



US 397: Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2024 (Aug. 26 – Oct. 18)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Theresa Sadler, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Virtual by Appointment
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Preferred Form of Communication: Email
Communication Response Time: 24 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

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

This ACUE supported class will provide course-takers with practices proven to create an inclusive and supportive online learning environment. Course-takers will be shown videos to highlight various practices and be provided with the resources to implement new techniques into their courses.

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. Each module provides you with various research-based practices designed to assist you in creating an inclusive and supportive online learning environment. Among these, you will select and implement the practice(s) that best suits your pedagogical style. The ACUE course is 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.

All work will be done within Canvas, the LMS used by ACUE. D2L will only be accessed to view the syllabus and grades for US 397. You will receive a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory for US 397 (see section under **Grading** for more details). If you complete all modules within ACUE you will receive a badge for the ACUE course.

Learning Outcomes

1. Faculty will develop effective practices for leading students from the first day.
2. Faculty will be able to promote civil online learning environments.
3. Faculty will effectively implement methods to ensure equitable access to online learning.
4. Faculty will discuss techniques to help students persist in meeting academic challenges in online courses.
5. Faculty will learn practices for embracing diversity in online learning.
6. Faculty will be able to check for student understanding.
7. Faculty will develop effective practices to provide useful feedback.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Module Components

The following table provide a description of the module components:

Module Component	Description
Introduction	Piques your interest and gets you thinking about and relating to the module topics.
Opening Questionnaire	Designed to activate prior knowledge, this survey helps you connect your classroom and online experiences to the practices you will learn more about in this module.
Learning Objectives	States what you will learn as well as the practices you can choose to implement.
Pause & Plan I	After reviewing the learning outcomes, this section has you think about the outcome you think would be most beneficial to your students.
Demonstrations	Show the effective practices recommended in the module being implemented by instructors, staff, and leaders from across the country in authentic settings.
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.
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.
Implementation Resources	Provide step-by-step guidance, course resources, and examples designed to help you implement module practices.
Pause & Plan II	Allows time to think about and select a practice to implement in your course.
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.
Implementation Resources	This section includes resources and handouts to support your implementation of the techniques and practices presented in 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 Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment

To earn the course badge, you will complete seven modules, which taken together address the knowledge and skills needed to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. As you engage with each module, you will view videos to learn from various faculty and students who have engaged in practices leading to a supportive and inclusive learning environment. The abundance of resources taken together with the videos are designed to help you implement the practices being taught. Opportunity to participate in thought-provoking discussions to learn with and from your colleagues is also included. Finally, you will reflect on the implemented teaching practices and write about your experience, which will be reviewed and scored by an ACUE National Reader.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assessments

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 introduction video that will walk you through ACUE's Learning Design.

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

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

- **Select and implement** at least one practice from the module that you feel will increase a sense of belonging for others.
- **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.
 - 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

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information, your reader will note what should be added, and you can resubmit your reflection in the assignment space.

- 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.
- Completion of both Practice & Reflect I and II is required to earn a badge for the module.

GRADING

Module	Assignment	Points
Start Here	Enrollment Survey (5 points), Create Your Profile (10 points), Introduce Yourself (20 points)	35
Leading the First Day of Class (LE1)	Opening questionnaire (10 points), Pause & Plan (10 points), Observe & Analyze (30 points), Practice & Reflect assignment (100 points), Survey (10 points)	160
Promoting A Civil Learning Environment (LE2)	Opening questionnaire (10 points), Pause & Plan (10 points), Observe & Analyze (30 points), Practice & Reflect assignment (100 points), Survey (10 points)	160
Ensuring Equitable Access to Learning (LE3)	Opening questionnaire (10 points), Pause & Plan (10 points), Observe & Analyze (30 points), Practice & Reflect assignment (100 points), Survey (10 points)	160
Helping Students Persist in Their Studies (LE4)	Opening questionnaire (10 points), Pause & Plan (10 points), Observe & Analyze (30 points), Practice & Reflect assignment (100 points), Survey (10 points)	160
Embracing Diversity in Your Classroom (LE5)	Opening questionnaire (10 points), Pause & Plan (10 points), Observe & Analyze (30 points), Practice & Reflect assignment (100 points), Survey (10 points)	160
Checking for Student Understanding (LE6)	Opening questionnaire (10 points), Pause & Plan (10 points), Observe & Analyze (30 points), Practice & Reflect assignment (100 points), Survey (10 points)	160
Providing Useful Feedback (LE7)	Opening questionnaire (10 points), Pause & Plan (10 points), Observe & Analyze (30 points), Practice & Reflect assignment (100 points), Survey (10 points)	160
Summary Discussion	Summary Discussion	20
End of Course Survey	End of Course Survey	50
	Total Possible Points	1225
	729-1225 points = 60%-100% = Satisfactory	
	0-728 points = 0-59% = Unsatisfactory	

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

S = 60%-100%

U = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

S = 729 - 1225 Points

U = 0 - 728 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

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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.

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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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

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 [Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01](#)

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<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 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](#)

CID Policy on Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, complicity in cheating, multiple submissions (or substantial portions) of the same work for credit without authorization, submitting another's work, plagiarism, submitting algorithmically (AI) plagiarized work, and other acts that may reasonably be called academic dishonesty.

- Students who commit academic dishonesty will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment in the course and be issued a Written Warning that is reported to the CID Assistant Dean's office and listed in a database.
- If the student does NOT have a previous Written Warning for academic dishonesty reported in CID courses and has additional attempts available for the assignment, the student may resubmit the assignment (this applies to CBE courses only).
- If the student has a Written Warning of academic dishonesty reported in CID courses, the student may NOT resubmit the assignment, and the instructor will follow the procedure detailed in [Policy 13.99.99.R0.03](#) for Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty and report the incident to the Provost Office.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

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 instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments 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.

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](#)

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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.

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

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Course Modules	Open Date	Start Date	Due Date
Start Here	August 15	August 26	September 1
Leading the First Day of Class (LE1)	August 15	August 26	September 1
Promoting a Civil Learning Environment (LE2)	August 15	September 2	September 8
Ensuring Equitable Access to Learning (LE3)	September 6	September 9	September 15
Helping Students Persist in Their Studies (LE4)	September 6	September 16	September 22
Embracing Diversity in Your Classroom (LE5)	September 20	September 23	September 29
Checking for Student Understanding (LE6)	September 20	September 30	October 6
Proving Useful Feedback (LE7)	September 20	October 7	October 13
Summary Discussion	September 20	October 7	October 18
End of Course Survey	September 20	October 7	October 18

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