

# Skills for Success MWSU 1003 – X21 (online)

MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Spring Semester 2026

**Instructor:** Dr. Phyllis M. Bunch

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**Office Phone:** 940-397-4544

**Office Location:** 113D Moffett Library

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Course:** MWSU 1003

**Course Title:** Skills for Success

**Class Time:** Asynchronous (no set time)

**Class Location:** Online

## Instructor Response Policy

I will make every attempt to respond to email and phone messages promptly; however, if you email or call me after 4:00 pm on Friday, I will not promise to get back to you until Monday morning unless it is an emergency. Lack of planning and/or procrastination on your part does not create an emergency for me!

## Required Texts:

- *Essential Study Skills, 8<sup>th</sup> edition*, Linda Wong.
- [Essential Study Skills, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, Linda Wong \(Amazon Link\)](#)

## Course Objectives:

The *Skills for Success* course is structured to provide the student with both a broad base of information and specific instruction in the various facets of effective academic performance. The course objective is to enhance information processing and information mastery through the practice and application of effective study strategies. We will assess learning strengths and weaknesses and practice the application of strategic learning techniques and strategies through assignments, tests, and interactive, experiential learning exercises designed to build information processing and mastery skills.

## Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify individual learning strengths and weaknesses, and develop an individualized learning profile.
2. Develop and/or improve self-management, planning, and study skills as evidenced through assessments and his or her semester goals outcome
3. Apply and demonstrate strategic learning and study strategies related to the study environment, note-taking, reading, information review and memory, and test-taking.

The goal of this course is to help each student learn to apply critical and creative thinking and problem-solving to enhance individual organization, learning strategies, and develop and refine effective study practices. Specifically, students will receive instruction and application practice in academic study skills related to self-management and preparation, processing and remembering information, methods of repacking information for review and use, strategic reading strategies, and test-taking performance.

## Learning Methods:

1. D2L
  - a. Online Learning Modules – PowerPoint Lectures, YouTube Videos, Links
  - b. Assessments, Assignments, Discussions
  - c. Handouts
2. Book
  - a. Assigned Reading

## **Attendance:**

**ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY!** Because this is an online course, active participation is key to success. While I won't be tracking attendance like I would in a formal class setting, due dates and discussions/activities will sneak up on you if you don't maintain a regular online presence. One part of being a successful online student is accessing the courses regularly. My expectation is that students access this online course two times per week for a minimum of 60 minutes total. Faculty can access student activity within the course, so please do your best to stay "plugged in" and engaged.

## **Additional Classroom Policies:**

1. Students are expected to adhere to the Standards of Conduct as published in the Student Handbook. Students should refer to the current MSU Student Handbook and Activities Calendar for the University policies and Student Honor Creed on civil behavior, academic integrity, class attendance, student rights, and activities.
2. Assignments will be due by 11:59 pm on the Sunday after they are assigned unless otherwise informed. **No late work will be accepted** unless specific arrangements due to extenuating circumstances have been made in advance with me.
3. Discussions will open on Monday morning and your initial response (5 pts) will be due by Wednesday @ 11:59 pm and your two student replies (2.5 pts each) due by Sunday @ 11:59 pm. More information regarding Discussions can be found in D2L. Don't be fooled... the points add up quickly!
4. Exams and graded assignments will be available for review promptly; however, I do not return most quizzes or exams. If you miss an exam or assignment, you will be eligible to take a makeup or submit work only if your absence is excused by me and proper documentation is provided. Makeup exams must be scheduled immediately. (Please remember that I am not only an instructor! **I am also the Director of the Learning Center** and sometimes I get very busy in my other position. Give grace with regard to timeliness for grade returns and I will give grace while grading!)
5. Substitute or extra credit work is not offered. Doing what is required will accomplish the learning goals. In all cases, it is the student's responsibility to stay current with activities and assignments. Students are responsible for checking their grades/absences and can do this regularly by checking D2L.
6. **Technical problems are not an excuse for incomplete or late work.** It is your responsibility to make sure that the computer you choose to use for this course is in good working condition and meets the website requirements. **If a student's personal computer is not working, it is expected that the student will find one that is working.**

## **Classroom Behavior:**

As adults, students are expected to behave respectfully. Disrespect will not be tolerated and could result in the student being dropped from the course with a grade of F AND referral to the Dean of Students Office. In life there is a time and a place for everything and that same rule applies to the virtual classroom. We will have online discussions and the utmost respect must be shown at all times. The power of life and death are in the tongue or in this case the fingers...

## **Academic Misconduct:**

Midwestern State University operates under the Student Honor Creed which states, "**As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so.**" The full Student Honor Creed can be found online <https://msutexas.edu/student-life/conduct/>

***Documented Disability:***

- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations are made for any student with a documented disability. Students should register with Disability Support Services. More information can be found here: <https://msutexas.edu/student-life/disability/>
- Requests for accommodation are acceptable at any time during the semester, but you are encouraged to contact me in person, or via email, as early as possible.

**Course Requirements and Points: (500 Total Points Possible)****Grades:**

You have 500 total points awarded to you the first day of class, and your job is to retain points across the semester to achieve your Grade Goal. Each evaluation will be an opportunity to retain points. Your performance on each exam, assignment, application project, quiz, and/or portfolio assignment will determine if any point deduction is taken. Your final grade will be the balance of points retained by your class and group contributions and participation, and skills competencies progress. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with his/her grades towards the grade goal. You have several places to keep track of your grades, use them!

**Point Distribution:**

**Class Participation and Attendance** (100): Active engagement in discussions, thoughtful discussion responses to peers, assignment submissions, and professor outreach.

**Personal Learning Style Essay** (150): Using information we learn, students will create an online portfolio project/academic plan for future courses.

**Quizzes/Assignments** (100): There will be 1 quiz and several assignments throughout the class worth 25 points each.

**Final Exam** (50): There will be 1 final exam administered in this course, which will be worth 50 points.

**Meetings with Instructor** (100): You will sign up for two online meetings with your instructor throughout the entire semester to discuss academic performance, receive feedback, and ask any questions you may have about the course. You can always reach out for more check-ins if needed, but two will be the minimum requirement.

**Grading Scale:**

**A = 450-500 points**

**B = 400-449 points**

**C = 350-399 points**

**D = 300-349 points**

**F = 299-0 points**

**Due Dates:**

All assigned work will be due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, except your initial Discussion posts (due Wednesday). No late work will be accepted unless specific arrangements have been made with the instructor in advance. A missed assignment will be eligible for makeup only due to an officially excused absence with \*proper\* documentation provided, and must be scheduled the day the student returns to class. It is the student's responsibility to stay current with class activities and assignments. If documentation is provided as to the reason for the absence and the absence is excused in accordance with university policy, the student must request the missed work/materials the first class after they return.

If you would like to start the class with the ONE 10-point gift, please take a minute and email me (not in D2L) a cute baby animal picture.

**Individual Appointments:**

There will be two instances during the semester where students will make an individual appointment to discuss topics including: expectations, goals, plans, and performance. These individual appointments will take place via Zoom and will be scheduled during the Second or Third and last weeks of the semester. I will send out a link in D2L that goes to my Navigate platform and schedule so that you will have the opportunity to schedule your first individual appointment. Appointments will be first-come-first-served. You may have to schedule your appointment at an inconvenient time for yourself to fit into my schedule.

You may request a Zoom conference with me at any time during the semester if you need individual help with anything.

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## MWSU 1003: Skills for Success

### Content Overview

**Please note that the fundamental subject matter of the course is you as a learner.** You will focus on defining your academic plan, enhancing learning strategies, refining, and developing study and review skills.

**The course content can be understood in terms of competency areas vs chapters.** The following overview represents the conceptual organization or competency areas covered in the course content. Each skill or competency is supported with relevant text materials and chapters, class exercises, assignments, collaborative group work, lecture notes, handouts, and/or portfolio checks.

#### Skills Competency

##### **Self-Management**

#### Related Topics/Assignments

- Academic Planning
- Goal Setting
- Time Management
- Motivation and Habits
- Preparing the Learning Environment
- Study Schedule
- Test Prep

##### **Self-Assessment**

- Intellectual Performance
- Sensory and Hemispheric Style
- MY, MBTI, Task Behaviors
- Thinking and Learning Characteristics
- Learning Strengths and Weaknesses
- Levels of Learning
- Critical and Creative Thinking

##### **Information Memory**

- Understanding Learning
- Learning Styles
- Principles of Memory
- Levels of Learning and Questioning
- Building Resources
- Types of Knowledge

##### **Strategic Reading Effective Note Taking**

- Strategic Reading Strategies
- Visual Reading Methods
- Building Listening Skills
- Application Practices

##### **Study and Review Practices Test Taking Skills**

- Repackaging Information
- Concentration
- Effective Group Work
- Test Anxiety