

COLLEGE of the REDWOODS

GS 1 College Success
General Studies (GS-1-E5195)
Syllabus **Spring 2014**

Instructor: Dan Dempsey

Course Units: 3

Course Days/Time: T&TH / 11:40am to 1:05pm

Location: Learning Resource Center / Rm. 104

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Office Hours / Days & Location: Tues / Thurs 1:30pm to 2:30pm in HUM 125A

I will make every effort *within reason* to accommodate **your schedule** should you need my help or have concerns regarding your academic objectives relevant to this class.

Required Text: *Becoming a Master Student (14th Ed.)*

Author: Dave Ellis

Publisher: Wadsworth

Course Description:

As an academic-success, preparation course for the university-bound student, individuals will learn how to navigate the challenges of higher education by practicing advanced reading, note and test-taking skills, higher-order thinking and academic research, while establishing college and career paths and accessing resources to support their goals.

Instructional Goals, Methods & Objectives:

1. Analyze and question complex problems using techniques such as idea generation and varying decision making models.
2. Develop a transfer focused action plan through inventories, research and critical assessment of personal values.
3. Demonstrate information literacy with the ability to find, evaluate, and use college level material.
4. Engage in cooperative learning through questioning and articulating clearly framed ideas regarding diversity issues.

COURSE POLICIES

Your success in this course depends upon ***YOUR thorough understanding*** of the following information. *You will be held accountable for it.* Read It. Know It. And ask questions if anything is unclear.

What you can expect from me...

ATTENDANCE

As I understand personal and professional obligations often cause complications with one's schedule (i.e. I know you have a life outside of school), I don't demand your presence in class. Nevertheless (and without exception), students who *regularly* attend lectures *consistently* achieve better marks than those who do not. *(see **Important Notes below**).

In order to record your academic intent, a "Question for the Day" is asked at the beginning of each session. Its subject matter is nearly always related to the previous lecture/discussion. *Write your name and the date on a small piece of paper (provided) along with an answer.* This serves a twofold purpose: 1.) Those who answer the question correctly are rewarded, as their grade (if it comes down to a small margin between marks) will be advanced to the higher value; 2.) This is also the effective way I take roll, furthering my consideration of your final grade determination. Beyond these practices and expectations, quite simply...

Show up to class on time and be prepared to engage the topic under discussion.

Plan for success. Be responsible. Do your best. That's all I expect of anyone.

***Important Notes on Class Attendance, Make-Up Policy and Academic Conduct**

Rest assured your success in this class is my chief objective. As such, there will be several ways to gain the requisite points needed to justify your end grade, and, in fact, I strive to make it possible for each individual to earn a high mark even if s/he isn't the most gifted academic! At this point in time, realize that if you hand in all of the semester's exercises

by the forthcoming delivery dates—regardless one’s level of academic “brilliance”—you will be equitably compensated for the effort. With that said, understand that I’m not a practitioner of “extra credit” efforts. I will expect you to complete the assigned work by the deliverable date, and allowances made beyond that date (granted at my discretion) will be subject to a reduction from the initial value.

- ✓ Rescheduling of deliverables is *only* allowed if brought to my attention and agreed upon **ahead of time**. **YOU MUST CONTACT ME ASAP regarding your challenge/failure to complete and hand in assigned work on time! NO AFTER-THE-FACT, “Can I still hand this in?” allowances WILL BE GRANTED.** (Further reasoning on this matter will be discussed in class).
- ✓ Personal emergencies/crises/calamities/tragedies/misfortunes/mishaps/catastrophes/disasters are *considered* only if they are accompanied by a hand-written justification from one’s Physician, Employer, Psychic Life Coach, Guru/Maharishi, etc. **Contact me as soon as you’re able to discuss your absence** either via telephone or email communication. Don’t “dis” me, and I’ll give you every benefit of the doubt.
- ✓ Plagiarism and/or Cheating are cause for failure and reported to college admissions.
- ✓ *College of the Redwood’s* regulations are outlined in the institution’s catalogue and applied as directed according to the circumstance.

If you decide NOT to complete this course, **it is your responsibility to DROP THE CLASS BEFORE THE WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE!** I will not initiate a withdrawal form for you. **Failure to submit a withdrawal request before the deadline results in an automatic ‘F’ (or the highest grade earned up to that point if warranted).**

*****The use of laptop computers during lecture is accepted. Cell phone use inside class OTOH results in the reduction of a full letter grade. Make any necessary calls before entering the classroom and then... turn off your phone.*****

Last Day to Drop is Friday, April 4th (04.04.2014)

Schedule changes are invariably made to accommodate coverage of the subject matter. Arrange with a colleague to recover lost information due to your absence before you miss class. **It’s your responsibility** to remain up to date with the classroom schedule including discussion topics, assignment, quiz and exam dates. I will post your ongoing point values on MyCR. Nevertheless, **it’s your responsibility** to be cognizant of the points recorded and that they are the amount you need to earn the final grade you desire. Discuss discrepancies between your marks and mine (if you discover them) as soon as you recognize them.

Course Content Point-Values for Projects, Assignments and Exercises:

Weekly Journals (15 @ 1 pt each)

Weekly reflections on the advancements and connections you’re making enabling your college success will be **due at the beginning of each Tuesday class meeting**. You’ll either have them prepared to hand in, or you won’t. Pretty straight forward. I’ll give you a point for a deliverable that reflects sincere and legitimate thought and effort. If the product doesn’t convince me of those qualities, be prepared to defend your reasoning that in fact to you, it does.

Section Quizzes (4 @ 5 pts each)

As the course is broken into four content sections, I will give you a short quiz upon completion of the material covered in each section. These will be “take-home” exercises and will be used to query your understanding of the content covered over the time of that section. I’ll assign them on a Tuesday. You’ll return them the following Thursday.

Outside Class Assignments (5 @ 2 pts each)

These will predominantly involve activities such as viewing a movie, going to a lecture presentation, accessing campus/community services, or some other exercise that facilitates “end goals.” By that I mean you’ll have several options to qualify for this point value which will be focused yet again on your academic/personal/professional objectives.

Text Book Exercises (10 @ 1 pt each)

Becoming a Master Student has numerous in-text and on-line exercises. As we continue to access and investigate these course-content, material sources, I will inform you of where they can be found (or accessed) and my expectations of the deliverable I expect as an end product.

Roots Assignment (1 @ 50 pts)

This will be your most “value-dense” assignment for the course. In order to know where you are, and where you want to go, one is arguably best prepared by knowing where you come from. The instructions as well as the relative point values for this assignment are explained within the assignment itself.

How to “Make the Grade:”

The above components offer individuals an opportunity to practice their research and written communication skills. For the sceptic, note that these are “skill-building” exercises in which you *must* gain proficiency for both further academic pursuits and employment opportunities.

Written work must (be)...

1.) word processed (12 pt., Times Roman font with one-inch (1”) margins all around and double spaced (*this is college standard formatting —learn this formatting method now, and it will save you time and effort in your furthering written assignments!*),

2.) no more than three (3) pages in length. You can wax on eloquently if you’re so inspired, but you must be able to convey your message succinctly. Consider that the reader (me, in this case) has limited time resources to devote to your message. Learn to explain to the reader the value of the topic under discussion within a restricted time/content allotment. This is a *skill* at which every successful individual practices, builds upon, and delivers.

3.) discuss a topic related to the course content. You *may* give me work from another class if we have discussed the matter before hand. I’m amenable to assist you with your other course work, *but I have to be able to relate it to this course’s objectives.*

4.) accompanied by citation(s) (and preferably a photocopy) of the article or essay discussed (if applicable). One of the most difficult challenges college writers face is learning to become practiced in the art of *peer-reviewed research skills*. We will discuss these matters and how to apply them as the course progresses.

5.) handed in ON TIME.

Along with spelling, punctuation and related syntax, written work will be graded upon your ability to *effectively convey your understanding* of the material under review and its value to your furthering success. Deliver the piece completed to the best of your abilities when it’s due, and *move on*.

Weekly Journals (15 @ 1 pt each)	15
Section Quizzes (4 @ 5 pts each)	20
Outside Class Assignments (5 @ 2 pts each)	10
Text Book Exercises (10 @ 1 pt each)	10
Roots Assignment (1 @ 50 pts)	50

<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>105</u>
A	> 95
A-	94.9 to 90
B+	89.9 to 86
B	85.9 to 83
B-	82.9 to 80
C	79.9 to 70
D	69.9 to 60
F	<i>Any cumulative effort of 59.9 pts or less results in a failing (F) grade.</i>

<p>Section 1: Class Introduction, Diversity and Student Challenges Weeks 1 and 2</p>	<p>Topics: <i>Where Am I? Where Did I Come from? How Did I Get Here? Where Do I Want to Go, and How Do I Get There?</i></p> <p>Reading: Introduction / The Master Student Chapter 1 / First Steps Chapter 9 / Diversity</p>
<p>Section 2: Building Personal Skills for Success Now and into the Future Weeks 3 thru 8</p>	<p>Topics: <i>What Have I Gotten Myself Into?</i></p> <p>Reading: Chapter 7 / Thinking Chapter 4 / Reading Chapter 2 / Time Chapter 3 / Memory Chapter 8 / Communicating</p>
<p>Section 3: Building Academic Skills for Success Now and into the Future Weeks 9 thru 11</p>	<p>Topics: <i>I Got This!</i></p> <p>Reading: Chapter 5 / Notes Chapter 6 / Tests</p>
<p>Section 4: Building Life Skills for Success Now and into the Future Weeks 12 thru 15</p>	<p>Topics: <i>Considering Responsibility, Maturity, and Persistence; Acknowledging One's Place, Space and Engagement in the "Human Experience"</i></p> <p>Reading: Chapter 10 / Money Chapter 11 / Health Chapter 12 / What's Next?</p>