US 397.01W: Fostering a Culture of Belonging

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2023 (August 28-October 22)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Course Facilitator: Elsa Villarreal, Ph.D.
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COURSE INFORMATION

No textbook is required for this course. This course is an ACUE supported course conducted online/asynchronously.

This ACUE supported class will guide course-takers on how to prioritize equity and inclusion in their work with students and colleagues. In addition to highlighting practices that can be used by instructional staff, this offering adds practices, videos, and resources that non-instructional staff and campus leaders can learn and implement allowing them to contribute to a culture of belonging across their academic institutions.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, the course- takers will be able to:
- Examine how implicit bias may affect one's thoughts, decisions, and actions.
- Apply research-based practices to establish an inclusive learning environment.
- Reduce microaggressions in learning environments.
- Use practices to address imposter phenomenon and stereotype threat.
- Create an inclusive environment.
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Course Description and Design

Consider this a mini-graduate course in which you will dedicate at least 2-3 hours per week engaging with the material, implementing teaching practices with your students and your colleagues, and composing a written reflection.

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Each module provides you with various research-based practices designed to increase a sense of belonging across your campus community. Among these, you will select and implement the practice(s) that best suits your goals and your position. The ACUE course is also community-based, and you will have many opportunities to learn from and share ideas with your colleagues about the practices you are learning. Your facilitator will guide you through the modules; help to create an environment where questions, conversation, and learning are valued; and provide you with ideas and feedback.

Module Components

The following table provides a description of the module components.

Module Component	Description
Introduction	Piques your interest and gets you thinking about and relating to the module topics
Learning Objectives	State what you will learn as well as the practices you can choose to implement
Expert Insights	Delve deeper into some of the module's practices with further explanations, supporting research, and commentary by nationally recognized experts in the field
Demonstrations	Show the effective practices recommended in the module being implemented by instructors, staff, and leaders from across the country in authentic settings
Implementation Resources	Provide step-by-step guidance, course resources, and examples designed to help you implement module practices
Common Challenges & Misconceptions	Provide research-based clarifications and suggestions for addressing common challenges and misconceptions
Observe & Analyze	Showcases instructors, staff, and leaders using practices with different levels of proficiency and provides an opportunity to discuss the module practices more deeply with your colleagues
Practice & Reflect I	Serves as the culminating activity where you implement a research-based practice that you learned about in the module and then reflect upon it
Practice & Reflect II	Provides an opportunity to think about what you learned, what you implemented, and what you may implement in the future
Note to Future Self	Provides an opportunity to write a note about the key concepts, ideas, or practices you would like to remember from the module
References	Provides a list of faculty and experts featured in the module and a list of sources used to develop the module content

Earn an ACUE badge in Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning

To earn the course badge, you will complete 4 modules, which taken together address the knowledge and skills needed to create more inclusive campus environments. As you engage with each module, you will view videos of inclusive practices featuring faculty, staff, leaders, and students from a wide variety of colleges and universities, as well as experts in the field of teaching and learning and diversity, equity, and inclusion. A set of resources designed to help you implement practices and deepen your learning is available, and you will have opportunities to participate in thought-provoking discussions to learn with and from your colleagues. Finally, you will reflect and write about your experiences implementing new teaching practices, which will be reviewed and scored by an ACUE National Reader.

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Complete the following to earn an ACUE badge for each module:
- Engage with module content.
- Implement or plan to implement an inclusive practice.
- Write a reflection of the experience.
- Complete the Practice & Reflect II survey.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods

COMPLETE THE START HERE MODULE

- Complete the Enrollment Survey. (Note: You must complete the Enrollment Survey to unlock your first modules.)
- **Create your profile** by following the directions provided.
- Meet your cohort and your facilitator by joining the **Introduce Yourself** forum on the course home page. Click on the **Introduce Yourself** link at the top of the module components list. Here you can join in your first cohort discussion forum, meet the other course-takers in your cohort, and become acquainted with some of the features of Canvas.
- Watch a short video that will walk you through **ACUE's Learning Design** for Fostering a Culture of Belonging and watch a **Course Introduction** video.

ENGAGE

- Begin with the module's **Introduction** video that previews the learning objectives and motivates you to learn more, and answer the questions provided that are designed to surface your prior knowledge and deepen your thinking about the practices you'll learn.
- Review the module's **Learning Objectives** and connection to supporting research. You can also download the skeletal outline to help organize your notes for the module and a vocabulary guide for the module.

LISTEN, WATCH, & LEARN

- Study relevant practices, supporting research, and commentary by nationally recognized experts in the **Experts Insights**.
- Watch the **Course Demonstrations** to observe effective practice and student reactions in authentic classroom settings.
- For both Expert Insights and Course Demonstrations, select the path that most closely aligns with your role on campus. The video resources have been divided into Core and Explore. We encourage you to watch the videos noted as Core for your role and to explore the other videos available, according to your interests.
- Consult and download the **Implementation Resources**, to aid in the implementation of effective practices and help you to learn more about the topics.

DEEPEN THINKING

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- o Learn about **Common Challenges & Misconceptions** others are likely to encounter as they implement the practices.
- o **Observe & Analyze** presents three videos that recreate the practices in action. View two of the three videos and engage in the discussion forum.
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    - o In the discussion forums:
        - o To post an idea, click the **Reply** button above the discussion board.
        - o To comment on another post, click the **Reply** button at the bottom left of the post.
        - o To agree with a post by the facilitator or another course-taker, click the **Like** button at the bottom left of the post.

PRACTICE & REFLECT

- o **Select and implement** at least one practice from the module that you feel will increase a sense of belonging for others.
- o **Reflect** on your experience by posting a written reflection that explains the practice you implemented, shares the impact it had on others, and shares your plans for next steps. The requirements for each reflection assignment are included in the Practice & Reflect assignment space.
    - o An ACUE reader scores your reflection and provides comments based on the rubric. Your reflection will be marked as complete if it meets the rubric criteria. If your reflection requires additional information, your reader will note what should be added, and you can resubmit your reflection in the assignment space.
    - o After After you have submitted your reflection assignment, complete Practice & Reflect II to consider what you learned in the module and which practices you implemented or plan to implement.
    - o Completion of both Practice & Reflect I and II is required to earn a badge for the module.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Although this course takes place online, community building is an important component for meeting our course outcomes. To ensure a productive and collegial learning experience for all course-takers, we need everyone to do their best to engage in the following behaviors:

• *Actively participate*. The course experience is more enriching when it includes a greater number of diverse voices and perspectives.

• *Read and respond to the discussion threads*. Research shows that learning is enhanced when online discussion participants read each other's posts, provide meaningful feedback, offer encouragement, and share relevant resources.

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•   ***Demonstrate respect for differences***. We all come to the table with different experiences and viewpoints. In order to get the most out of this learning opportunity, show respect for differences by seeking to understand, asking questions, clarifying understanding, and/or respectfully explaining your own perspective.

•   ***Be timely***. To ensure a full group discussion in the discussion forums, it is imperative that you post no later than the deadlines as listed in each module.

•   ***Be specific***. We encourage you to offer specific evidence from the videos or your own course experiences when posting to the discussion forums.

•   ***Use an appropriate tone and language***. In online environments without verbal or physical cues, humor and sarcasm can be mistaken as cold or insulting. Please pay special attention to your tone and language use before submitting discussion posts.

•   ***Be generous***. Be generous with your knowledge, insights, and time. Your weekly posts are not merely requirements for participation; they are your contributions to our learning community.

•   ***Respect confidentiality***. Some of the topics/issues we discuss may be sensitive and/or personal. While it is okay to talk about the things that you are learning with your colleagues, please do not share what other participants post without their explicit permission.

GRADING

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

Module Components (FCB1-FCB4)	Assignment	Points
Submit Introduction and View Learning Objectives	4 @ 10 points each	40
Expert Insights (view at least 2 videos per module)	Viewed 2 videos per module @ 20 points each	160
Demonstrations (view at least 2 videos per module)	Viewed 2 videos per module @ 20 points each	160
View Implementation Resources	4 @ 10 points each	40
View Common Challenges and Misconceptions	4 @ 10 points each	40
Observe & Analyze (with discussion)	4 @ 25 points each	100
Practice & Reflect Assignment and Survey	4 @ 100 points each	400
View Note to Future Self	4 @ 5 points each	20
End of Course Summary Discussion and Survey	1 @ 100 points	100
	Total Possible Points	**1060**
	636-1060 points: 60%-100%=Satisfactory	
	0-635 points: 0-59%=Unsatisfactory	

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Assessments

Discussions

ACUE's courses include discussion boards and other opportunities to share ideas with colleagues.

Maintaining appropriate etiquette for online forms of communication—or netiquette—is crucial to ensuring that these discussion forums offer a rich learning experience for all participants. Participants in the course and community are asked to kindly follow six norms for proper netiquette:

- **Actively participate.** The course experience is more enriching when it includes a greater number of voices and perspectives. By actively participating, course-takers have an opportunity to engage in discussions that further their understanding of different practices and prepare them to effectively implement module techniques in their own classrooms.

- **Read and respond to the discussion threads.** The course is designed to be taken in cohorts because research shows that learning is enhanced by engaging in meaningful discussions. A discussion does not take place by solely reading and responding to the initial prompts, but rather by reading other course taker's posts and providing feedback, offering encouragement, and sharing relevant resources.

- **Embrace the diversity among course-takers.** Our participants belong to a community of learners that benefit from the exchange of diverse perspectives and experiences. We expect that all course-takers are respectful of these differences.

- **Be timely.** Research shows that discussions are most beneficial when people respond to one another in a timely manner. We ask that you do your best to stay on the same schedule as your cohort to maximize learning for all course-takers.

- **Be specific.** We encourage you to offer specific evidence from the videos or your own classroom experiences when posting to the discussion forums. Citing evidence whenever possible not only allows you to effectively support your ideas but also helps paint a picture for your readers, who may have different perspectives or who have had different experiences.

- **Use an appropriate tone and language.** Without nonverbal cues, humor and sarcasm can be mistaken as cold or insulting. Please pay special attention to your use of tone and language before submitting posts in the discussion areas.

Reflections

As the culminating activity of each module, you will be asked to implement a practice or plan to implement a practice presented in the module and then engage in a written reflection. After submitting the written reflection, you will complete a survey about the module experienc as a whole. You will be asked to think about what you learned during the module, what you implemented, and what you will implement in the future.

The reflection assignment directions, examples, checklists, and rubrics are available in the course

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Summary Discussion

At the end of the course, your cohort will participate in a summary discussion, which allows you additional time to learn from your cohort colleagues. This is the ideal time to share your teaching practices, discuss how your students responded to the teaching practices, and solicit feedback from your colleagues. The content in the course is enhanced greatly by the interactions you have with your cohort colleagues.

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

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool
https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

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.

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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

The course requires no prerequisite knowledge and is designed for anyone interested in postsecondary instruction.

As a course participant, you are required to set aside the time necessary to:

- Fully engage in viewing videos of authentic course experiences

- Take note (perhaps literally take notes) of what subject matter experts offer during Expert Insights videos and podcasts

- Use discussion opportunities to expand, and even push, the thinking of your cohort peers

- Thoughtfully respond to survey questions that activate prior knowledge through reflection

- Plan when and how you will implement new practices in your course

- Reflect on the experiences you had implementing new practices and make plans for continuous improvemen

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

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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/docume nts/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form

http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyF ormold.pdf

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13stude nts/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf

AI Use policy [Draft 2, May 25 2023]

Texas A&M University Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instruc tor of the course. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes
an instance of academic dishonesty (Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assign ments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors 'guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.
13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty
13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

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

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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/

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/34Safet yOfEmployeesAndStudents/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.

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

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calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit **www.tamuc.edu/counsel**

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Course Modules	Module Open Date	Start Date	Due Date (by 11:59 pm)
Module 1 (FCB1) Managing the Impact of Biases	August 28	August 28	September 10
Module 2 (FCB2) Reducing Microaggressions	September 8	September 9	September 24
Module 3 Addressing Imposter Phenomenon and Stereotype Threat (FCB3)	September 22	September 25	October 8
Module 4 (FCB 3) Cultivating an Inclusive Environment	October 6	October 9	October 22

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