGS section. Click Update.

What if my students forget to tag their posts? How can I tag them? View the post you would like to tag then click Edit. In the lower right Tags sidebar, type in a tag and click Add. On the upper right sidebar, click Update.

Why do some portions of the blog require a password? What is the password? In order to protect our students, some portions of the blog are protected so that only BGS staff and students can see them. Consult BGS staff for current password: __________________

To Comment: Click on “Comment” under the post, but make sure you are logged on–otherwise the blog server won’t accept your comment.

Blogs: From the Student Participant Perspective

How do I access the blog?
1. From http://blogs.cofc.edu/bgs/ > Click Log in on the Sign in sidebar. Note: If you enter “www” before the address, it will not work.
2. Enter your CofC User Name (what is before the @ in your CofC g-mail address).
3. Enter your official CofC password. Note: When you change your CofC password, this password changes as well.
4. Once you are logged in, you will see the Dashboard. If you aren’t immediately routed to the Dashboard, click Site Admin on the right sidebar.
The two items on the Dashboard that will be most important—both in the left sidebar—are **Posts** and **Users**. Through **Users**, you can change things like your public posting name using **Nickname**. You need to use at least your first name so you can be identified.

Once you set up your nickname, click **Posts** to compose and edit your blog reflections. Clicking **Posts** will reveal a sub-menu (if it is not already exposed). Click **Add New**. A text editor opens. Offer an engaging post title and type away in the text box below!

You can save posts that are still in progress as drafts. Previewing all posts before publication is encouraged. When you finish editing your blog, you need to click **Publish** to submit it to the blog. You can also go back and edit your own published posts.

**A note for BGS participants:** During BGS, you must pay special attention to post “Categories.” On the BGS course website and blog, you will access your section’s blogging area via the drop-down menu. To blog, and to read your peers’ posts, click on your own section in the drop-down menu instead of the main blog menu button. In order for your posts to appear in the proper section, you must file your post in your section’s designated Category (“Thursday Afternoon,” for example). You must select your section in the “Category” box to the right of the composition box or you will not receive credit for your post.

**For the Fancy-pants Bloggers**

Blog posts are great because they can point (link) to other things online. You can also visually enhance them by adding pictures and videos. Moreover, you can help readers categorize them by giving the “tags.” All of these things help bring a blog post to life.

**To add a link:** In order to point to other blogs, news items, or anything else online, you need to add a link. You’ll see the “link” button (it looks like two links of a chain) in the composition toolbar. Highlight the text in your post that you want linked and click on the “link” button. You’ll be prompted to enter a URL (web address). (Make sure the “http://” tag doesn’t appear twice when you cut and paste). You can also give the link a title (these words will appear when a user hovers over the link). Check the box next to “open link in new tab” so you don’t lose your current place on the website. Then, just click “Add Link” and you’re done!

**To include a picture:** Click on the picture-frame icon to the right of “Upload/Insert” at the top-left of the composition box. Remember to select the appropriate size (small thumbnail, larger image, etc.) and alignment. You have to press the “upload picture” button at the bottom of the insert-picture dialog box to officially upload the post. Once the picture is uploaded into your post, you can change its size and/or location, add a caption, or work with the advanced features by clicking on the picture itself, and clicking on the icon in the upper-left of the picture. Please also link your photo to the website from which you borrowed it (see linking instructions above). In addition to saving online images to your computer and uploading them as described above, you can simply cut and paste and alter the specs once the picture is already in your post. Not all picture formats
translate well, though, so cutting and pasting from online, while easier, can sometime create more problems. JPEG is the safest file format for pictures.

To add video: Simply click on the Youtube (or other) video you would like to upload and cut-and-paste the URL (web address) directly into your post. You’re done! If you want more control over the appearance of the video (border color, framing, size, etc.) you can click “embed” and insert the code. In order to do this, you need to click the HTML tab at the top-right of the composition box. Remember to switch back to the “Visual” tab after you insert the code, however, as that’s the easiest interface for composing your post.

Adding Tags: When you compose a post, it will help readers of the blog if you offer 1-3 keywords what will help identify it. If you are enrolled in the Honors First-Year Experience course (BGS) you will be required to add tags that indicate certain values-related competencies-related keywords for your blog reflections. In order to insert a tag, look for the “Post Tags” box to the right-hand site of the composition box (you may have to scroll down just a bit). You can choose from frequently used keywords or add new ones. The tags will join a “tag cloud” on the right side of the course website. This will create a dynamic keyword map of your collective blogging.

To Comment: Click on “Comment” under the post, but make sure you are logged on—otherwise the blog server won’t accept your comment.

The Strength of OAKS

Student assignments, announcements, and grades can be handled through OAKS. As a peer facilitator, you need to understand, embrace, and utilize the online tool. How do you log in? How do you check grades? How do you update grades? Make OAKS your friend.

• How do I access my BGS class on OAKS?
  Log into MyCharleston > click OAKS> In the My Courses panel, Click the Instructor Tab. You should be able to select your BGS section.

• How do I update the Calendar?
  From your BGS section, click Calendar at the top-center of the screen. Click New Event. Fill in the appropriate fields, and click Save and New. If you are updating an existing event, click Calendar, select the event, edit the details, and click Save.

• How do I add a News Announcement?
  From your BGS section, click the green plus sign under News. Fill in the form and click Save and New. A friendly reminder: ALL students in your section will see the announcement, not only your advisees.

• How do I access Dropbox submissions?
Log into MyCharleston > click OAKS > In the My Courses panel, Click the Instructor Tab. Select your BGS section. Click Dropbox. Click on the folder you wish to open. A list of submissions appears.

- How do I leave feedback on Dropbox submissions?
  From the Dropbox, click the folder you wish to open. Find the submission you would like to comment on and click Leave Feedback. Enter your feedback and click Save. If you would like to update/edit feedback for a submission, find the submission and click Feedback Left. Update and click Save.

Please do not give student feedback via e-mail. If you would like to leave in-text feedback (such as track-changes), you must download the student document, leave your comments, and upload the marked copy to OAKS as an attachment on the Leave Feedback screen.

- How do I learn what the icon buttons mean?
  Hold your mouse over an icon for it to display a written label.

- How do I add, edit, or delete a file on the OAKS Content tab? Although you should not be asked to do this, and you should rarely (probably never) delete something, here are the basics:
  Log into MyCharleston > click OAKS > In the My Courses panel, Click the Instructor Tab. Select your BGS section. Click Content. The “Manage Content” window appears.
  - To Add: Icons with a green “plus” sign allow you to add content.
  - To Edit: Select the box next to the item you wish to edit. Click the Edit button at the top of the window (two pencils icon).
  - To Delete: Select the box next to the item you wish to delete. Click the Delete button at the top of the window (trash can icon).

- How do I know when a student last logged on?
  A little-known secret is that instructors can see when a student last logged into OAKS. After selecting your BGS section, click Classlist. You can see the date and time of a student’s last log-in next to their name.
Section 4: In the Looking Glass: Reflective Assignments

Throughout the course of the course, you will guide your students through multiple writing and reflective assignments. From writing informal blog posts to compiling a professional portfolio, you need to provide students with answers and support. This section will guide you in your approach.

Put Yourself on the Map: Core Competencies and Values

After personal reflection and discussions, students will be required to create a visual representation (or map) of their core competencies and values.

Blog it Out

Before blogging, students should be asked to consider their audience: facilitators, instructors, and future employers.

The four blogs prompts below are keyed to skills that you will need to practice in order to compose excellent personal essays (just to clarify: when directed towards competitive opportunities, these kinds of essays are often referred to as “personal statements”). An excellent personal essay articulates values and competencies that have been tested and proven by a dynamic range of academic and community engagements. And even as these blogs—and the culminating personal essay—offer a glimpse of the person you are today, they should also help you conceive of the person you want to become in the years ahead.

BLOG 1—The Content of Character: Competencies and Values (300-400 words)

- **Reading:** Phillip Lopate, “On the Necessity of Turning Oneself Into a Character”
- **Discussion:** What is Lopate’s central argument? What, according to Lopate, does deft self-characterization require? Did you find yourself disagreeing with certain aspects of Lopate’s argument?
- **Prompt:** Compose a character sketch of yourself. Try to remain as “in-the-moment” as possible. You are not giving your biography, but a much closer description of yourself as you exist at a moment—ordinary or extraordinary—in time.

BLOG 2—The Creation of Character (300-400 words)

- **Reading:** Anton Vander Zee, “Inventing Yourself: Towards the Personal Essay”
- **Discussion:** What are values and competencies? What kinds of things might we place in each category? Do these values and competencies convey meaning on their own? Where do competencies and values come from? Are they innate?
Woven into the very fiber of our being? Or are they learned and acquired? Aspired to and constructed? Invented, or even faked?

- **Blog Prompt:** Think back to the map of values and competencies that you sketched out during your BGS class. Reflect broadly on the tension between the innate and the constructed, the authentic and the strategic. Is that a real tension for you? A productive one? A dynamic one? A frustrating one? Can those invented values and competencies become innate? Is that when you finally own them? Can you name any values or competencies about which you have no good stories to tell? What will you have to do to tell convincing stories about those values and competencies in the future?

**BLOG 3—Details, Details, Details: Under/Over/Reflect (300–400 words)**

- **Readings:** Rob Davidson, “On Emotional Investment and the Objective Correlative”; Roy Peter Clark, “Get the Name of the Dog.”
- **Discussion:** What is the objective correlative, and what does it ask of us? What makes the objective correlative a key element in truly excellent writing? Wouldn’t it be much more effective to just state what one means or feels directly rather than in what can seem an evasive, roundabout way?
- **Prompt:** First, in 100-150 words, narrate part of a scene in which you are doing something that you value. Exclude anything that strikes you as specific and detailed. Next, in 100-150 words, flood the same text with details: specific place names, individual names, smells, sounds, sights, objective correlates, and so on. Finally, in 150-200 words, reflect on the two texts (what did the exercise help you see) and select a few sentences where you compose a “happy medium” directed towards a specific projected audience (a future employer, for example). How does your conception of that hypothetical audience impact the choices you made?

**BLOG 4—The Act of Service (300–400 words)**

- **Reading:** “Building Communities from the Inside Out.”
- **Discussion:** Discuss asset-based community development vs. a more traditional needs-based model before constructing respective “maps” in relation to the LOI initiative. How would you define ABCD? What values and competencies does this approach promote and demand?
- **Prompts (choose one)**
  - Compose an asset map and a needs map for a service context (past or present), and reflect upon how each map presents a different model or idea of community service.
  - Define ABCD in your own words (in 2-3 sentences). Next, explore, and possibly critique, your past service experience in light of what is likely a new way of conceiving of your service experience.
  - Assess your current LOI activities in relation to the ABCD model. To what extent does the LOI initiative seize upon and learn from the core
ABCD principles? In what ways does it fall short? How would you recommend that we address these shortcomings?

- How does the ABCD model complicate (for better or worse) the seemingly simple and selfless “act” of service? How do the words often used to describe community outreach (“service,” “needs,” “troubled communities”) shape our outreach efforts? Are there better, more careful words we might use?

“Personally…” Here’s the Statement

The personal essay can seem tedious. We are constantly coaxed into offering some one or two page version of ourselves. “They have the resume already,” we think. “They’ve seen the GPA, class rank, and evidence of copious acts of community service.” What’s the point? Why must we narrate ourselves? Why the personal essay? The point is this: if you are unable to tell convincing and lively stories about yourself, you appear to others as mere assemblages of boring facts and abstract values. For this reason, it is crucial to understand and practice the personal essay. This way, when you are prompted to narrate some aspect of your life for a scholarship, a summer internship, or, eventually, graduate school or a prestigious nationally competitive award, you can approach the task with the confidence and skills that you will need. Remember: you are in control of how you are perceived; you can write yourself into the world. Use the skills and self-knowledge you gained through the four blog posts to compose a superb personal essay.

For this assignment, please write a one-page, single-spaced personal statement in response to the following prompt: in your essay, please compose a narrative, giving a picture of you as an individual. It could deal with your personal history, family background, influences on your intellectual development, the educational and cultural opportunities (or lack thereof) to which you have been exposed. Address the ways in which these experiences have shaped who you are as a scholar and person. But remember: before we can get Beyond George Street, we need to get Beyond High School. The best essays will use more recent experiences—from the current semester or perhaps a meaningful summer experience—to convey strategically chosen values and competencies (you can’t possibly relate all your values and competencies) in a rich and textured narrative.

If you are in HONS 110, you will “workshop” the essay during the last week of class. If you are not in Academic Writing, you will meet with a BGS faculty member in individual or group workshops.

You will receive two grades on the Personal Essay. In BGS, you will receive a “process” grade that reflects your timely and earnest participation in the preparatory blogging assignment, your submission of a complete and polished draft of the personal essay prior to Thanksgiving Break, and a significantly revised final draft in your portfolio. In your HONS 110 section, you will receive a “product” grade based on the quality of your narrative. A grading rubric shared in all sections of HONS 110 will be circulated in
advance so you can better understand the criteria used to determine your grade. If you are not enrolled in HONS 110, a BGS faculty member will determine your “product” grade.

**The Final Product: Portfolio Guidelines**

Throughout the semester you will create a portfolio that will represent your accomplishments across your college and professional career. While there will be several required documents for your portfolio (see the nested sub-entries for each) we encourage you to add to your portfolio according to your needs and interests. You might include slides from a studio art class, for example, or a substantial research paper from a political science course. Because the portfolio is a semester-long project, it will go through several revisions in response to peer edits, in-class workshops, outside input from Academic Writing instructors and Writing Lab staff, and feedback from PFs and class leaders. You will have the option of submitting a physical version of the portfolio or of creating an e-portfolio.

A draft of your portfolios will be due in class during the last week. Failure to bring your complete portfolio to class will result in a lower grade on the portfolio. During class, you will review the components of the portfolio as a group and your peer facilitator will answer any questions you have about the final submission.

Your portfolios should contain the following documents in this order:

- Résumé
- Personal Statement
- Four-Year Navigator
- Action Plan
- Other materials: your best research paper from the semester, perhaps, or slides from a studio art project.

These documents should all be typed and free of grammatical, spelling, and other typographical errors.

Your portfolios should have a professional appearance; you should submit them in a new binder with a professional label on front (no colorings, flowers, handwritten titles, etc.—use typed labels). The portfolio should be black or blue–white sometimes works but over time can start looking dingy.

Your documents should be either hole-punched or you may choose to put each document in a clear sheet protector—that way you don’t have to hole punch them and you could have multiple copies of your resume or personal statement just in case you are in an interview and they ask for one. If you don’t put each document in a separate sheet protector, you should use dividers between each document. The dividers should have typed labels—again, no handwriting.

You may choose to do an e-portfolio, but it too must have a professional appearance. See samples and information about e-portfolios under the Resources tab. Please be aware that
e-portfolios are not emails with attached documents – they are well-designed, thoughtful, creative compilations of your portfolio in an electronic format. Dividers between each document. The dividers should have typed labels—again, no handwriting.

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Section 5: The College Reads! and Literacy Outreach

One large component of BGS is the community outreach program. What better way to reach out than to help with one of Charleston’s largest social issues? Illiteracy is crippling to a community… and here’s how we’re connecting college to communities to books. Read on for information on The College Reads! book discussions and our ties to the Literacy Outreach Initiative.

The College Reads!

Read on to learn about leading a book discussion. How does this program tie to LOI?

The College Reads! is the College of Charleston’s common reading program. Each year, The College Reads! engages and connects thousands of students, faculty and staff around a single book to promote the idea that liberally educated people read broadly and discuss with one another ideas arising from the books they share. In past years, The College Reads! collaborated with the Honors College to support the Literacy Outreach Initiative. Two-hundred College of Charleston students work with nearly 4,000 Charleston County children and adults to promote literacy and model a love of reading.

In an effort to encourage incoming freshmen to participate in The College Reads!, you will be leading a book discussion with your advising group. Before the discussion, you will collaborate with other PFs to develop thought-provoking discussion questions about the selected book.

The Importance of Community Outreach… and why LOI, specifically

Most people don’t contest the importance of helping their community. Why did we choose LOI to focus our outreach? In light of the need to address problems with access to education worldwide and with literacy development in the Charleston community, the overarching goal of this initiative is to engage College of Charleston students in literacy-focused outreach both globally and locally.

The Requirements

What do students DO during LOI? What is optional; what is not?
Find out here: http://blogs.cofc.edu/loi/
Section 6: The Rest of the Story: Other requirements

The last of the BGS requirements include: Know the News, Meet a Professor, student résumés, and student action plans.

Assignment 1: Meet a Professor

Students are required to meet with a professor to learn how to meaningfully engage with faculty members. The students will receive the following assignment guidelines:

Meet a Professor Instructions

Most of them aren’t very scary! For this assignment, you should select a faculty member in a discipline that you are considering for your major. Find someone who is doing work that interests you. The faculty member can be a professor you currently have or one whose class you might take in the future.

Email the professor and introduce yourself: “I’m XXXX, a student in the Honors College. I’m very interested in the work that you are doing on XXX.” Ask if the faculty member could meet with you for about 15 minutes to talk about opportunities to get involved in the kind of work he/she is doing. Make sure you don’t miss the meeting – missing meetings with faculty is a huge faux pas!

At the meeting, introduce yourself again and tell the faculty member that you are a first year student in the Honors College. You think you want to major in XXXX. You really like the work he/she is doing on XXXX and would like to know a little more about it and whether there are opportunities available for undergraduates to work on a project.

After the meeting, complete the attached form and submit to you PF by XXX.

Meet a Professor Interview Questions/Summary Form

Student Name:
Name of Faculty Member:
Date of Meeting:
Brief description of faculty member’s work:

Brief description of opportunities for undergraduates to collaborate with faculty member or in department:

How early can an undergraduate get involved in the research or other scholarly collaboration with the faculty member?

Why did you select this particular faculty member and do you think it’s possible that you will work with him or her at some point? If so, in what capacity? If not, what other faculty might you approach and why?
Assignment 2: Know the News

One important aspect of being a well-informed citizen is being well-informed. This assignment teaches students how to find, understand, and analyze information on current affairs. You may encounter questions like, “What do you mean, I can’t use the Enquirer?” or “Why doesn’t Cosmopolitan count as a reputable source?” We have this assignment for that very reason.

Know the News Assignment Instructions

As a college student (especially one in the Honors College) you are expected to be up-to-date on current events by means of respected news sources. This is a great way to expose yourself to the moment’s most important and relevant ideas, events, people, and organizations, allowing you to broaden your perspective outside of the college.

You should read a magazine or newspaper article and prepare to facilitate a 5 minute discussion (including your brief presentation of the main points). The article you choose must have appeared in one of the publications below within the last week.

New York Times
Wall Street Journal
London Times
The Economist
Scientific American

Some of these publications are accessible online. The Honors College has print copies of the New York Times, The Economist, and Scientific American.

Present the main argument in the article and give a couple examples of the evidence/logic the author uses to support the argument. You must turn in your prepared questions and a copy of the original article. While reading the article, think about questions that will help you and your group dig deeper into the subject matter. Some of the questions you might consider are:

What ethical issues are or potentially could be at play?

How is the topic important for contemporary society? The future?

If there is a conflict presented, how do you see the conflict being resolved? Do you agree with one side of the argument more than another?

What are some causes of the event or topic in the article?

What are the effects of the event or topic?
Assignment 3: Student Résumés

Résumés are vital to most applications: scholarships, internships, graduate school admissions, and careers, especially. By partnering with the campus Career Center, BGS is providing students an important workshop on building a competitive résumé.

Résumé Instructions

For this assignment, using the tools provided by the Career Center, you should develop a professionally-formatted “baseline” résumé, one that is a comprehensive compilation of your accomplishments, responsibilities, awards/honors, skills and interests. You can tailor this base document for specific application situations.

Submit your résumé through OAKS no later than the due date. Your PF will review it with you at your portfolio meeting.

Assignment 4: Student Action Plans

Over the course of the semester, students will be expected to think about their future engagements. How will they put into action the ideas of building community and embracing leadership? The following assignments will guide them in their endeavors.
Section 7: Appendix

The following pages are handouts and worksheets useful for the course.
4 Year Navigator

Name:
(Potential) Major:
(Potential) 2nd Major:
(Potential) Minor:
Professional Focus:

List your Transfer Credits (transfer credit through dual enrollment or enrollment at other colleges, AP credit, IB credit):

**Freshman Year:**
First Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Proposed Second Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Post-Freshmen Year Summer Plans:

**Sophomore Year:**
Proposed First Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Proposed Second Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Post-Sophomore Year Summer Plans:
Junior Year:
Proposed First Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Proposed Second Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Post-Junior Year Summer Plans:

Senior Year:
Proposed First Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Proposed Second Semester Courses (Indicate credit hours for each)

Post-Graduate Plans:

Remember to think about:
--When you might study abroad
--When you might pursue an internship
--When you might start participating in undergraduate research
Leadership and Community Engagement Action Plan

Name:

Prospective Major(s)/Minors(s):

What Academic & Social Issues are you passionate about?

Future Educational Plans/ Career Plans:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Enrichment Activity</th>
<th>What competencies will you develop?</th>
<th>How is this congruent with your core values?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opportunities for Leadership:

How does this relate to your long term goals?

Next Steps (during this year ‘12-’13):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On-Campus Enrichment Activity</th>
<th>What competencies will you develop?</th>
<th>How is this congruent with your core values?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunities for Leadership:

How does this relate to your long term goals?

Next Steps (during this year ’12-’13):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community &amp; Service Enrichment Activity</th>
<th>What competencies will you develop?</th>
<th>How is this congruent with your core values?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Description:

Opportunities for Leadership:

How does this relate to your long term goals?

Next Steps (during this year ’12-’13):