



CID 2301
The Human Experience
FALL 2023

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Zachary Palmer

Office Location: BA 102F (subject to change when Ferguson reopens)

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 10-11am, 4-5pm, or by appointment

University Email Address: Zachary.palmer@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: Within 24 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Texts

The readings for this course are partially drawn from a system-wide list of Transformative Texts. **Transformative Texts** are books, films, artwork, music, documents, memoirs, etc. from diverse regions, cultures, ethnicities, ideologies, religions, genders--around the world and through time--that reflect the core ideals, ethics, and moralities of the human experience.

Required Readings for this section of CID 2301:

- *Americanah: A Novel* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *Sissy: A Coming-of-Gender Story* by Jacob Tobia
- *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* by Alison Bechdel

Course Description

The Human Experience introduces students to humanities-based inquiry by guiding them through an exploration of important ethical and moral issues across the human experience. Through a deep focus on a connecting theme, students will engage with topics addressing fundamental questions about human life and human interactions, develop the skills of humanistic

inquiry (including critical thinking, research, and communication skills), and learn to apply their knowledge to their personal, professional, and academic goals.

This course is the foundational course for the Humanities Certificate program, a grant-funded, TAMU System-wide initiative designed to create an intentional connective pathway through the core curriculum to infuse the humanities and humanities-based inquiry (critical thinking, research, communication, ethics, morality, cultural awareness, empathy, etc.) into student degree pathways and encourage students to see the relationships between larger questions of the human experience and their own lives and goals. The course is based on Transformative Texts and a Transformative Project.

The theme of this section is identity, the self, and memory. We will be exploring what makes us who we are and will cover culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, family, and issues of memory and storytelling.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. **Critical/Integrative Thinking:** Students will apply insights from the humanities (i.e. examinations of human history, culture, language, ethics, and aesthetics) to problems or questions that intersect with other areas of inquiry, including STEM and professional disciplines (Core Outcome Alignment: Critical Thinking)
2. **Communication:** Students will communicate ideas effectively through writing and, where appropriate, oral communication, visual communication, or creative performance (Core Outcome Alignment: Communication)
3. **Ethical Reasoning:** Students will engage with multiple perspectives in exploring the human dimensions of real-world situations and problems (Core Outcome Alignment: Personal Responsibility; Critical Thinking)
4. **Cultural Awareness:** Students will demonstrate an appreciation for social and cultural diversity while engaging in critical analysis of various forms of literary, artistic, or cultural expression (Core Outcome Alignment: Social Responsibility; Critical Thinking)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods and Assessment

This course will be centered on classroom discussion of assigned works, using small group and large group discussions, with short low-stakes writing and reflection assignments that scaffold to a final Transformative Project. The Transformative Project showcases student learning and development of humanities skills, including information literacy, critical thinking, and communication. Students will read, analyze, and develop an understanding of the assigned texts and their connections to their own lived experience, goals, and beliefs; conduct research; and communicate their ideas. In engaging with the core learning objectives of critical thinking,

communication, social responsibility, and personal responsibility, students will gain a greater appreciation of the complexities of the world and their place within that complexity, and gain new skills derived from deep textual reading and analysis, critical thinking and engagement, research and information literacy, and the ability to communicate their ideas. These skills provide a key foundation for the college experience and will bolster students' employability after graduation.

To prepare for and develop the Transformative Project, students will engage in short writing, research, and oral presentations that provide a scaffolded foundation for their final project, as set out in the Course Schedule. Through reflective assignments, students will develop a project focus that sets out the large issue drawn from their study of the chosen Transformative Text and the relevance students find to their lives and goals. They will conduct research on different approaches to that large issue to understand in a holistic sense the different perspectives on the large issue, and make arguments about how such different perspectives might shape a society's understanding of the issue. Students will prepare a product that articulates the connections between the larger issue they researched and discussed and their own lives, goals, and experiences. The final Transformative Project will be presented using Adobe Creative Campus suite of programs, in a format that makes the most sense to students, to allow them creativity of expression in making the connections between their humanities inquiry and their personal experiences.

Throughout the course, discussions and assignments will be geared to reinforcing the basic premises of university education and to emphasizing students' development of skills central to their college career and beyond—exposing students to new ideas, different perspectives, and the diversity of the human experience; developing relationships between and among students, mentors, and faculty; reinforcing persistence and resiliency; encouraging reflection and sense of purpose; and honing reading, writing, and communication skills.

Assessments are broken down as follows:

- **Reading quizzes-** There will be weekly in-class quizzes over the readings to assess completion and comprehension. You must be in class that day to complete the quizzes and they cannot be made up. There will be 13 quizzes worth 10 points each, but I will drop your lowest 3 for a total of 100 points.
- **Reflective Writings-** Students will choose from a list of discussion prompts posted on D2L that require you to think deeply about issues related to identity, the self, and memory. There will be 6 prompts worth 25 points each, but you only need to complete 4 for a total of 100 points.
- **Transformative Project-** For the transformative project, students will interview someone about their identity—whether it is their gender, race, religion, profession, etc. You will then come up with a creative way to explore issues of identity through the story of your interviewee, connecting to the themes of the class. The final product may be a podcast, comic, short documentary, play, photo essay, or whatever you can dream up.

However, you must utilize outside sources and analysis in your final product. Smaller assignments will help lead up to the final product, including

- Interview questions & interview plan- Due September 28th through D2L. You will turn in your list of interview questions and explanation of who you plan to interview and why. Worth 5 points.
- Interview transcript- Due October 24th through D2L. You will provide a written transcript of your interview with your participant. Worth 5 points.
- Proposal- Due November 7th through D2L. You will write a 1-2 page proposal of your final project, including the medium you have chosen (for instance, podcast, video, written essay, etc.) and a brief description of your analysis, themes you'll be exploring, etc. Worth 5 points.
- Final product- Due December 8th through D2L. Worth 50 points.
- Presentation of final product- Students will present their final product at the student showcase. Details will be shared when I have them. Worth 5 points.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A=90-100%

B=80-89%

C=70-79%

D=60-69%

F=59% or below

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All courses 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 coursework 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

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulties with any part of D2L, please contact Brightspace (D2L) Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found at <http://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I am available through email during business hours. Please feel free to reach out to me to set up a Zoom meeting if you want to have a more in-depth conversation. If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact me!

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Policies

- Regular attendance is critical as this is a discussion-heavy class. However, I understand that there are some instances in which students must miss class. There will be regular, unannounced reading quizzes taken in class that cannot be made up. However, **I will be dropping your lowest 3 quizzes in order to provide wiggle-room for any absences that may arise.**
- Coming to class on time is also important, and lateness is a bad habit to get into as you begin your college career. Reading quizzes will be taken at the beginning of class and if you are more than 5 minutes late, you will likely miss the quiz.
- I take plagiarism and academic dishonesty very seriously. Please read through the module on plagiarism on D2L to familiarize yourself with best practices for avoiding plagiarism. Your first instance of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in a zero for that particular assignment. Your second instance may result in you getting a zero in the class. **For the purposes of this course, use of AI to write your assignments is considered academic dishonesty.**

- If you have any questions or concerns throughout the class, please come by my office hours or email me. I want you to succeed in this class and will do everything I can to help you get caught up or explain the material. There is no such thing as a “dumb question”!

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for me to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook:

http://www.tamuc.edu/student_guidebook/Student_Guidebook.pdf?_ga=2.174666466.139137986.1597081037-785048279.1537547496

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please visit the [Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99R0.01](#)

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Students with Disabilities- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protections 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 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](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

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, and environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

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 34.06.02R1, 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.

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 CALENDAR

Class Session	Reading Due	Assignments
Tuesday, 8/29	Syllabus	
Thursday, 8/31	None	
Tuesday, 9/5	None	
Thursday, 9/7	Chapters 1 & 2 of Americanah (44 pages)	

[Syllabus is Subject to Change](#)

Tuesday, 9/12	Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 of Americanah (59 pages)	
Thursday, 9/14	Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 of Americanah (41 pages)	
Tuesday, 9/19	Chapters 12, 13, 14, and 15 of Americanah (48 pages)	
Thursday, 9/21	Chapters 16, 17, and 18 of Americanah (48 pages)	
Tuesday, 9/26	Chapters 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 of Americanah (48 pages)	
Thursday, 9/28	Chapters 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 of Americanah (50 pages)	Interview Questions & interview plan due
Tuesday, 10/3	Chapters 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35 of Americanah (56 pages)	Hair and Race Writing
Thursday, 10/5	Americanah chapters 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41 of Americanah (42 pages)	
Tuesday, 10/10	Chapters 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, and 48 of Americanah (49 pages)	Becoming Black in America Writing
Thursday, 10/12	Chapters 49, 50, 51, 52, and 53 of Americanah (52 pages)	
Tuesday, 10/17	Chapter 54 (29 pages)	
Thursday, 10/19	Introduction of Sissy	Americanah Review Writing
Tuesday, 10/24	Part I of Sissy	Interview Transcript due
Thursday, 10/26	Part II of Sissy	
Tuesday, 10/31	Part III of Sissy	Coming-of-Gender Writing
Thursday, 11/2	None	
Tuesday, 11/7	Chapter 1 of Fun Home	Proposal due
Thursday, 11/9	Chapter 2 of Fun Home	
Tuesday, 11/14	Chapter 3 of Fun Home	
Thursday, 11/16	Chapter 4 of Fun Home	
Tuesday, 11/21	Chapter 5 of Fun Home	Fact and Fiction Writing
Thursday, 11/23	NO CLASS	
Tuesday, 11/28	Chapter 6 of Fun Home	Bruce and Alison's Identities Writing
Thursday, 11/30	Chapter 7 of Fun Home	
Tuesday, 12/5	None	
Thursday, 12/8	None	Final Project due

Final Exam Period= Tuesday, 12/12 10:30-12:30