



## **CID 2301-02W: The Human Experience**

Web-based Course

### **Identity, Purpose & Meaning**

COURSE SYLLABUS

#### **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor: Rachel Aumann, MSW, MPH

Office Location: NHS 144

Office Hours: T/Th 10:00 – 11:00 am & 12:30 – 2:00 pm; or by appointment (in-person or virtual)

Office Phone: 650.776.6096

University Email Address: rachel.aumann@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Emailed

Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours

#### **COURSE INFORMATION**

##### **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, 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 specific course, we will explore the topics of identity and finding meaning and purpose in one's life. We will do this through the reading of transformative texts, introspection and reflective assignments, group discussions and creative expression. The texts, discussions and reflective assignments will further our exploration by having us consider our identity as it relates to: race and

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ethnicity, culture, gender, social contexts (family and friends), work and occupation, recreation and leisure and bias, privilege and resilience (and other topics the class has interest in). Many of these topics will show up within the same discussions as they are inexplicably enmeshed in the US.

Additional work in this class will focus on building skills for collegiate success, including academic interests, networking and professional development activities.

### **Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings**

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 CID2301:

- **Search for Meaning** by Viktor E. Frankl
- **Between the World and Me** by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- **The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life** by Erving Goffman
- **Rich White Men** by Garrett Neiman
- **How to Be Bored** by Eva Hoffman
- **Biased** by Jennifer L. Eberhardt

Additional excerpts from texts or video/audio clips (to be provided by instructor)

### **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.

# COURSE REQUIREMENTS

## Instructional Methods and Assessment

This course will be centered on class 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 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. 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 and students by assisting in online discussions, answering student questions about work, but will not engage in teaching or assessment.

Assignments are broken down as follows:

**Participation Work:** Participation is based on engagement with your discussion group each week as well as completing college and career success activities (**400 points or 40% of your total grade**). In most cases, you will be graded purely on engagement with the discussion material and college/career success

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material. The college and career success activities will include presentations from campus resources, career selection testing and other activities with the goal of growing your academic success toolkit.

***Participation does depend on your preparation for class which means DOING THE ASSIGNED READINGS each week and providing an original post and at least 2 responses in your discussion group.***

**Assignments:** There will be 10 assignments (30 points each) for a total of **300 points or 30%** of your grade. Assignments will include reflections from the readings, photo collages, short videos/PSAs and other creative assignments that relate to the week's topic. **All assignments will be due to D2L by Sunday @ 11:59 pm** the week it is assigned. **See course calendar attached.**

**Transformative Project:** The Transformative Project (**worth 300 points or 30%** of your grade) will ask students to take a theme from the course, engage in research about that topic, identify relevant sources, present an argument, and link the outcomes to an issue relevant to their own career or personal trajectory. The Transformative Project aligns with and assesses all Student Learning Outcomes for the course.

You may choose any topic that can be related to identity, meaning and/or purpose. You can articulate this topic in any format you'd prefer. This can include: creating music, poetry, infographics, PSA, skit, cartoon, video short, eZine, brochure, game, diorama, choose-your-own adventure book, etc. You may set out on your own, you may team up with a classmate or you may form a small group (no more than 3 students, to ensure each person has a part to play). For the pairs or small group, you may create one cohesive project or you can create opposing pieces, for instance each person picking a different side of an identity topic.

We will "preview" all projects virtually in Week 15 (4/28-5/2). The final version of your projects is due on Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. There is an in-person Transformative Project Showcase at Rayburn Student Center on Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-5:00 pm. You **MUST** be in attendance for this showcase to receive the grade for your project.

### **What must the project include?**

Creativity  
Articulation of a topic related to identity, purpose, meaning  
Connection to your own personal experience  
Something tangible to read, listen to or engage with

## **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

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Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Participation (Discussions/College Success)	400 pts/40%
Assignments (10 x 30 pts)	300 pts/30%
Transformative Project	300 pts/20%

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TOTAL 1000 pts/100%

## COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Each week we will explore a different topic related to identity. We will also review a campus or community resource which may include presentations from other campus faculty or offices. This is what I am calling “college and career success” material. We will also engage in activities such as time management and stress management skills

**In parentheses you will find the out-of-class assignment topic, which will be due at 11:59 pm on Sunday of that week.**

**Week 1 (1/13 - 1/19):** Intro to identity, meaning and purpose. (Introduction Videos, Syllabus quiz)

**Week 2 (1/20 - 1/26):** Career-Exploration of career options & personality (*Resume & LinkedIn Profile*)

**Week 3 (1/27 - 2/2):** Core values (*Core values and dissonance reflection*)

**Week 4 (2/3 - 2/9):** Recreation, hobbies, sports (*Photo collage assignment*)

**Week 5 (2/10 - 2/16):** Stress and emotional well-being (*Stress Inventories & stress management plan*)

**Week 6 (2/17 - 2/23):** Health (*PSA on a health topic of choice*)

**Week 7 (2/24 - 3/2):** Leisure & travel (*Travel brochure of your FAVORITE place*)

**Week 8 (3/3 - 3/9):** Bias

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS & NO ASSIGNED WORK!!!

**Week 9 (3/17 - 3/23):** Privilege (*Environmental Scan*)

**Week 10: (3/24 - 3/30)** Religion & Spirituality

**Week 11 (3/31 - 4/6):** Personal\* Part I (*Podcast*)

**Week 12 (4/7 - 4/13):** Personal\* Part II & NO CLASS ON 4/10

**Week 13 (4/14 - 4/20):** Family & Relationships (*Family/friend Tree*)

**Week 14 (4/21 - 4/27):** Putting it all together (and work on projects)

**Week 15 (4/28 - 5/2):** Presentation of Transformative Projects (virtual)-**SHORT WEEK**

**Celebration of Student Success: Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> 3-5pm, SRSC (you MUST be present)**

\*Personal includes: sexuality, gender identity and gender expression, expanding on core values, politics, finances, etc.

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## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

### LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University 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](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](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](mailto: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 ETAMU 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>

### Interaction with Instructor Statement

See below under communication. TL/DR: Communicate early and often is something comes up. Please address your emails to me formally, as it is good practice. Be respectful and show up on time to class.

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# COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

## Course Specific Procedures/Policies

**Attendance & Participation:** These two concepts are inexplicably connected. That is, if you are in attendance, you are expected to participate. And, you cannot participate if you are not in attendance. The majority of the work in this class WILL OCCUR IN THE DISCUSSIONS, which is how attendance and participation will be assessed.

**Late work:** EACH student is granted ONE late assignment, no questions asked. YOU MUST TELL ME that you are redeeming your late assignment so that I can reopen the D2L portal for that assignment. Late work is otherwise NOT accepted except under extreme circumstances. Part of the college experience is learning to manage time and meet the deadlines, as arbitrary as they might seem, set by professors/instructors. However, it usually does not hurt to ask for an extension if you think one might be warranted.

**Communication:** It is my expectation that you communicate with me and the Student Instructor if “life happens” and you are not able to engage with class material for the week. The earlier the better. This is good practice for future employment. You would not ghost an employer, right?

I communicate a lot over email. That means that I expect you to regularly check your email. Not seeing an email because you decided not to check for a few days, does not mean you get a freebie. The best way to know what is happening is to check your students email at least once per day.

Along those same lines, please start any email to me like this:

“Hi Professor Aumann,

.....

**Use of AI:** The use of AI might be warranted for some assignments, however I will let you know if AI is allowed and if so, my expectations around its use. If I do not say that AI is permitted on an assignment and it appears that you DID use AI, I will assign a ZERO for that assignment.

## 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. Those changes will be communicated to you over email AND posted to D2L on the Announcements page.

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## 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>

### ETAMU 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 East Texas A&M University 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>

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

### AI use in course

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there may be 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 instructor's 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**

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

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

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M 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 East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

## **East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, 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](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

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## **Mental Health and Well-Being (NEW RESOURCE)**

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 Schedule  
(as currently predicted)**

<b>WEEK/DATES</b>	<b>TOPIC/DISCUSSIONS</b>	<b>Assignments (Due @ 11:59 pm)</b>
<b>One (1/13 - 1/19)</b>	Introduction to identity, meaning and purpose	Syllabus Quiz & Intro Discussion Video
<b>TWO (1/20 – 1/26)</b>	Career (Presentation Selection)	Resume & LinkedIn Profile
<b>THREE (1/27 – 2/2)</b>	Core Values	Core Values & Cognitive Dissonance Reflection
<b>FOUR (2/3 - 2/9)</b>	Stress & Emotional Well-being	Stress Inventory & Management Plan
<b>FIVE (2/10 - 2/16)</b>	Health	PSA on health topic of choice
<b>SIX (2/17 - 2/23)</b>	Recreation, hobbies, sports	Photo collage
<b>SEVEN (2/24 – 3/2)</b>	Leisure & travel	Travel brochure
<b>EIGHT (3/3 - 3/9)</b>	Bias	-
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>NOTHING</b>	<b>REST &amp; REFLECT</b>
<b>NINE (3/17 - 3/23)</b>	Privilege	Environmental Scan
<b>TEN (3/24 - 3/30)</b>	Religion & Spirituality	-
<b>ELEVEN (3/31 - 4/6)</b>	Personal Topics	-
<b>TWELVE (4/7 - 4/13)</b>	Personal Topics	Podcast episode
<b>THIRTEEN (4/14 - 4/20)</b>	Family & Friends	Family/friend Tree
<b>FOURTEEN (4/21 - 4/27)</b>	Putting it all together	-
<b>FIFTEEN (4/28 - 5/2)</b>	VIRTUAL PROJECT PREVIEW	<b>FINAL VERSION OF PROJECT DUE ON FRIDAY 5/2</b>
<b>FINALS WEEK</b>		<b>Project Showcase on 5/7 Be available 3-5 pm</b>

Each week you will have discussions related to the assigned readings. You may ALSO have an assignment to complete that is SEPARATE from the assigned readings.  
**YOU MUST BE PRESENT IN-PERSON ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 7<sup>TH</sup> 3:00-5:00 pm**

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