LIBS 400 – Liberal Studies Senior Seminar
Texas A&M University - Commerce – Fall Semester 2021
Online course

Instructor: Dr. Brad Klypchak
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      Office Hours: Office Hours: MW 3:00-4:00, Tues 12:30 – 2:30 or by appointment
             (Zoom meetings welcomed)

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.

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. 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

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).

Covid 19 Considerations

Students, faculty, and staff are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated, wear a mask in public indoor settings, and wash hands frequently. These actions can reduce the spread of COVID-19. Review the whole of the university's Fall 2021 COVID-19 Management and Guidance Plan thoroughly and be prepared to strictly adhere to it.

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
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@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 Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document 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.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health
The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit **www.tamuc.edu/counsel**

Course Outline:

Week 1 (8/30-9/5)
- general course information
- establishing expectancies and introducing options
- **Academic Autobiography due September 5**

Week 2 (9/6-9/12)
- **Future Application Project due September 12**

Week 3 (9/13-9/19)
- **Annotated Bibliography I due September 19**

Week 4 (9/20-9/26)
- **Annotated Bibliography II due September 26**

Week 5 (9/27-10/3)
- **Proposal Plan due October 3**

Week 6 (10/4-10/10)
- Independent work

Week 7 (10/11-10/17)
- **Progress report I due October 17**

Week 8 (10/18-10/24)
- Independent work

Week 9 (10/25-10/31)
- **Progress report II due October 31**

Week 10 (11/1-11/7)
- **Progress report III due November 7**

Week 11 (11/8-11/14)
- **Draft Final Project due November 14**

Week 12 (11/15-11/21)
- Independent work

Week 13 (11/22-11/28) *Thanksgiving Break November 25-26
- Independent work

Week 14 (11/29-12/5)
- **Critiques due December 5**

"Week" 15 (12/6-12/10
- Independent work

Finals "Week" (12/11-12/17)
- **Executive Summary due December 12**
- **Revised Final Project due December 12**
- **Reflective Review due December 14**

final grades available via MyLeo on Tuesday, December 21

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:
https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements

LMS Browser Support:
https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:
https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements

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.

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

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. Other support options can be found here:

https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport