

**Missouri Western State University, Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences**  
**Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism**  
**\*\*\*\*Course Syllabus\*\*\*\***

**Reading 095: Reading Skills Improvement-Introduction to College Reading**  
**Sections 01, 02, 03, 04, & 05**

Office: Eder Hall 222S  
Phone: 816-271-4314

**COURSE GOALS:**

The purpose of this class is to enable students to expand their abilities to process and understand written expression. The focus will be on higher level comprehension skills, critical thinking, and vocabulary skills necessary for a successful college experience.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- \*American Heritage Dictionary, Fourth Edition, available at the campus bookstore.
- \*The online version of Newsweek Magazine will be available free to all students as our reading text.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

Students will be expected to:

- Bring required text to each class period unless otherwise instructed.**
- Participate actively in class discussions and activities.
- Turn in assignments on time. All assignments are due on the date indicated when they are assigned. Late assignments may not be accepted resulting in an "F" for that assignment at the discretion of the instructor.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

**In order to improve student learning as well as to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100-level courses.**

You will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided you give prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event. Class attendance is mandatory. **Grades will be lowered a full letter grade after two unexcused absences, and will continue to be lowered a full letter grade for** each two unexcused absences recorded. An excused absence is one that is approved by the instructor and must be accompanied by written documentation from an appropriate source. The instructor will make the final determination as to the validity of the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor outside of class time to make arrangements to make up missed assignments and activities.

All other absences will be deemed unexcused. The maximum number of unexcused absences allowed for this class before the midterm report, March 24, is 5. Thus, when you have six (6) unexcused absences you will be reported to the Registrar's Office, who may automatically withdraw you from this class. The Financial Aid Office will reduce financial aid as appropriate.

**SKILLSTUTOR LAB PROGRAM**

Skillstutor is a software program available online. Students will be given an in-class orientation regarding the use of the program. After the orientation, the assignments will be completed outside of the classroom. There will be a computer lab (Murphy 107) designated for completion of these assignments, or, students may work on them on any computer. The lab will house a coordinator to provide assistance for assignments. Lab hours will be announced. All students are required to complete 780 minutes at a level of 80% or above on the Skillstutor program for the semester. This works out to about an hour per week. Students are responsible to complete these hours on their own. The program will compute your scores and completed hours. This information will be monitored by the lab coordinator and distributed to your instructor.

### **COURSE GRADING INFORMATION:**

Grades will be determined by in/out of class assignments, presentations, activities, attendance, class participation, Skillstutor lab work, and quizzes and tests as follows:

Critical Thinking & Comprehension Assignments – 30%  
Class Participation – 30%  
Skillstutor Lab – 20%  
Exams – 20%

There will be a mid-term exam and a final exam in addition to the Accuplacer testing. There will be quizzes and tests given at the discretion of the instructor. Major exams will be announced well in advance.

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A 90-100%  
B 80-89%  
C 70-79%  
F 0-69

**Students must receive a “C” or above for their final classroom grade in addition to a “72” or above on the Accuplacer in order to successfully complete this course.**

\*All students with scores below 72 on the Accuplacer test at the close of the term will be required to enroll in RDG 095 a second time. Enrollment in other college programs is restricted for a student who has not met the exit standards. If a student fails to complete the course after two attempts they will be unable to continue with additional course work at Missouri Western State University.

**\*Students earning an "A" in their course work will be eligible to take the Accuplacer test at midterm. If they score a 72 or above, they will be able to leave the class following mid-term, with full credit and a final grade of "A."**

### **CIVILITY AND COOPERATION:**

Missouri Western requires all students to help with maintaining good conditions for teaching and learning. All students will treat classmates, teachers, and student assistants with civility and respect, both inside and outside the classroom. **Students who violate this policy may, among other penalties, be counted absent and asked to leave. Each and every cell phone, pager, portable CD player and radio, i.e., any electronic device that may cause class disruption, must be turned off during class.** Review the Missouri Western student handbook for further information.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**

If teachers find evidence of cheating or plagiarism, the student bears the burden of showing that the completed work is the result of personal effort. Keep thorough evidence of processes for all papers and assignments. Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, falsifying documents or academic records, or any other fraudulent activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure in the course, or expulsion from the University. When a student's grade has been affected, violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report forms.

Please see the 2009-2010 Student Handbook and Calendar for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure. This handbook is also available online at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/handbook/index.pdf>

### **LEARNING RESOURCES:**

The Center for Academic Support is available for additional assistance. Contact Cathy Gann at 271-5621 to schedule an appointment.

### **STUDENT DISABILITY:**

Any student who has a disability that prevents the fullest expressions of abilities should contact Missouri Western's special needs coordinator for possible certification of special needs and expert recommendations for assistance. Contact all teachers personally as soon as possible to discuss class requirements.