

## **Syllabus: College Success (GS-1)**

*Our Collective Educational Commitment: Please remember that college is a commitment, first and foremost, to intellectual curiosity and creative inquiry. This requires perseverance and dedication, but above all, you must have the will to wonder, to challenge, and to be challenged. To remain ever-mindful in this regard is a tall order, but the benefits will stretch far beyond the work we do in this course. Warmest welcome, Scholars!*

### **Course Information**

Semester and Year: Fall 2025

Course ID and Section Number: D9485

Instructor's Name: Karyn-Lynn Fiset ( "KL" for short)

Day and Time of Required Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30-4:55 p.m.

Location: Room 29

Course Units: 3

### **Instructor Contact Information**

Office location: E7

Office hours: By appointment, in person or via Zoom

Email address: [karyn-lynn-fiset@redwoods.edu](mailto:karyn-lynn-fiset@redwoods.edu)

Communication notes: Please reach out early and often. See course norms and policies regarding how to best contact your instructors and peers.

## **Catalog Description**

A course that introduces students to lifelong learning and self-development from sociological, physiological and psychological perspectives. Topics include emotional intelligence, social connections, health and wellness, and cognitive development. Students will be introduced to a wide variety of skills and concepts that are relevant to success in college, career, and life.

## **Required Materials**

- You do not need to purchase a textbook for this class, but there will be plenty of readings and other materials (written, visual, and oral) provided for you in class and on Canvas. These are required.
- Please come to every class with access to our readings (whether printed or digital), something to write with, and something to write on.

## **Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes**

### **Course Objectives**

- Demonstrate growing learning skills - how the brain works, how learning happens, why learning is important.
- Display self-awareness - why self-awareness is important, how being self-aware can facilitate life-long success.
- Develop an academic and career plan - why planning and goal setting is important, why planning for a major and career is important for one's future.
- Examine how personal choices can affect short and long term goals.
- Attune to sense of self as part of the larger society.
- Demonstrate a variety of effective academic skills: time management, memory, note taking, reading, stress management, test taking and presentation skills.
- Understand college policies and available resources including campus programs and services, student rights and responsibilities, and resources available to plan for higher education and career.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Demonstrate the importance of lifelong learning as it applies to college, career, and relational fulfillment.
- Develop interpersonal communication skills and greater self-awareness.
- Develop a career and academic plan.

### **Prerequisites/corequisites/ recommended preparation**

None.

### **Evaluation & Grading Policy**

You will complete a diverse array of assignments this semester, some during class, and some outside of class. Each is designed to help us meet our course objectives and achieve our learning outcomes. Our final assignment, the Student Academic and Career Plan will build upon, and reflect these efforts. In order for you to keep an eye on the future— on where we are headed as a class, and where you are headed academically and professionally— instructions will be made available to you in our Week One/ Orientation Module on Canvas. Please familiarize yourself with this assignment, and keep it in mind as we proceed.

**Each week you can expect to participate in the following (30% of your grade, total):**

- Completing all required course readings
- Discussions on/ annotations of our readings and course concepts; in and out of class (15%)
- Written reflections (15%)

You will also be asked to complete several more robust project-based assignments:

- **Self-Assessment (10% of your grade):** You will complete a self-assessment project that encourages reflection on your academic strengths, areas for improvement, and personal habits. The process begins with taking various assessments to identify your learning styles (or preferences), time management skills, and study patterns. You will then gather and organize your findings, highlighting key insights into what you do well and where you may need to put in a little extra work, and share these with your peers. You will then write a short paper, analyzing the results and setting both short- and long-term goals. Ideally, you'll develop an action plan outlining specific steps to achieve these. This project is designed to foster self-awareness and help you create a personalized plan for success in your courses at CR, and beyond.
- **Vision Board (15% of your grade):** You will build on your Self-Assessment by creating a vision board that represents not only your **academic, but also your personal and professional goals**. Start by reflecting on where you see yourself at the end of your college journey, and considering how your current aspirations might overlap, conflict, or change— and how and why. You will gather images, quotes, and other visual elements to create a collage or some other type of visual aid that reflects your goals and the steps you plan to take to achieve them in the various parts of your life. You might also incorporate lyrics, or audio of some kind. This is an opportunity for you to be creative! Once your vision board is complete, you'll present it to the class, explaining the significance of each element and how it aligns with where you see yourself in the future.
- **Campus and Community Connections/ Learner's Passport (20% of your grade):** Over the course of the semester, you'll complete a Passport designed to help you make meaningful connections on campus and in our local community. Your Passport will have spaces for earning stamps (1 pt.) or visas (3 pts.), each representing a connection you make or an event you attend. To fill your passport, you will actively participate in student organizations, attend campus events, and engage with your professors and peers as your schedule allows. Beyond campus, you can earn stamps and visas by volunteering, joining local clubs, attending community meetings or events, or reaching out to leaders in a field of interest to you. As you work to fill your Passport, you'll keep a record of the connections you make, noting names, roles, how you met them, and their contact information. This project can be highly individualized, and not only encourages you to build a strong network, but will also provide you with a valuable resource of contacts who will support your success after college. (Believe the data: While your GPA may be important, networking in college is in general a far greater predictor of success than the

grades you earn; plus, it will help you gain confidence and hone the soft-skills employers desperately seek).

- **Student Academic and Career Plan (25% of your grade):** This project is designed to be a comprehensive roadmap for your academic and prospective career journey in which you outline your goals, course selections, and future aspirations. The assignment aims to guide you in planning your educational path, exploring transfer options, and even considering study abroad opportunities. (I am an *all-caps HUGE* advocate for continued education and study abroad, and will gleefully chat with any of you who may be interested in exploring such opportunities, including researching programs and accessing financial aid). To complete this research-based project, you'll create a detailed academic plan that includes your current and future coursework, short- and long-term academic goals, potential transfer institutions, and your career aspirations. You can submit your plan in various formats, for example: in an essay, portfolio, podcast, video presentation, visual representation like a timeline or info-graphic, or in an oral presentation. In developing your Plan, you'll practice all the skills we work on during the semester: goal setting, research, planning, communication, self-assessment and reflection, while gaining knowledge about academic pathways and career opportunities.

### Submitting Your Work

Please be prepared to submit your work **in class and/ or on Canvas (or both) on the day it is due**. NOTE: If I cannot access or read your work, I will return it to you ungraded. (Late penalties will apply).

**Letter Grade Weight Breakdown per CR Faculty Handbook** (These are the letter grades that will be given on your assignments, as well as on your transcript after the course ends; each assignment will include an additional grading rubric that will outline the requirements and expectations).

Letter Grade and Percentage Values	Grade Description
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A (100 – 94%)	Defined as “Excellent” – fulfills all requirements and exceeds expectations.
A- (93 – 90%)	Defined as “Excellent” – fulfills all requirements and exceeds expectations.
B+ (89 – 87%)	Defined as “Good” – fulfills all requirements and meets expectations.
B (86 – 84%)	Defined as “Good” – fulfills all requirements and meets expectations.
B- (83 – 80%)	Defined as “Good” – fulfills all requirements and meets expectations.
C+ (79 – 77%)	Defined as “Satisfactory” – fulfills most requirements and meets some expectations.
C (76 – 70%)	Defined as “Satisfactory” – fulfills most requirements and meets some expectations.
D (69 – 60%)	Defined as “Poor” – fulfills some requirements; does not meet expectations.

F (59 – 0%)

Defined as “Failing” – does not fulfill requirements and expectations.

### **Course Policies**

**Participation:** This class is normally a mix of informal lectures, small group work, individual brainstorming, researching and writing, and class discussion—meaning that you’ll all be contributing, in many ways, and often.

*Different Types of Participation:* I respect and understand that some of us feel more comfortable sharing, while others might hold back. I encourage everyone along that spectrum to step outside of their comfort zone and strike a balance. If you typically don’t talk a lot in class, try to reach out a bit more often, even if it’s difficult. On the other hand, if you typically dominate, make an effort to allow and encourage others to share their thoughts. Carefully and attentively read your peers’ work when they’re willing to share; think before firing off your responses.

*Mutual Respect:* On that note, mutual respect of others is the standard by which we will conduct ourselves in this class. We will honor one another as individuals and will value each person’s right to express their own opinions and beliefs, while at the same time respecting the productive potential of the whole group. If we disagree, we will not argue or judge. Instead, we will ask questions of ourselves first, and then of others, so that we might better understand the stakes. It is my goal to encourage an environment where we feel comfortable—but challenged—and motivated to listen with as much enthusiasm as we talk.

As a member of this community, you agree to adhere to these norms, and any other we agree to as a class:

- Stay present and awake;
- be an active participant;
- listen carefully when others are speaking;
- respond to others’ contributions;
- think about new, and challenging ideas;
- recognize that there are no easy solutions to complex problems;
- consider the personal meaning of subjects discussed-- and the diversity of attitudes, ideas, and experiences in the room;
- support a democratic classroom process;
- observe confidentiality;
- ask questions, if confused, and at appropriate times;
- plan ahead;

- show up prepared with your readings, something to write with, and something to write on, as well as with any assignments due the day of class in hand.

**Attendance:** Your attendance is essential to your success in this class. You and your classmates will rely on each other to assist you through the process of grappling with and coming to a fuller understanding of our readings and other course materials, and ways of responding. If you neglect to show up, (including logging into and contributing to our Canvas shell), you let down your peers, and yourself. Aside from missing out on key concepts, assignments, and access to other resources, you will also miss in-class discussions as they take place. Certain in-class assignments simply cannot be made up, and you will very likely miss something important. Further, if you aren't consistently engaged, you will end up doing *more* work trying to get back on track. Ultimately, I ask that you observe the courtesy of giving your teacher, your peers and yourself some dedicated time to focus on higher learning. If you must miss class, please let me know as much in advance as possible so we can craft a plan for you to catch up when you return.

**Time Commitment:** Much of your work will be done outside of class, independently. Plan to spend *at least* 2 hours in outside prep time for every credit hour, per week on this course. Working solo requires a great deal of *self-motivation and planning*. It also demands you understand the difference between “doing homework” and “studying.” Not only will you read quite a bit on your own, you will also devote a considerable amount of attention to annotation, organizing and revising your thoughts, and then, your assignments. Like most college courses, this one involves a great deal of dedication and a high level of effort. I advise you to pace yourself, and invest the time necessary week-by-week, and to be relentless in maintaining good academic habits throughout the semester. If you are not prepared to do this now, I gently suggest you take this class when you are able to make that commitment.

**Contacting and Meeting the Instructor:** When you email me, please do so through your College of the Redwoods student account or Canvas; do not use a personal email address—yours or mine! Allow up to 48 hours for a response, and do not expect that I or your other instructors are awake at 2 a.m.—even though in all likelihood we are. One more thing: Be sure to include an appropriate subject line, for ex., “Student Academic Plan Question,” or “Office Hours?,” etc. Emails that start off “EMERGENCY!!!!!!” will be forwarded to 911. I am not equipped to deal with emergencies; I’m just a lowly, easily panic-stricken teacher. Your subject line should tell me exactly what the email is about, so I know how to prioritize it. Please practice professional standards here, by including an appropriate greeting, making your needs clear, and signing your name.

**Regarding Office Hours:** I am happy to arrange a time to meet in person or online for anyone who would like to do that. I just beg that you be mindful of the limitations of my calendar (and

the number of students I need to accommodate). Plan ahead as much as possible, perhaps even before you have too many questions. That way, we will be able to stave off any confusion or sense of overwhelm as the semester progresses.

**Late Work:** I will not accept late work without penalty except in the most rare, extreme, and thoroughly documented cases. Otherwise, expect any late work submitted to be docked 10 percent, or a full letter grade, per *calendar day*. I will not accept any assignment that is turned in more than 5 days late; (assignments in Canvas will close after those 5 days, and you will NOT be able to submit). I will not accept multiple late assignments at once; nor will I accept late work after Week 14, or any work at all once the semester has concluded. Always plan ahead; this includes making sure any work due in class is ready at the start of class (e.g., printed, stapled, and so on).

**Technical Problems:** Please keep in mind that a technical problem with your own software, hardware, or Internet connection is not a genuine emergency or excuse—nor is it a problem I can solve for you. For this reason, I suggest you always back up your work in another location other than your home computer and, at the same time, know what other computer you can use in the case your system is down. If your technical problems have to do with Canvas or other platforms or software you use for your classes, please contact the IT department immediately. I can help you with our course content—but sadly, not with much of the tech stuff.

**Academic Dishonesty (er, Integrity):** In an academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

**An Addendum From Your Instructor:** Much of your college education will involve making use of work done by other scholars. Your own work will benefit from and build on other people's research, articles, books, films, art, theories, and ideas, especially in this course. By following the laws and etiquette that govern academic work, you may borrow what others have written, which allows you to further develop and support your thoughts.

The rules of citation, and the laws of copyright, require you to give credit and acknowledge this borrowing *anytime* you make use of any *facts*, *ideas* or *language* (including short phrases, and also including AI-generated language) that did not originate with you. Ideas or language not credited to a source and documented with attention to detail are assumed to be yours. Allowing your reader to make this assumption when it's not true means you are committing plagiarism.

It is possible to plagiarize simply by failing to either cite your sources accurately or use quotation marks appropriately, but carelessness is not an acceptable reason for failing to name (or cite) your sources properly. We will spend time practicing citation skills, but when in doubt about plagiarism, please ask *before* submitting work that potentially violates this policy and puts your grade at risk.

**MLA Guidelines:** Please format your formal work following current MLA guidelines. Refer to the Purdue OWL or a writer's handbook, and to the rules below.

- Written work must be typed and double-spaced.
- Use standard 12-point font (Times New Roman) and 1-inch margins on all sides of the page.
- The left margin must be justified and the right unjustified.
- You do not need a title page. Type your name, my name, the class, and the date in the upper left corner of the first page of the essay. Note the MLA date format.
- Do not add extra line spaces between paragraphs.
- Number each page and include your last name before the page number.
- All work using outside sources should have a correctly written works cited page; all entries must conform to the current MLA format.

**Check Your Work:** The strategies below will help you to complete your class assignments ethically and honestly. This list is not complete, but provides some of the most common expectations in college and beyond.

1. **Ask Your Professor:** If you are unsure what help or resources are allowed, ask your professor to clarify their expectations and instructions.
2. **Cite Your Sources:** When you use outside sources to support or expand your work, you must (1) say where the source material came from, (2) enclose in quotation marks any language taken from the source, and (3) cite the work in your assignment and on a separate reference page. Make sure the use of outside sources is allowed by your professor.
3. **Turn in Original Work:** Self-plagiarism is submitting the same work for credit in two different classes without professor permission. To avoid self-plagiarism, (1) only turn in work that you do for that class and (2) ask for permission before using work done in a different class.
4. **Do Your Own Work:** Cheating is getting or giving help on assignments that isn't allowed by your professor; this includes using AI to complete any work in this course. It also includes sharing classwork with other students, past or present, and buying or using work that isn't your own.
5. **Don't Fake Your Work:** Making up or falsifying your research, evidence, sources, or citations, or giving false information when completing a class assignment is a form of academic dishonesty. Don't do it.

**Disruptive Behavior:** Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

**(N)Etiquette:** Rule Number One: A little bit of kindness and some foresight goes a long way. We will use Canvas regularly in this class, as a repository for, and record of our discussions and our labors. Please remember that Canvas is an extension of the academic environment—not Snap, not Instagram, not TikTok, not Twitter/ X, not Facebook, not Reddit, or any of the other places where you might decide to opine online. When using Canvas, please remember your peers and your professor are real people; before posting anything to our discussions, and before contacting your classmates, or me, do this: *Imagine that you are saying to that person's face whatever it is you are about to send or submit*. Even one instance of disruptive, rude, or otherwise offensive language can cause harm to another and to our small community, and is grounds for disciplinary action. Please do not risk that. Rather, observe and practice high standards for online etiquette. Type once; edit thrice. To ensure that you yourself are not misinterpreted or misinterpreting, please heed the following:

- Always address your posts/ emails to someone! "Dear, Timmy" or "Hi, All" are two options. Double check the spelling of others' names while you're at it. As a "KarYn-Lynn Aloysius" (with all that unpredictable spelling and punctuation!), I appreciate such efforts.
- Always sign your posts with at least your first name, or your initials; I use KL to save you and myself the trouble of having to type out my whole wonky name.
- Don't overuse, but don't be too afraid to use an emoji to lighten the mood a bit; just make sure you're not using these in place of words. We are working on improving our communication skills, after all.
- Please avoid ALL CAPS as they tend to come off as RUDE.
- Please avoid snarky, harsh, or downright offensive language, punctuation, and emoji(s).
- Please keep in mind that when you email or message your instructors or your peers—no matter the course—that you should offer the same respect electronically that you would offer face-to-face. Keep it classy!

**Solidarity Statement:** The power of student voices is crucial in inspiring positive social change, and I stand in solidarity with you when you use yours. So: please don't hesitate to share your ideas (comments, concerns, questions, etc.) about how to help create a supportive and compassionate classroom and campus environment. I dedicate myself—and hope you will dedicate yourselves—to upholding and modeling an open, safe, and united learning community

in which all members thrive. If at any time you feel we can do better to achieve this goal in our classroom, or at CR, please speak out.

**Inclusive Language in the Classroom** (From the College): College of the Redwoods aspires to create a learning environment in which all people feel comfortable in contributing their perspectives to classroom discussions. It therefore encourages instructors and students to use language that is inclusive and respectful.

**Name and Pronoun Preferences:** Please let me know if you have a preferred first name, nickname, or D.J. name that you would like to be called by that does not appear on my official roster. Likewise, please let me know if you have preferred pronouns that you would like us to use when referring to you, and also if I mess up. Trust that this will never be intentional!

**DO NOT PASS GO!** College-wide policies, important dates for this semester, and information about resources for student support are located in the **Student Support Handbook**, which you will find in the Week One/ Orientation Module; this information is supplemental to our syllabus, so please review it carefully.