June 2022

Dear Syracuse University Project Advance Student:

Welcome to SUPA, a first-year college course in academic writing and textual studies that all Syracuse freshmen take as part of their baccalaureate studies at Syracuse University. You will find this college course enjoyable, challenging, and useful. SUPA will intellectually challenge you, requiring you to deeply explore and thoroughly interact with college-level subject matter. This college course will prepare you to transition from high school to college, and you will earn 6 college credits.

In preparation for this year, please read:

*Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life, by Anne Lamott*

Available from the WPHS Library through the Sora reading app

Focus on the first half of Part 1 (through the chapter called “Polaroids”) and all of Part 2

As both a memoir and a writing how-to book, this text will anchor our year as a community of readers, writers, and revisers of analytical and creative work. The following passage explains the meaning of the title:

“Thirty years ago my older brother, who was ten years old at the time, was trying to get a report written on birds that he’d had three months to write, which was due the next day. We were out at our family cabin in Bolinas, and he was at the kitchen table close to tears, surrounded by binder paper and pencils and unopened books about birds, immobilized by the hugeness of the task ahead. Then my father sat down beside him put his arm around my brother's shoulder, and said, ‘Bird by bird, buddy. Just take it bird by bird.’”

In preparation for the school year, please write a **1.5-2-page reflection** (400-500 words) in which you reflect on this quotation. Have you ever left a major project until the last minute? Why? When have you approached a task “bird by bird”? What did you learn about the task – and yourself – in the process? **This assignment is due the first week of school.**

We look forward to a SUPA year together!

Sincerely,

Seren Cepler, Amy Estersohn & Nicole Reis
Adjunct Instructors
Syracuse University