



CID 2301-07E The Human Experience: Finding Self and Identity through Dystopia

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2023

[TI:Dr Version](#)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Rebecca Rowe | Office Location: DTH 314

In-Person Office Hours: T/Th, 1pm-1:50pm | Virtual Office Hours: W, 10am-12pm; and by appt.

Email Address: Rebecca.Rowe@tamuc.edu (preferred form of communication)

Communication Response Time: Within 24 hours (M-F, 8am-5pm)

COURSE INFORMATION

Time: TTh 11:00am-12:15pm | **Location:** EDS 129

Textbooks Required

- Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. ISBN: 9781606865811
- Additional materials available on D2L and/or on the course schedule

Software Required

- We will be using D2L for all assignment submissions and course materials.
- You will need to read pdfs during the course of the semester. You are not required to print them off, but you are required to be able to look at them during class. Make sure you have something with Adobe Acrobat or another pdf reader.

Optional Materials

- [Purdue OWL MLA](#) is a great resource to check out for citation information.
- <https://www.tamuc.edu/library/>—the university library website.

Course Description

CID 2301: The Human Experience introduces students to humanities-based inquiry by guiding students through an exploration of important humanistic questions across all elements of the human experience. Through the deep focus on a connecting theme, students will engage in holistic discussions of topics addressing fundamental questions about human life and human interactions, develop the skills of humanistic inquiry (including critical thinking, research, literacy skills, 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,

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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.

In this course, we will be looking at the human experience through the lens of dystopias. In particular, we'll consider how dystopias work to dehumanize people and what characters do to push back against that dehumanization. In doing so, you will get a chance to explore your own humanity and ways that it is confirmed or denied by the culture around you. Ultimately, in developing your Transformative Project, you will design your own dystopia and imagine how you can champion your own humanity, both in fiction and in the real world.

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, through 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)

Student Learning Outcomes will be assessed by the Transformative Project (see discussion below) presented during the Celebration of Student Learning held on the Wednesday of Exam Week, 3-5pm.

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

The most important technical skill you need is the ability to use a word processor, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs. Unless otherwise noted in the assignment prompt, **all projects and essays must be submitted as a Word Doc, a Google Doc, or a pdf**. You will also need to be familiar with D2L and websites such as *YouTube*. At the end of the course, we will also be using Adobe Premiere to create trailers, but we will spend time in class developing skills for that.

Instructional Methods

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, discuss, listen, 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

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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 variability 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.

Student success in this course will be supported through the Student Instructor (SI) assigned to the class—Kassandra Whitehurst. The SI provides an intermediary between the student and the instructor—a peer to whom students can turn for assistance and guidance, a role model and mentor for navigating college life, and a resource for students to encourage persistence and success. The SI will support the instructor through course administration, such as taking attendance, being available to students outside of class meetings, and facilitating student-instructor interactions, but will not engage in teaching or assessment.

GRADING

In this course, **you have complete control over your grade.** This course uses what's called Gameful or Gameified learning, designed around concepts of gaming. Basically, there are many assignments you can complete in this course. You choose which assignments you want to complete based on what interests you and what you think will benefit your learning journey most. So, for example, if you're really great at taking notes, you can get points for that. If you want to do more analysis of the week's text, you can get points for that. You choose which assignments work best for you.

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As you complete assignments, you will rack up points. While I will assign points to each project, your grade rests mostly on completion. If you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit it is asked, you will earn all of the points that assignment is worth. I may disagree or misunderstand your ideas, but if you put in the labor, you are guaranteed all the points on each assignment you submit. Assignments will *not* earn full points if they are shorter than the assigned prompt, late, or do not complete the work of the assignment prompt (see policies below).

Your semester grade will be determined by how many points you have at the end:

- A = 90+ points
- B = 80-89 points
- C = 70-79 points
- D = 60-69 points
- F = less than 60 points

You can turn in as many or as few assignments as you like to get the score you want. In other words, your grade does not depend on the quality of your work; my comments will be geared towards quality to help you strengthen your critical thinking skills. Instead, your grade depends completely on what you turn in and how much you're engaging in the work of the course. This is intended to give you more room to experiment and fail, to alleviate stress since you will have control over all that you do, and to allow you to chart your own educational path within this course. If you'd like to learn more about gameful learning, you can do so [here](#).

Assessments

Throughout the semester, there will be five required assignments that all lead up to your Transformative Project, each of which will be worth 10 points and will involve some level of engagement with your peers:

- Research Review Discussion Board
- Dystopia Design Discussion Board
- Plotting a Dystopia Discussion Board
- Collaborative Dystopia Proposal Discussion Board
- Collaborative Dystopia Script Discussion Board

You will then complete the Transformative Project collaboratively, creating a **trailer for a dystopia of your own design**, which is worth 20 points. If you earn full points for these required projects, you will have 70 points (a passing grade).

Alongside these required assignments, you can also earn Community Engagement points that allow you to engage in our course community in a variety of ways in order to bump your grade up higher:

- Class notes (3 points each)
- Office hours (3 points each)
- Discussion boards (5 points each week completed *except for* the required weeks, which are worth 10 points, as noted above; the first week discussion board is also required but is only worth the typical 5 points because it is not part of the transformative project)
- Reading the World (5 points)

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- Community essay (5 points)
- Social media post (5 points)

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>

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Interaction with Instructor Statement

As an instructor, communication is key with me. I am happy to be flexible with most things in this course if it will help you succeed, but I'm not a mind reader. You have to tell me what you need so that I can help you. If you need to contact me, send me an **email**. Generally, I will respond to emails sent between 8am and 5pm, Monday-Friday, within 24 hours of receiving them. If you have an urgent question about an assignment that's due on Sunday, you might want to start working on it by Friday so you have a chance to ask me before the weekend. If you forget and get started late, just let me know you need more time in the Extension Request Form. If I plan to be away from my computer for more than a couple of days, I will let you know in advance. I will also update the online grades as quickly as I can. I aim for no more than a week, but it may take me longer, especially with longer projects. You will receive written feedback for every project, so make sure you check for it. I often use rubrics, so if it looks like I didn't leave any comments, look for the rubric.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Policy on Humanity

My courses and teaching are designed around two core concepts: adaptability and empathy:

- I recognize that you have considerable knowledge about many things coming into this class. I start by exploring what you already know so that I can help you take your skills and refine and strengthen them. I also want you to be able to take what you learn in my class forward with you. So, I design my courses around skills that I can teach you that you can then apply elsewhere as you move through your education and life.
- I know that you do not begin and end with this class, and I approach each student first and foremost as a human being who, if we're being honest, may have more important things going on in their lives than this class. **Your health—physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial—is more important than anything we will do or discuss, and I want you to prioritize them.** That means a few things:
 - If you need help, accommodation, an extension, or anything else to perform as well as you can while also maintaining your health, please let me know. That also means that you can eat and drink in class if you need to, that you can use technology as it best serves you, and that if you need to leave the room at any point for your health (including mental and emotional), please do so.
 - This class will be full of human bodies, so please be considerate. If you are sick, stay home. There are plenty of ways to make up any day of class.
 - As a fellow human being, I respect you. By respect, I mean that I will always do my best to see you as a whole human being whose life experiences have created a person who acts in certain ways and who deserves to be treated like a human being. All I ask is that just as I respect you as a human being, you treat me and your peers with that kind of respect. We may at times cover new or difficult material and we all may have different opinions about it. I ask that you keep an open mind and be respectful with me, your classmates, and our material.

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Ultimately, my goal is to discover where you are on your personal learning journey and help you move along that journey in whatever way I can. Most importantly, **I am here to help you, not harm you.** If there is ever anything I can do to help you with that, please let me know!

Absence Policy

While your presence in the course will help both you and your classmates learn and process the material, life often finds a way to get in the way. So, **every student is allowed six missed days within the semester without a penalty.** You do not have to tell me why you're absent (unless you believe that your absence would count as one of [TAMUC's attendance policy's](#) reasons for excused absence, at which point, you should definitely tell me); you may be sick or need to work an extra shift or look after a child or simply need a mental health day to be the best you that you can be. You do not owe me an explanation for organizing your time as well as you can. When you have missed six days, I will let you know that you have used your free absence days. **At this point, you will lose two grade points for every day you miss.**

Makeup Work

If you are absent for any reason at any point in the course, you can complete a make-up activity by contacting me to receive the specific activity for that day. If, and only if, you have missed more than six days, this makeup activity will replenish the two points you lose from missing additional days. Either way, the makeup activity will allow you to complete whatever educational objective you missed for the day you are gone.

Grading Policies:

- **Late projects:** Because there are so many different projects due at different times, it is helpful if you turn assignments in on time. All formal and informal assignments should be ready to turn in at the beginning of the class they are due and/or submitted to D2L no later than the stated deadline. If you need an extension, fill out the Extension Request Form before the due date; if you need more time to do your best work, I'm absolutely happy to give up to a week extra (for real, I give out extensions like free candy, except at the very end of the semester, when I need to turn in grades). If, and only if, you don't communicate with me, late projects will lose two points each calendar day they are late.
- **Short projects:** Each of the assigned projects has been designed to fit a certain length, the word requirement given on the assignment prompt. I do give you wiggle room: as long as you're within 50 words for shorter assignments and 100 words for longer assignments, you'll be fine. Any project not meeting this standard will lose points according to how much of the project is missing. For example, if the assignment is for 1,000 words, and you submit 500, you can only make half the number of points on the assignment.
- **Missed-the-point projects:** Even though I'm fairly flexible with how students interpret the prompt, if you do not complete the project asked of you, you cannot receive full points. For example, if you submit a project that requires research but offer no research to support your ideas, the assignment would be incomplete and will receive no more than half of the possible points. Likewise, if you write an essay when a podcast is required, you cannot receive full points because you have not engaged with the public aspect of the project.

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Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor 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/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

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

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

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

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

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

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Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

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](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<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, an 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 34.06.02.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.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

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.

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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

CLASS SCHEDULE

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.