

**LIBS 400 – Liberal Studies Senior Seminar**  
**Texas A&M University - Commerce – Spring Semester 2019**  
Online course

**Instructor:** Dr. Brad Klypchak

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Office Hours: Mon 2:00-3:30; Tues and Thurs 1:00-3:00 or by appointment

**Course Description:** This course provides each student in the Liberal Studies Program with opportunities for making connections among his or her concentration, support fields, other educational experiences, and possible careers. A project reflecting a sound application of research methods, analytical frameworks, or performance criteria and a learning outcomes learning assessment will also be required. Must be taken in final semester.

**Course Objectives:**

1. to demonstrate the effective application of interdisciplinary scholarship and its theoretical underpinnings through designing and carrying out an independent research project.
2. to demonstrate the academic skill of researching a topic from multiple disciplinary fields and to then use the findings to inform one's project.
3. to generate and effectively communicate scholarly material which is informed by critical thought and the student's personal academic career.
4. to communally engage in the process of assessment, critique, and refinement as applied to the work of not only the student but of their classmates as well.

**Evaluation:**

Academic Autobiography:	5%
Future Applications Project:	5%
Annotated Bibliography I:	5%
Annotated Bibliography II:	5%
Proposal Plan:	10%
Progress Reports:	10%
Draft Final Project:	10%
Critiques:	10%
Revised Final Project:	20%
Executive Summary	5%
Reflective Review:	5%
Participation and Engagement:	10%

**Grading System:**

A (exceptional) = 100 - 90%      B (good) = 89.99 - 80%      C (average) = 79.99 - 70%  
D (minimally sufficient) = 69.99 - 60%      F (failure) = <60%

I am a firm believer in the formal significance to these letter grades and their meaning. As much as it pains us on occasions to realize, exceptional is a difficult realm to achieve. As well, average is just that, average – on a level with one’s peers. Average does not equate to poor or a “bad” grade. In nearly all grading instances, I start from a mindset that one begins at middle “C” (75%), and one proves their relative ability to shift above, shift below, or remain at that mark with their work.

In a course such as this one, the ability to work with independence in a productive manner is crucially important. As well, the ability to problem solve and to synthesize are key skills to develop and demonstrate. I will continuously be looking for evidence that these qualities are being demonstrated and will evaluate with such considerations in mind.

### **Brief Assignment Explanations:**

**Academic Autobiography:** As the first step in the process of developing a project which successfully reflects their LIBS degree, students will depict their academic career, their specific areas of academic interest, and their potential future pursuits as they fit with their scholarly experiences and/or professional aspirations.

**Future Applications Project:** As a second step to the process, the student will locate potential outlets for scholarly and/or professional connection to their respective field(s) of interest. Beyond locating where like-minded professionals gather and network, the student should also become aware of outlets where a project’s results could be put to practical academic use. This might include outlets such as conference presentations, journal submissions, staged performance or exhibitions, or the like.

**Annotated Bibliography Projects:** Students will be required to locate source material from scholarly-sound sources on a topic which pertains to the student’s particular interests. Specific attention will be also given to discovering a specific scholarly theory which may be applied to the further analysis/conceptualization of the chosen topic.

**Proposal Plan:** Part of the nature of the Senior Seminar course is to demonstrate the integrations and synthesis of the entire undergraduate experience. For a program like Liberal Studies, one inherently engages an interdisciplinary approach towards one’s academic pathway. The proposal plan simply declares how your eventual completion of the Senior Seminar will effectively demonstrate such qualities: you declare what your project will be, how it is scholarly-sound in both methodological conception and connection to existing scholarly literature, and provide a timeline for when each component step to the project’s execution will be achieved. The proposal plan establishes an effective plan for the student to follow throughout the duration of the term.

**Progress Reports:** Periodically throughout the term, students will be asked to inform the professor and/or their classmates as to their relative progress on their individual projects. Documentation of such progress at the given time may be requested. These reports are intended to serve as both reflections of what had been done on the project during the given time span, but also what needs to happen in the coming future for the project to reach its intended aims. Additionally, progress reports serve as a means to encourage self-reflection on the process of doing independent work.

**Draft Final Project:** A completed draft of the final project is to be distributed amongst the course community. This draft will then be reviewed by one's colleagues, allowing for feedback and offering outlets for where revision may well be in order thereby improving the project as a whole.

**Executive Summary:** This brief form summarizes elements of the project and serves to illustrate some of the project's core elements.

**Critiques:** One will provide feedback to the work of one's colleagues. The relative degree of effort and engagement contributed to the critiques offered will be assessed.

**Revised Final Project:** A completed final project, informed by the critiques and thoroughly demonstrating the intentions of the Senior Seminar, will be required.

**Reflective Review:** Independent projects are a process (much like achieving an undergraduate degree in and of itself). Here, the student is to reflect on the experiences of the term and the ways in which the project experience as a whole has come to achieving what initially was considered.

### **Readings**

There is no required text for the course. There may be readings distributed via D2L Brightspace as necessary.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

All coursework is to be an original work by the student and created specifically for fulfilling the requirements for this course. Plagiarism, cheating, or otherwise representing another's work or ideas as one's own without proper attribution will not be tolerated. It is the student's responsibility to:

1. research and write their own papers
2. give proper credit through documentation when using words or ideas of others
3. rely on their own knowledge when taking tests
4. refuse to give another student the opportunity to be dishonest

**Any act of academic dishonesty will result in the automatic failure of the course** and may be subject to further disciplinary action by the university.

**“Attendance” policy, instructor’s rights and expectations:**

All courses demand active participation and regular attendance. Online courses offer no exception. Rather, it is imperative that the student do all assigned work in a timely fashion. In particular, this course demands the student to be independently dedicated to making positive progress throughout the term. As we are working toward a collective goal of not only accomplishing our own projects, but also aiding others in their pursuits, it becomes all the more important that each and every student stays actively engaged in the process. Failure to do so hurts not only the individual student, but the collective community as a whole.

*Please be aware:* Full term online courses are typically already quite time-involved as the amount of outside library work, reading, and writing is greater than a traditional classroom course. One must stay active and disciplined with researching, writing, discussion board posting, and assignment management throughout the term.

All assignments are devised for the explicit purpose of offering educational benefit, be that academic growth, hands-on experience, development and display of critical thought, or expression of our academic selves. Coursework is to be completed as assigned and is to be turned in no later than the formal due date. Any work turned in after due dates will incur a penalty respective of its relative degree of tardiness. **No credit will be given for work submitted more than one week late.** Failing to complete assignments not only inhibits the immediate learning process but, again, ultimately hurts the overall learning community as discussion of the process and its results can prove insightful as well. Repeated failures to meet deadlines (be it missed assignments, periods of minimal progress, failure to engage with the course community, etc.) will constitute the equivalence of “absences” in a traditional classroom setting. Students with more than **three** “absences” may be dropped from the course. For additional information, see the *Student’s Guide Handbook*, p. 37. Additionally, I reserve the right to assign a final course grade no higher than a “C” for students accumulating more than **three** “absences.”

Course participation includes aspects of respectful, thoughtful, class interaction and engagement in group discussions. This course’s expectations work in conjuncture with what the *Student’s Guide Handbook* describes as Civility in the Classroom (see p. 36). Additionally, all students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Student’s Guide Handbook*, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, pg. 42).

## **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See current Student Guidebook).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](#)

## **ADA Statement**

### **Students with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Gee Library- Room 132  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835  
Fax (903) 468-8148  
Email: [Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu](mailto:Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

## **Concealed Carry Notice**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the [formal policy](#) and/or consult your event organizer. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

## **Course Outline:**

### Week 1 (1/14-1/20)

- general course information
- establishing expectancies and introducing options
- **Academic Autobiography due January 20**

### Week 2 (1/21-1/27)

- **Future Application Project due January 27**

### Week 3 (1/28-2/3)

- **Annotated Bibliography I due February 3**

### Week 4 (2/4-2/10)

- **Annotated Bibliography II due February 10**

### Week 5 (2/11-2/17)

- **Proposal Plan due February 17**

### Week 6 (2/18-2/24) (no office hours 2/21)

- Independent work

### Week 7 (2/25-3/3)

- **Progress report I due March 3**

### Week 8 (3/4-3/10)

- Independent work

### Week 9\* (3/11-3/24) (includes Spring Break)

- **Progress report II due March 24**

### Week 10 (3/25-3/31)

- **Progress report III due March 31**

### Week 11 (4/1-4/7)

- **Draft Final Project due April 7**

### Week 12 (4/8-4/14)

- Independent work

### Week 13 (4/15-4/21)

- **Critiques due April 21**

### Week 14 (4/22-4/28)

- Independent work

### “Week” 15 (4/29-5/10)

- **Executive Summary due May 3**
- **Revised Final Project due May 3**
- **Reflective Review due May 8**

final grades available via MyLeo on Tuesday, May 14

# TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

## Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

## Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

### Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or <b>point</b> release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or <b>point</b> release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2L supports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version.  Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
  - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
  - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
  - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
  - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
  - Speakers or headphones.
  - \*For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.



- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: [JAVA web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp](http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp)
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  - [Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
  - [Adobe Flash Player \(version 17 or later\) https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/](https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/)
  - [Adobe Shockwave Player https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/](https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/)
  - [Apple Quick Time http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

# COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

## Brightspace Support

### Need Help?

### Student Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words "[click here](#)" to submit an issue via email.



### System Maintenance

D2L runs monthly updates during the last week of the month, usually on Wednesday. The system should remain up during this time unless otherwise specified in an announcement. You may experience minimal impacts to performance and/or look and feel of the environment.