

**College of Arts and Sciences**

**Reading Specialist Report**

**Spring 2015**

**30 July 2015**

**Submitted by Dowan McNair-Lee**

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1. **Introduction and Summary of Achievements**

This report contains data collected from the rosters and end-semester grades from the pre-foundational reading courses in CAS. Analysis of the data revealed the following achievements:

* Completion rates for CRS 101 increased from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015.
* In Spring 2015, all students who completed CRS 100 passed the course.
1. **Dashboard**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Fall 2014 | Spring 2015 |
| **CRS 100s** | **CRS****101** | **CRS 100s** | **CRS 101** |
| **Original Roster Pass Rates** | 72%\* | 84%\* | 60%\* | 77%\* |
| **Active Roster Pass Rates**  | 75%\* | 90%\* | 60%\* | 79%\* |
| **Completion Rates** (students who completed the semester ) | 96%\*\* | 95%\*\* | 60% |  97%\*\* |

***\*****Pass rate is based on data from all course sections that ran in the particular semester.****\*\*****Completion rates for Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 are based on the number of students who withdrew from the course since adjuncts did not report students who abandoned the course.*

# Report on 2014-2015 Goals and Progress

***Goal 1:******To improve pass rates and retention for the CRS 100S and CRS 101 courses by helping students to master foundational skills in making inferences, differentiating between fact and opinion and identifying main idea and supporting details***

**Progress:** While the data shows a decline in pass rates from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015, it should be noted that the full-time reading specialist provided instruction to CRS 100s only in the Fall. Adjuncts and full time faculty served as instructors for the Fall CRS 101 courses. Also, the decline in pass rates for CRS 100s in the Spring is comparable to the decline in other Spring 2015 pre-foundational classes. However, a review of the data provided to specialists shows that the data from Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 represent a continuing trend of increased pass rates and retention rates for the CRS 100s and 101 courses.

The high failure rate (40%) in CRS 100s can be attributed to the high abandonment rate of the course in the Spring 2015 semester. While no students withdrew from the course, seven of the enrolled 20 students abandoned the course throughout the semester. All of the students who failed the course for the semester abandoned the course.

While the instructors of CRS 100s made greater attempts to dissuade students from withdrawing from the course, course abandonment remains a problem across the curriculum.

***Goal 2: To ensure that the CRS 100s/101 curriculum is preparing students to read and analyze college level text.***

**Progress:** For the purposes of analyzing progress towards this goal, the assessor will utilize both the midterm and final exam from seven (7) sections of CRS 101 Spring 2015. The average midterm exam grades across seven sections of CRS 101was 68% while the average final exam grades were 71%. This increase demonstrates greater proficiency with tested skills such as inferencing, drawing conclusions and using context clues.

1. **Key Assessments**

**Assessment 1: Pass Rates**

***Target Topic: CRS 100s and CRS 101 Pass Rates for the 2014-2015 Academic Year***

Data: CRS 100s Original Roster Pass Rates

**Analysis:** As stated previously, there was a decline in pass rates from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015. This may be attributed to several factors, one including the high number of students who abandoned the course in the Spring versus the Fall.

**Data: CRS 101 Original Roster Pass Rates**

**Analysis:** The pass rates for CRS 101 continued their upward trajectory in Fall 2014; however, the pass rate was higher in Fall 2014 than in Spring 2015. The course was taught be full time faculty and adjuncts in the Fall and that may be a sign of grade inflation. This data suggests that adjunct faculty members are inflating grades to some extent; therefore, greater oversight of grading standards across the pre-foundational curriculum is warranted. This also substantiates the need for a standardized curriculum that addresses the same goals and objectives with appropriate college level rigor.

**Assessment 2: Grade Progress**

**Data: Midterm and Final Exam scores for seven CRS 101 sections.**

According to the data presented, Sections 1, 2 and 7 were able to increase their grades from the midterm to the final exam. Overall, the averages increased from 68% to 71%.

1. **Conclusions and Recommendations**
* Despite high pass rates for CRS 100s students in the Fall 2014 semester, pass rates dropped significantly in the Spring 2015 semester when many of the students were repeating the course. Abandonment of pre-foundational courses in the Spring is a trend and more research should be conducted to see how that trend could be reversed.
* As we move from the CRS 100s and CRS 101 model to the CRS 101, 102 and ENGL 107 model, there needs to be continued conversation around what constitutes A or B level work. There appears to be a lack of consistency between grading for classes taught by specialists, adjuncts and full-time faculty. This inconsistency does not help students as they matriculate and does not contribute to fair assessment of the courses.
* Assessment goals need to be made clear at the beginning of each semester so that messaging can be delivered to all instructors for courses. It is difficult to conduct “rear-view window” assessment. Goals should be decided early and those goals should be clear and measurable. Outcome assessment should not be simply based on grades. The curriculum revision committee should establish certain assignments as “benchmark” assignments. These assignments should be tracked across classes so that there is consistent data around student progress.

**Appendix 1**



CRS 100s Foundations of Reading

(4 Credits)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Course Title | Course Day/Time/Location | Lab Day/Time/Location |
| CRS 100s/Lecture/1 | Monday/Wednesday 9:00-10:15Main 251 | Friday 9:00-9:50Main 251 |
| CRS 100s/Lecture/4 | Monday/Wednesday 12:00-1:15Library G100 | Friday 11:00-11:50Main 251 |
| CRS 100s/Lecture/5 | Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:15Main 251 | Friday 10:00-10:50Main 252 |
| CRS 100s/Lecture/6 | Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-1:15Main 251 | Friday 12:00-12:50Main 251 |

Dowan McNair-Lee

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202-884-9289

Main 444

Office Hours: 2 to 5pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

**Course Description**

This course provides students with an intensive review of basic reading skills needed for college level reading. Students will practice using context clues to make inferences and analyzing sentences and paragraphs for main idea, supporting details, fact/opinion, language use, and relationships between ideas. A weekly laboratory supplements instruction for this course. CAS students who place into CRS 100 must earn C or higher in order to pass. Students who pass CRS 100s must enroll in CRS 101 the following semester. 4 credits Gen Ed Area: Area I - Foundational Skills

**Texts**

Angelou, Maya. *Letter to My Daughter.* New York: Random House, 2008. Print.

Langan, John. *Ten Steps to Improving Reading Skills.* West Berlin: Townsend Press, 2008. Print

**General Requirements**

**Attendance:** You must come to class. It is unlikely that you will be able to succeed in this class if you do not attend regularly. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. That means that you do not have to provide me with excuses when you are absent. Please keep in mind, class work cannot be made up outside of class under any circumstances. If you miss a reading test that we take in class, you will receive a zero. In the case of a verifiable emergency, I will allow you to submit an alternate assignment to replace only one reading test. I will deduct 5 points from your final grade for every 5 classes you miss. This policy is not negotiable. Please make a note of the following:

* I take attendance in the beginning of the class period. Students who do not respond are marked absent.
* I consider students who leave class early without my written permission absent. You must send an email the day before class in order to receive written permission.
* I consider students who engage inappropriately with electronic devices during class (i.e. texting, surfing the internet, talking on the phone, listening to headphones or any activity deemed disruptive by the instructor) absent.
* I consider students who are sleeping, laying their heads down, or resting their eyes absent.

**From the Trinity Washington University Catalog:** “Students are responsible for attending all class meetings unless they have made specific arrangements with the instructor. Advance notice of an absence should be given to instructors, and students are responsible for initiating a meeting with faculty to determine how all work will be completed. Faculty has the right to monitor attendance. Students are responsible for reviewing the attendance policy for each instructor as listed on the course syllabus. Absence in any course amounting to one-third or more of the class periods may result in a lower grade, including the grade of "F," at the discretion of the faculty member. Emergencies should be reported immediately to the Dean of Student Services and the Enrollment Services Office, who will inform instructors. Only in an emergency may a student be absent during an assigned test, class presentation, or evaluation. No children may attend classes or be left unattended anywhere on campus; childcare is the responsibility of the student. We understand that childcare emergencies happen. However, Trinity is not in a position to provide emergency childcare on campus. We advise students, faculty and staff who have child care emergencies to choose to remain at home rather than bringing the child to campus.”

**Materials:** Please bring all materials to class every day. You will need:

1 notebook

1 folder

1 pink highlighter

1 yellow highlighter

Pens and pencils

At least one pack of smaller-than-average-size sticky notes

Access to a reliable computer

Access to a dictionary

**Independent Work:** You will have to complete many assignments independently. These assignments are listed on the course schedule. You will not be able to succeed in this course if you do not regularly complete independent work.

**Weekly Reading Tests and Exams:** You will be given a reading test almost every Friday. It is imperative that you are present for each test. You will be given an exam at midterm and a cumulative final exam. Exams cannot be made up. In addition, you will be required to complete weekly chapter tests on Moodle.

**Academic Integrity:** You are only permitted to use your brain and the books listed in the “Texts” section of the syllabus to complete assignments for this class. You must not use any outside sources. You are not permitted to work with your classmates, friends or family members to complete assignments for this course unless I have given written permission. **If you are having difficulty, stop by my office or send me an email so that we can chat about your troubles. I enjoy spending time with my students, and I enjoy helping students find solutions.** I will forward any plagiarized documents to the office of Academic Affairs without hesitation. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and must be prosecuted. The penalties for plagiarism and other forms of cheating range from course failure to dismissal from the University.

**From the Trinity Washington University Catalog**: “Trinity is devoted to the highest standards of academic honesty and intellectual integrity. As an institution of higher education founded in the Catholic intellectual tradition and rooted in liberal learning, Trinity challenges students to develop sound moral and ethical practices in their study, research, writing and presentations; in their examinations and portfolios; and in all of their relationships and actions as members of the academic community.

The values that are central to the Trinity experience animate the Honor System that has been a part of the Trinity College community since 1913. All members of the Trinity community, students, faculty, and staff, are expected to uphold a way of life that embraces personal integrity and responsibility, the foundation of the Honor System. The Honor System reflects a personal commitment on the part of all members of the community to individual integrity and shared trust, hence it also reflects a community commitment to abide by University policies, rules, and regulations. Upon joining the Trinity community, each student and each member of the faculty and staff agrees to adhere to the following honor pledge:

*"I realize the responsibility involved in membership in the Trinity College community. I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of this community. I also affirm my intention to live according to the standards of honor, to which lying, stealing, and cheating are opposed. I will help others to maintain this responsibility in all matters essential to the common good of the community."*

**Special Accommodations:** If you need DSS accommodations, you are required to share this information with your professors within the first two weeks of class. If you think you may need accommodations or have questions or concerns about disability support contact **Dr. Kimberly LaBoone** in Academic Support Services. Academic Support Services is located on the first floor of the library.

**From the Trinity Washington University Catalog**: “If you are a student with a psychological, cognitive, and/or physical disability, Disability Student Services (DSS) is here to ensure that you receive support services that will equalize your access for your courses and campus activities. In contrast to high school, where students with disabilities are entitled to certain services, in college, you must become approved or eligible for services based on the guidelines set forth by your college. At Trinity, this means that you must first register with DSS before you can request support services

**Grading**

CRS 100s is considered a pre-foundational course. You must earn a C or higher in this course in order to move on to CRS 101. CRS 101 will satisfy your General Education reading requirement. If you earn less than 72% in this course, you will not be permitted to move on to CRS 101. Instead, you will be required to repeat CRS 100s.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade Percentages** | **Grade Scale** |
| **Chapter Tests 15** | **A 94-100** |
| **Reading Tests 30** | **A- 90-93** |
| **Midterm 20** | **B+ 87-89** |
| **Final Exam 20** | **B 84-86** |
| **Homework/Classwork 10** | **B- 80-83** |
| **Participation 5** | **C+ 77-79** |
| **Total 100**  | **C 72-76** |
|  | **F 71 and Below** |

CRS 101 Critical Reading Seminar

Mondays and Wednesday (Section 1)

Main 252

9:00-10:15

Tuesdays and Thursdays (Section 4)

Main B-9

10:30-11:45

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202-884-9289

Main 444

Office hours:

Monday/Wednesday 2:30-5 pm

Tuesday/Thursday-By appointment

**Course Description**

This course strengthens critical reading skills through close readings of disciplinary texts by focusing on critical reading objectives.

**Course Objectives**

Students will:

-Identify the thesis or theme of a text by analyzing the main points of the text.

-Judge the quality of evidence used to support a theme or thesis in a text.

-Provide summaries for texts..

-Determine the purpose and tone of a text.

-Identify the author’s organizational and rhetorical strategies and recognize the strengths, weaknesses and inconsistencies in the text.

**Textbook: Ten Steps to Advanced Reading, 2nd Edition, by John Langan. 2013. Townsend**

**Press.**

**Readings: reproduced for students from Dream City: Race, Power and the Decline of**

**Washington DC. By Harry S. Jaffe & Thomas Sherwood, 2014.**

Additional readings from text and instructor.

Questions or comments about page 1:

**General Requirements**

Attendance: You must come to class. It is unlikely that you will be able to succeed in this class if you do not attend regularly. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. That means that you do not have to provide me with excuses when you are absent. Please keep in mind, class work cannot be made up outside of class under any circumstances. If you miss a reading test that we take in class, you will receive a zero. In the case of a verifiable emergency, I will allow you to submit an alternate assignment to replace only one reading test. Points are automatically deducted in Moodle every time you miss class. This policy is not negotiable. Please make a note of the following:

* I take attendance in the beginning of the class period. Students who do not respond are marked absent.
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1 folder

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1 yellow highlighter

Pens and pencils

At least one pack of smaller-than-average-size sticky notes

Access to a reliable computer

Access to a dictionary

Recommended: A kitchen timer

Questions about page 2:

**Independent Work:** You will have to complete many assignments independently. These assignments are listed on the course schedule. You will not be able to succeed in this course if you do not regularly complete independent work.

**Weekly Reading Tests, Papers and Exams:** You will be given a reading test every other week. (Please see the course schedule for more details.) It is imperative that you are present for each test. You will be given an exam at midterm and a cumulative final exam. Generally, I do not allow students to make up missed assignments. I do drop the lowest test grade. You will also be required to complete weekly article reviews and summaries in addition to the two major papers that you will present this semester.

**Academic Integrity:** You are only permitted to use your brain and the books listed in the “Texts” section of the syllabus to complete assignments for this class. You must not use any outside sources. You are not permitted to work with your classmates, friends or family members to complete assignments for this course unless I have given written permission. **If you are having difficulty, stop by my office or send me an email so that we can chat about your troubles. I enjoy spending time with my students, and I enjoy helping students find solutions.** I will forward any plagiarized documents to the office of Academic Affairs without hesitation. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and must be prosecuted. The penalties for plagiarism and other forms of cheating range from course failure to dismissal from the University.

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Questions or concerns about page 3:

**Grading**

 CRS 101 will satisfy your General Education reading requirement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade Percentages** | **Grade Scale** |
| **Reading Tests 30** | **A 94-100** |
| **Written Assignments/Homework/Classwork 20** | **A- 90-93** |
| **Midterm 20** |  |
| **Participation/Attendance 5** | **B+ 87-89** |
| **Final Exam 25**  | **B 84-86** |
| Total 100 | **B- 80-83** |
|  | **C+ 76-79** |
|  | **C 70-75** |
|  | **D 60-69** |
|  **F 59 -0** |

Questions or comments about grading criteria:

Course Schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | In Class | Independent Work |
| Week 1-January 11-17Class begins January 14th | Housekeeping & AnnotationGroup assignment  | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 1pages 19-22  |
| Week 2January19-24 (Jan 19th MLK Holiday. No Class) | Day 1-Vocabulary in Context | Create a glossary and Complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 1Pages 23-26 |
| Day 2-Vocabulary in Context-Syllabus quiz | -Create a glossary and Complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 1Pages 27-30-Complete Current Events article  |
| Week 3January 25-31 | Day 1: Test 1-Annotation and Vocabulary in Context  | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 2Pages 31-41  |
| Day 2: Outlining and Summary | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 2Pages 42-51Complete Current events article summary |
| Week 4February 1-7 | Day 1: Outlining and Summarization | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 3 Pages 52-58 |
| Day 2: Outlining and Summarization | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 3Pages 59-66Complete Current Events article summary |
| Week 5February 8-14 | Day 1: Test 2-Outlining and Summarization  | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 4Pages 67-77 |
| Day 2: Paraphrasing | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 4Pages 78-87Complete Current Events article summary |
| Week 6February 15-21(Monday, February 16th, Presidents Day, no class) |   Day 1:Paraphrase | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 5Pages 88-96 |
| Day 2: Paraphrase | Create a glossary and complete worksheet for Dream City Chapter 3Pages 59-66Complete Current Events article summary |