FYI 100 Expenses and Field Trips

The budget has been significantly reduced from last year and there are no funds available for field trips or any other FYI 100 expenses. In my opinion, field trips are still the best mechanisms we have to make those vital learning community connections. The field trip venue does not have to be related to the academic course content, however it should be “educational” and/or “informative.” The major goal of a field trip is personal interactions. This can be done with little or no cost. Locally, students have gone to the Windham Textile and History Museum, The Willimantic Food Co-op, The Covenant Soup Kitchen, the Windham Arts Collaborative and Third Thursday (September 18, 2014). Students can easily walk to these venues. Such activities with the exception of Third Thursday should be planned in advance with a representative from the venue you wish to visit. Students who had taken a field trip as freshmen have told us time and again that it was the field trip that enabled them to get to know each other, their professor, and their peer mentor.

Invariably, those students who had their field trip experience at the end of the semester said that it would have been much more effective had it been at the beginning of the semester. Please try and plan a field-trip-like experience for the beginning of the semester.

There are generally three cost considerations associated with a field trip; transportation, venue fees, and meals.

1. Transportation – Since field trip funds are no longer available, there are only two no cost travel alternatives; university vans and walking. To reserve a van(s), contact Scott Smith (X54326, smithsc@easternct.edu), Athletics Equipment Manager/Vehicle Coordinator, Sports Center Room 118. As for drivers, anyone employed by Eastern (student workers included) can drive most of the vans. Of course, if the venue is close enough, you can walk.

2. Venue Costs - Some venues can be quite expensive. Since the students will have to pay all costs associated with the venue, please consider keeping the cost to no greater than $10.00. If a student cannot afford the cost associated with a field trip, they should be excused from the activity and given an alternative assignment.

3. Meals – If a field trip lasts longer than three hours, there will usually be a meal involved. Students can either pay for their own meals as long as you have made arrangements for them to purchase food somewhere or have Eastern’s food service pack them a box lunch. You can arrange to have food services prepare boxed lunches for all of your students if you give them one week’s notice. The lunches can then be picked up as you leave campus.

If students will miss classes or a sport practice, you must give them a written note (also found at http://www.easternct.edu/firstyear/faculty_info.htm) to give to their instructors or coach. Inevitably, someone will not be able to go for one reason or another. In such cases, a substantial make-up assignment should be considered. This should be clearly stated in your syllabus.

You must complete a Travel Authorization form (link found at the secret website http://www.easternct.edu/firstyear/faculty_info.htm) including a list of all participants for your field trip. Once you have completely filled out your TA, have your department chair sign it and send or bring it to my office, currently Webb 147.