

**Texarkana College**  
**Frameworks for Mathematics and Collegiate Learning Syllabus**  
**Fall 2015 ~ PSYC 1300 Section 03 ~ Social Science Room 05**  
**Day(s) & Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.**

**Instructor Information:**

**Name:** Melva Flowers

**Office:** Social Science Room N

**Telephone:** 903-823-3325

**E-mail:** [melva.flowers@texarkanacollege.edu](mailto:melva.flowers@texarkanacollege.edu)

## Welcome!

Well done! By enrolling in this course, you are showing that you take your college experience seriously and intend to become a learner who takes responsibility for his/her academic success.

I hope that you will not only learn a lot in this course, but also find it fun and engaging. Each lesson is made up of a series of different activities, so you won't be expected to listen to me lecture the whole time! In fact, I hope that you and the other members of the class will work with me to create a fulfilling class experience—by fully participating in the discussions, being an active member of the various peer-group activities, and communicating to me your thoughts and suggestions about the material I am about to share with you.

This course will be challenging only for anyone who refuses to bring 100% commitment to each lesson. That's not you . . . so let's look forward to your earning an A!

## Course description

This course has been designed to give you a different experience than what you may have experienced in other courses. Specifically, this course offers:

- A welcoming environment.
- A strong community-building component, including establishing trust with the instructor and clarifying course expectations in a fun, inclusive way.
- Ways to stimulate motivation for attendance and participation.
- Ways of connecting the purpose of this course (both for math success and overall success in college) with your personal interests and future direction.

Course topics covered include goal setting, effective time management, note-taking strategies, how to undo bad academic habits, test-taking strategies, how to read a math textbook, and much, much more.

## Required readings/supplies

In addition to the course materials that must be purchased from the Texarkana College bookstore, I will occasionally distribute reading assignments. You are required to read all assigned material. The reading load is not designed to be heavy. As with any lecture or discussion material, reading material is fair game for exams, quizzes, or in-class discussions. You should bring the course materials to class each class session.

## Learning environment

Your enrollment in this class acknowledges that you intend to learn the course material. Behaviors that would impede the learning process will not be permitted. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, reading newspapers or books, text messaging, surfing the web, answering cell phones, and talking out of turn. If you are not sure what is appropriate, please ask me. Students are responsible for knowing and following common sense rules of behavior. I am committed to creating and maintaining an open, productive, intellectually engaging learning environment. Disruptive students will be instructed to leave the classroom. This is college, so warnings will not be issued. Please also read the Respectful Classroom Behavior document (Syllabus Appendix B) for more information about appropriate behaviors and classroom expectations.

## Objectionable material warning

This is a college course, and you should know that anything is fair game. The college classroom is a unique place in society in which any ideas, opinions, and perspectives are welcome and should be shared, respectfully. You may find some of the material offensive. There will not be any inappropriate language.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this semester, through class lectures, videos, discussions, in-class activities, and a variety of written and other assignments, you will increase your written and oral communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and toolbox of study strategies.

## High-level course objectives

### *Students*

- demonstrate a positive mindset toward learning and maintain motivation.
- develop a process through which they change negative, self-defeating habits into positive habits.
- make personal connections with peers, their instructor, and other campus support personnel.
- develop and pursue useful goals.
- demonstrate organization of time and study materials.
- describe how to store and retrieve information from their memory.
- demonstrate effective reading and note-taking strategies that enhance retention and comprehension.

- distinguish effective test-taking strategies to be used before, during, and after taking a test.
- employ critical thinking skills when approaching challenging tasks.
- demonstrate written and oral communication that is appropriate to context and that effectively conveys meaning and logic.
- identify future college and career pathways.
- locate and use support center services.
- use technology throughout the course.

## Course requirements

You are required to complete all assignments, participate in class discussions (including those involving your Success Team) and submit all written work according to the stated deadline. College instructors expect students to spend time outside of class reading, writing, and studying course material. Specifically, for every hour you are in class, you need to study for two to three hours. This means working on this class material for approximately 100 hours outside of class. This is college!

*The breakdown of the course requirements is as follows:*

250 Points / 25%	Assignments	Ongoing
150 Points / 15%	Participation	Ongoing
150 Points / 15%	Midterm Exam	See attached
150 Points / 15%	Final Exam	See attached
150 Points / 15%	Career Project	See attached
150 Points / 15%	Group Presentation	See attached

*Semester grades will be earned as follows:*

900 Points and Above / 90% and Above	A
800 – 899 Points / 80% – 89%	B
700 – 799 Points / 70% – 79%	C
600 – 699 Points / 60% – 69 %	D
500 – 599 Points / 59.9% and below	F

## Assignments (25% of semester grade)

The biggest single percentage of points for this course comes from completing regular assignments. These assignments will vary—they include, for example, journal entries, time management plans, exam debriefs, and goal-setting outlines—and they will offer many opportunities for you to apply what we are studying in class immediately. Completing these assignments on time and thoroughly will earn you full credit.

*A special note about journal assignments:* Journaling in this course is designed to help you reflect on the course material and your experiences outside of class and college and to stimulate insights into becoming a more successful learner overall. See Syllabus Appendix C for information about how journal entry writing is graded. Please type your journal (see “Guidelines

for written work.”) When your journal is returned to you, please put it in your binder. Further instruction on the value of journaling and feedback will be given throughout the course.

### Participation (15% of your final semester grade)

Your participation grade will be based on your informed contributions to classroom discussions and exercises. You will participate in graded activities in every lesson. Some of these might take place outside of the designated classroom (e.g., in the computer lab or the library).

Participation grades will be based on the following:

- **Level of engagement/listening skills:** You (almost always, sometimes, rarely, almost never, OR never or very, very rarely) engage with course lectures, discussions, and activities with eye contact, taking notes, and makes thoughtful contributions.
- **Behavior:** You (almost always, sometimes, rarely, almost never, OR never or very, very rarely) behave appropriately (e.g., demonstrate active listening during lectures; show respect to the differing view of group members, etc.) in the classroom.
- **Preparation:** You (almost always, sometimes, rarely, almost never, OR never or very, very rarely) come to class with a pen, paper to take notes, and having read any necessary information to provide informed comments to course discussions and activities.
- **Collaboration:** You (almost always, sometimes, rarely, almost never, OR never or very, very rarely) collaborate (or work in groups) in appropriate and fair ways.

Points may be deducted as follows:

0 points, almost always (80-100% of the time)

1 points, sometimes (60-79% of the time)

2 points, rarely (40-59% of the time)

3 point, almost never (20-39% of the time)

4 points, never or very, very rarely (0-19% of the time)

### *A special note about attendance:*

Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to attend every class, to arrive on time, and to remain the entire period. You need to be here in order to participate in in-class activities! It is your responsibility to find out what you missed in the case of an absence. In college there is no such thing as an “excused absence.” For classes meeting two times per week, five points will be deducted for each absence. For classes meeting one time per week, ten points will be deducted for each absence.

### **Absentee Policy**

Texarkana College’s absentee policy allows instructors to withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences. If a student leaves and returns during class or leaves the class before the class is over, he/she **may** be considered absent. Three tardies constitute one absence.

Faculty members **are not** obligated to provide opportunities for students to make-up missed assignments and tests as a result of a student’s absence from class. The institution is not required to take attendance with the exception of workforce/vocational areas, where certification requirements require taking attendance. However, experience demonstrates that regular attendance enhances

academic success. As such, students are expected to attend each meeting of their registered courses.

A student should not stop attending a class without formally withdrawing from the course by the Institution's published Last Day for Students to Drop. If a student stops attending class after the published Last Day for Students to Drop, the student **may** receive a grade of "F" in the class. The instructor will submit the last date of attendance for students receiving a grade of "F" or "W".

Withdrawal from a course(s) **may** affect a student's current or future financial aid eligibility. Students should consult the Financial Aid Office to learn both short and long term consequences of a withdrawal.

Attendance is so crucial for success that if you miss no more than one class, you will receive an extra 5% on your final grade. This means that if your final course average is 85% (B), your final grade could be increased to 90% (A).

### **Projects (both projects combined are worth 30% of your final semester grade)**

You will complete two projects this semester: an individual career project and a group presentation project. More details about each project will be given in class at the appropriate time.

### **Exams (each exam is worth 15% of your final semester grade)**

You will complete two exams this semester, a midterm and a final exam. More details will be given in class at the appropriate time, including how to prepare to ace these exams.

### **Guidelines for written work**

In-class assignments must be completed legibly. In-class work must also follow Standard English usage - including complete sentences. Of course, you are not expected to create polished in-class work.

Out-of-class written assignments must have one-inch margins on all four sides, be double spaced, and be done in the Times New Roman font, size 12. Please note that correct spelling and grammar and a clear, easy-to-read writing style all count toward your grade. Use professional, formal, college English (i.e., no text-message language, contractions, clichés, or slang, for example). More details about each assignment will be given in class at the appropriate time.

### **Late work policy**

Since a core focus of this course is to prepare you for experiences in higher education and/or your future in the workplace, completing work on time, in accordance with the good time-management skills you will learn in this course, is considered highly desirable and an important habit to develop. For this reason, points can be deducted for late work. If you are having trouble completing an assignment on time, please contact me as soon as possible. If possible, I want to work with you so you can submit the assignment without losing points.

### **Academic honesty**

This college assumes that students eligible to perform on the college level are familiar with the ordinary rules governing proper conduct, including academic honesty. The principle of academic honesty is that all work presented by you is yours alone. Academic dishonesty, including but not

limited to cheating, plagiarism, and collusion, shall be treated appropriately. Please refer to the Texarkana College 2015-2016 Catalog and Student Handbook for more information. Texarkana College will utilize as necessary, technology programs/software to ensure academic honesty.

**You must complete all work independently unless otherwise instructed. Plagiarism, cheating, or any related offenses will result in an automatic zero for that assignment—no exceptions, no excuses!**

## Withdrawals

If for any reason you need to drop the course, it is your responsibility to inform me officially (i.e., in writing) in a timely manner. If you are considering dropping, please try to meet with me to discuss your options. I may be able to help you find solutions to some of the challenges that may be affecting your progress in class. If I can help, I would like to! Ultimately the decision is yours; therefore, I will not drop students for any reason. All students who remain in the course will receive a grade based on their performance. The last day to withdraw is \_\_\_\_\_.

## Accommodations

This college is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to every student. We offer services and technologies, including counseling, tutoring, special equipment and software, for individuals with special needs and capabilities. Please contact Larry Andrews at 903-823-3349 for further information. Students must notify the instructor of any accommodations needed during the first week of class.

## Email

Communicating with others via email is an important skill to succeed in today's world. I will communicate important class-related information via email, so it is important that you check your official college email often.

It is critical to know your audience when communicating in this medium. When you communicate with your instructor or your peers, you should be mindful of how your message may be interpreted. Please consider the following guidelines when communicating with instructors:

1. Appropriate salutation (e.g., Dear Mrs. Smith)
2. Brief introduction of yourself (especially important early on in the semester) so the instructor knows who you are
3. Subject heading that includes identifies the class and indicates the general nature of your communication (e.g., "Question about Career Project")
4. Polite closing (e.g., Thanks, Best Wishes, Sincerely, Cheers, etc.).
5. Short, to-the-point message
6. Proofread, proofread, proofread!
7. Avoid slang, text-message language, and acronyms (e.g., LOL).
8. Avoid sending an email when you are angry or upset.

## **Disclaimer**

THE COURSE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES TO ANY PART OF THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, POLICIES, DEADLINES, CONTENT, ETC. You are responsible for keeping track of any and all changes. The instructor assigns grades based solely on performance, not on effort or anything else. If you anticipate any difficulty meeting course requirements or deadlines, you should contact your instructor well in advance. If an emergency should happen (e.g., hospitalization), formal documentation is required, and the instructor will be more than happy to help the student to complete the course successfully.

## **Copyright protection**

All federal and state copyrights reserved for all original material presented in this course through any medium, including lecture or print. Unless otherwise noted, all course materials are the intellectual property of the instructor and are thus copyrighted. Individuals are prohibited from being paid for taking, selling, or otherwise transferring for value personal class or other informational notes made during this course to any entity without the express written permission of the instructor.

In addition to legal sanctions, students found in violation of these prohibitions may be subject to disciplinary action from the college administration.

## **Final words**

I am delighted you are enrolled in *Frameworks for Mathematics and Collegiate Learning!*

I commend you for placing such importance on doing well in college and on developing skills that will not only potentially improve your grades and standing in college, but also ensure you become a lifelong learner.

## Syllabus Appendix A: Tentative Course Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, we will follow the tentative course calendar shown below. This is not a comprehensive list of topics, just a glance at what will be covered. More details will be given in class at the appropriate time.

Week of	Topic
8/24	Introductions; building the foundation for our success
8/24	Finding the support to be successful
8/31	The plastic brain and smart thinking
8/31	Getting ahead with Better Note Taking
9/7	Tackling technology fears and frustrations
9/7	Meeting and academic advisor and career counselor
9/14	Building success teams and identifying your impact on the world
9/14	Creating motivating goals and the Career Project
9/21	Managing priorities and time
9/21	Metacognition
9/28	Building a better memory – focus on attention and deep processing
9/28	Building a better memory – focus on elaboration and organization
10/5	Identifying important information as you read
10/5	Critical thinking
10/12	Preparing to do well on exams
10/12	Where we've been, where we're going
10/19	Midterm exam
10/19	Midterm exam debrief
10/26	Working in groups
10/26	Library resources
11/2	Using library resources and introducing the group presentation project
11/2	Effective oral communication and using evaluation rubrics
11/9	Career project sharing and course planning
11/9	Success team presentations
11/16	Success team presentations
11/16	Success team presentations
11/30	Reviewing course material
11/30	Final exam
12/7	Final exam debrief
12/7	Looking forward 10 years

## Syllabus Appendix B: Respectful Classroom Behavior

We all benefit when:

- Everyone feels comfortable and free to share their thoughts in a safe and supportive environment. Please consider this before challenging, questioning, or contradicting the input of other students.
- All students understand they are being listened to in their own time, in their own way. This includes students who may speak more slowly or take a longer time to articulate their thoughts than you. Please do not interrupt a student who is still speaking; wait until they have finished before making your contribution to the discussion.
- We actively listen to other's opinions and insights.
- Contributions made to discussions are thoughtful, supported by examples (to make the meaning clearer) or evidence (e.g., sharing the original source).
- We are willing to take risks in sharing opinions that might be different than those ascribed to by the majority. Diversity of thought is as much a classroom asset as other, more established forms of diversity!
- You do not just accept without comment when the instructor says something you do not understand or agree with. No instructor minds being intellectually challenged, as long as it is done respectfully.
- Someone asks a question. Because chances are, someone else in the class wanted the answer, too, but was too shy or nervous to ask. So asking questions does the whole class a favor.
- We choose to engage fully in class discussions. Let's make them as lively and rich as possible this is your responsibility as well as the instructor's.

Additional points to consider regarding contributing to class discussions:

- If you thought of something after class ended, take the opportunity to raise the issue in an online thread (Blackboard or equivalent).
- Remain open-minded! It is a myth that smart people stick to their original views. In fact, the smartest people are those who are willing to be swayed by reasoned argument and revise their views and opinions accordingly.
- Take the opportunity to continue class discussions in your success teams and/or study groups. The more you actively work with the material we cover, the more embedded in your long-term memory it will be.
- Remember, the richness of this course experience, for you and for your peers, depends on your playing an active role in discussions. Speak up!

## Syllabus Appendix C: Grade Sheet

Assignment	Due Date	Possible Points	Points Received
Syllabus Quiz		10	
Scavenger Hunt		10	
You can grow your brain ideas		10	
Bad habits & your world ideas		10	
Note taking Journal		10	
Note-taking		10	
Using technology		10	
Nine boxes		10	
How to Kill Writers Block		10	
Confidence factors journal		10	
Distributed schedule		10	
Applying metacognition		10	
Meaningful information journal		10	
Flash cards		10	
Chapter outline		10	
Test-taking strategies		10	
Test questions		10	
Self-reflection		10	
Goal modification review		10	
Web addresses		10	
Scholarly article		10	
Annotated bibliography		10	
Presentation outline & action plan		10	
Couse planning form		10	
Review course materials		10	
Midterm		150	
Career Project		150	
Group Presentation		150	
Final Exam		150	
Participation		150	