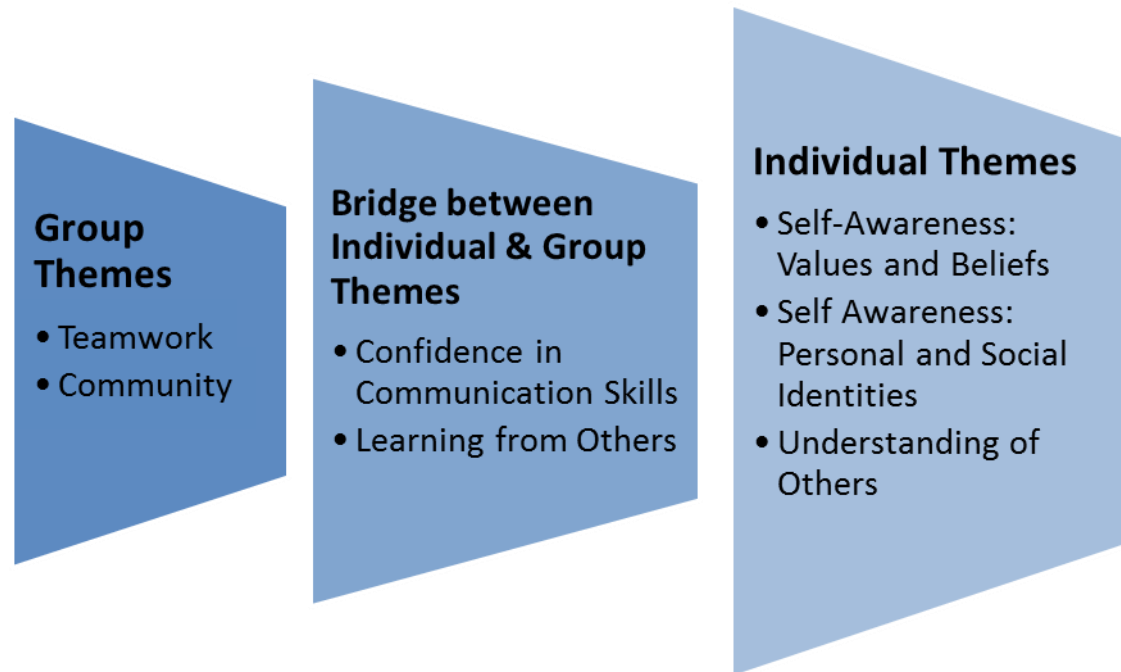


### Successes of the Fall 2014 Pilot Course:

Six sections of the First-Year Dialogue pilot course were held in the fall 2014 semester. A total of 52 students enrolled. Over the course of the semester, common rubrics were utilized by the instructors to assess student learning. In addition, students had the opportunity to evaluate their experiences through an end-of-semester evaluation.

The assessments provided evidence of student learning across the following themes:



### Interested in enrolling?

Enrollment will begin during SLU 101 summer registration dates. Further information about enrolling in the course can be found from your academic advisor, SLU 101 leader, or through the Student Success Center.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

The First-Year Dialogue course is a collaborative effort between the Student Success Center, Cross Cultural Center, and Assistant Dean of Diversity and Inclusion from the College of Arts and Sciences.

For questions, please contact: Kelly Herbolich  
Program Director  
Retention & Academic Success  
(314)977-2649, kherboli@slu.edu

# FIRST-YEAR DIALOGUE

## STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER Saint Louis University

### Course Description:

The First-Year Dialogue is a discussion-based, peer-led course where students will explore the culture of Saint Louis University and define their personal identity as a SLU student. The course uses communication theory to examine how students navigate between the culture of SLU on interpersonal and community levels.

The 3 credit-hour course meets for 2.5 hours per week for 14 weeks.

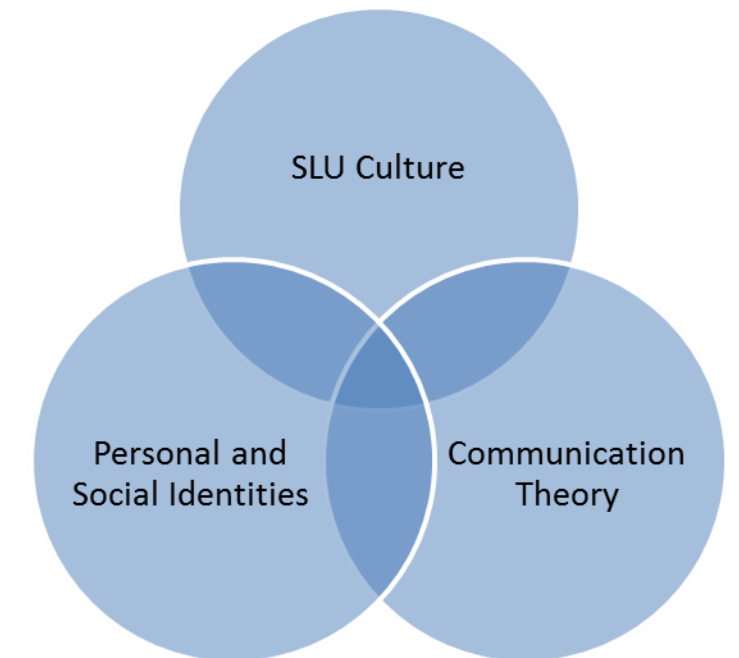
### Dialogue and SLU's Mission:

The purpose of this course is to prime students for social action through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to dialogue. By learning of and engaging in dialogue during the first year, we seek students to learn about themselves and prepare for social justice work within the local, national, and international communities.

### Learning Outcomes for the Course:

Through the practice of sustained dialogue and reflection, students will be able to...

1. Define personal values and beliefs that influence the decision to attend college.
2. Describe personal and social identities.
3. Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate with those different from self.
4. Describe the differences and similarities of experiences and perspectives across social identities.
5. Explain how University resources and services support a diverse student body.
6. Critically reflect upon personal responsibility to the University community.
7. Examine personal, social, and societal transitional factors affecting first-year college students.
8. Identify campus issues and formulate a plan that contributes to an inclusive University community.



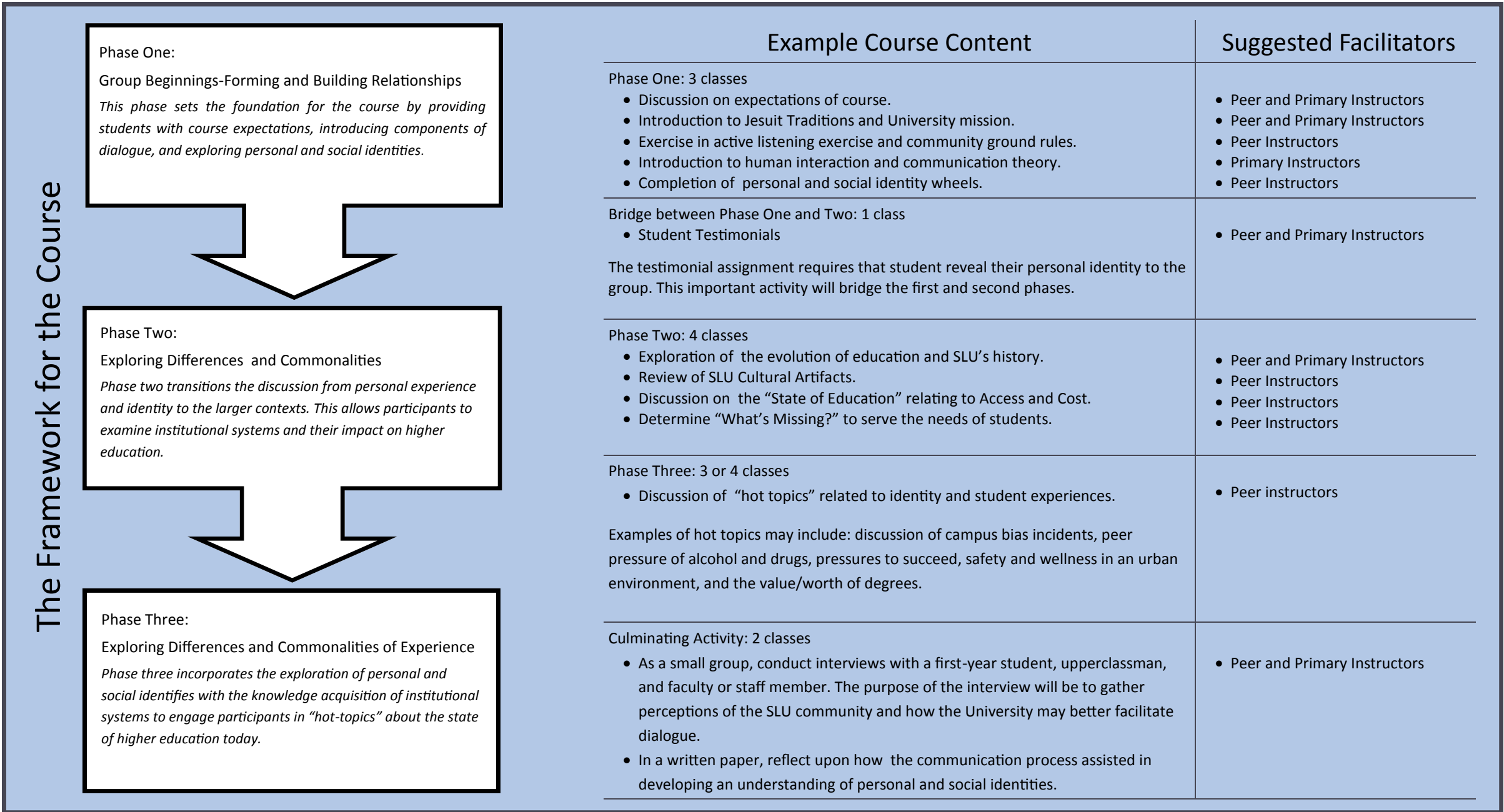
**Hiring and Training for Fall 2015:**

Peer and primary instructors will be recruited throughout February 2015 to teach six sections of the course.

Trainings will occur in April in order to provide the necessary tools to prepare for instructing a dialogue course. The following provide a brief overview of the training topics. An additional training will occur in August before the beginning of the fall semester.

**Topics Covered in Training:**

- Overview of the First-Year Dialogue
- Timeline of the Curriculum and Activities
- Differences between Dialogue and Debate
- Expectations of Working with the Peers and Primary Instructors
- Setting Guidelines to Dialogue
- Active Listening & Non-Verbal Communication
- Social Identity Profiles
- “What is Facilitation?”
- Challenges of Facilitating Dialogue



**The Role of the Primary Instructor:**

The primary instructor is responsible for the oversight and direction of the 3-credit hour, 14 week course. Responsibilities given to the primary instructor include attending training sessions, preparing for the course, facilitating class discussions, and providing support to two peer instructors.

The primary instructor will play an essential role in setting-up the course. However, the nature of an intergroup dialogue framework encourages peer instructors to create and sustain the dialogue. As the primary instructor begins working with assigned peer instructors, they should agree upon when the primary instructor should be present. As the course progresses, the primary instructor should remain available to attend the class whenever it is felt to be necessary, and more importantly, should plan to meet with the peer instructors for at least 30 minutes per week.

A primary instructor can prepare that working with the course will take approximately 3-5 hours per week.

**The Role of the Peer Instructor:**

The peer instructor positions are considered leadership opportunities within the First-Year Experience. Peer instructors’ responsibilities include attending training sessions, preparing for the course, facilitating class discussions, and working directly with a primary instructor.

The peer instructors are an essential part of the intergroup dialogue framework, and for the purpose of this course, are primarily responsible for actively engaging students in dialogue. To prepare for this process, peer instructors will be trained on content and processes, such as: dialogic communication, social justice education, group building, conflict surfacing, and de-escalation.

Two peer instructors will be provided for each section. They are expected to work as a team and should utilize the primary instructor as a supervisor and mentor. As part of the instructor experience, they will enroll in EDL 305: Internship in Peer Instruction and should prepare to spend 5 hours per week on the course.