



EAST TEXAS A&M

UNIVERSITY

BAAS 301 - Pathways, Purpose, Exploration and Career

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2025

16 Week Session

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Gabe Dunbar

Office Location: Remote

Office Hours: Email to schedule phone or virtual conversation

University Email Address: Gabe.Dunbar@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: Weekday emails will receive a response within 24 hours. Emails sent on weekends and holidays will receive a reply the following business day.

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required

Burnett, B., & Evans, D. (2021). Designing Your New Work Life: How to Thrive and Change and Find Happiness--and a New Freedom--at Work. Vintage.

Students are welcome to purchase the book, find at a library, or access free through the ETAMU library electronic resources. Please note [that this link](#) will help you access the book, but the license is restricted to a single user at a time.

Supplemental Materials

Links and files will be provided in the document sharing tab within the course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will explore the changing future of work and their place in it. Planning for academic success and future career opportunities will be discussed. Students will also learn about personal leadership, reflecting on their own strengths and abilities, and will draw upon perceptions from others to construct their own understanding of leadership.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Completion of this course provides the student with the knowledge to:

1. Understand principles of design thinking and apply life design mindsets and concepts to future work design problems.
2. Interpret trends in the workplace due to technological disruption, human skill development, and workforce needs.
3. Analyze important career competencies and evaluate areas of strengths & weaknesses.
4. Discover tools to pursue a well-designed life.
5. Design a plan that will guide personal and professional growth through academic and career experiences.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed: Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Instructional Methods: This course is an online course. To be successful in this course, all content and course modules should be read and reviewed. All assignments and quizzes (both graded and not graded) must be completed. Please contact the instructor by email for any assistance.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course: To be successful in this course, all content and course modules should be read and reviewed. All assignments and quizzes (both graded and not graded) should be completed. Please contact the instructor by email for any assistance.

ASSESSMENT

- Participation (15%)
- Life Design Activities (15%)
- Career Competency Presentation (15%)
- Written Analysis Papers (30%)
- Final Paper/Presentation (25%)

Participation: Your active, informed participation is essential for doing well in this course and designing your life. Essentially, your perspective is essential to the conversation. Therefore, your preparation for class meetings is important, specifically, completing assigned readings before the class. For full participation credit, students should offer comments or questions in class, work with classmates on in-class assignments/activities and initiate and contribute to brief discussions about design thinking, life design, and the future of work. Each student will be expected to add to the discussion at each class meeting. **Finally, reflection and writing are important to improving your self-awareness, so each week there will be a prompt connected to the reading allowing active reflection.**

Life Design Activities: Students will complete a variety of life design activities throughout the semester:

- Worldview/Workview: Students will create a Worldview and a Workview. Students will be challenged to recognize that connecting the dots between who you are, what you do, and what you believe, increases coherence and meaning making.
- Work/Love/Play/Health Dashboard: Students will assess their current state of work, love, play, and health and reflect on how those components impact the design of their lives.
- Career Mix: Students will reflect on ideal elements of a future workplace.

Career Competency Virtual Presentation: Each student will focus on a single career competency as defined by NACE: National Association of Colleges and Employers. The final product will be a 5-minute individual virtual presentation. Emphasis on goal setting, listening, verbal/nonverbal communication, and presentation skills.

Written Analysis Papers: Analysis papers or case studies will be done throughout the semester. Guidelines with details specific to each assignment will be provided the week(s) before each assignment is due.

- Analysis 1: Generational Views of Work and the Job Market
- Analysis 2: Human+ Skills for the Future of Work
- Analysis 3: The Value of Lifelong Learning

Final Paper OR Presentation: Through life design and future of work conversations, reflections, and activities, you will develop a deeper understanding of yourself and how you can prepare for the future of work. Your worldview and workview will provide the foundation of who you are and what you believe while in pursuit of coherence and meaning making of what you want to do. Integrating other life design content and future of work research and analysis is imperative for success with this assignment. You will write a 5-page paper or conduct a 5-minute presentation of your future of work.

GRADING SCALE

A = 90%-100%

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or below

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 the technical requirements

Learning Management System (LMS) Requirements:

View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).

LMS Browser Support:

Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

Visit the [Virtual Classroom Requirements Webpage](#).

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@etamu.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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

Interaction with Instructor Statement

This is an online course; therefore, expect most communication to be online as well. Correspondence will always be through university email (your "myLeo" mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). The instructor will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 provided the correspondence follows the requirements listed below. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

All emails from students should include:

- Course name and subject in the subject line (ex. ORGL 3322 – Posttest)
- Salutation
- Proper email etiquette (no "text" emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY 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.

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 online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

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:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty Policy](#)
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

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

East Texas A&M University
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

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.

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.

Counseling Services

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 [their website](#).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Any changes to the following course outline will be announced in advance. Each week will have readings, journals, activities, and or assignments due. First day of the semester is **Monday, August 25**. All weekly content must be completed **by Sunday at 11:59 PM Central Standard Time**. The following module will open the following **Monday morning at 12:01 AM EST**. The final day of the semester is **Friday, December 12**.

Section 1 – Design Thinking and Designing Your Life

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| Week #1 | Course introduction, syllabus review, set the course norms, and course expectations
Journal Reflection #1 - <i>What are your hopes and/or expectations of this course over the next 16 weeks? What would you like from me as an instructor in terms of communication i.e. strictly email and virtual communication, live weekly conversations, 1-on-1 coaching.</i> |
| Week #2 | <i>Design Thinking Introduction</i>
Read: Burnett & Evans Introduction & Chapter 1 – <i>Are We There Yet?</i>
Assignment Due: Work/Love/Play/Health Dashboard
Journal Reflection #2 - <i>Which of the five Life Design mindsets do you embrace most naturally? Which mindset is most challenging to you?</i> |
| Week #3 | <i>Workview</i>
Read: Burnett & Evans Chapters 2 – <i>Money or Meaning</i>
Assignment Due: Lifeview/Workview
Journal Reflection #3 – <i>Respond to the concept in the chapter about money or meaning. What do you pursue in your work. How has that changed over time?</i> |
| Week #4 | <i>Problem Finding and Getting Unstuck</i>
Read: Burnett & Evans Chapter 3 – <i>What's the Problem</i>
Journal Reflection #4 – <i>A classic dysfunctional belief with work is "Work is not supposed to be enjoyable; that's why they call it work". Do you agree or disagree? Why?</i> |
| Week #5 | <i>Overwhelmed at Work</i>
Read: Burnett & Evans Chapters 4 – <i>My Overwhelm is Overwhelmed</i>
Journal Reflection #5 – <i>What kind of overwhelm would you identify in your work according to this chapter?</i>
Assignment Due: Ideal Career Mix |

Section 2 – Future of Work

- Week #6 *The Future of Work – what's the big deal?*
Read: World Economic Forum's The Future of Jobs 2023
Journal Reflection #6 - *As you read Future of Jobs report, what two facts or statistics seem most relevant to your future work? How might you modify your vision for your future based on this new information?*
Assignment Due: Written Analysis #1: Generational Views of Work and the Job Market
- Week #7 *The Future of Work: Us vs. Robots | Communication in the Workplace*
Read: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' The Future of Work: Does it Belong to Us or the Robots?
Read: Workplace Communication Article
Journal Reflection #7 - *The Future of Work article was published in 1982. What most surprised you about reading this article? Almost 40 years later what did they get right or wrong?*
- Week #8 *The Importance of Being Human in a World of Automation*
Read: Strada's Robot Ready: Human + Skills for the Future of Work
Journal Reflection #8 - *According the description of Human+ skills and jobs, how would you define Human+ aspects of your future work and what do you think may be converted to some type of machine learning?*
Assignment Due: Written Analysis #2: Human+ Jobs for the Future of Work
- Week #9 *The Future U.S. Labor Force*
Read: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' A look at the future of the U.S. labor force to 2060
Read: GetSmarter's The 100 Year Life – How to Prepare for the Future of Work
Journal Reflection #9 - *How does this potential concept change your outlook on work and retirement? Could you remain in your same job for longer than expected? Would you consider a different part-time job into your 70's or 80's?*
- Week #10 *Career Competencies*
Read: National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE)'s Career Readiness Defined
Journal Reflection #10 - *Watch one other student presentation and share a short summary in the following form:*
 1. *I like...*
 2. *I wish...*
 3. *I wonder...*
Due: NACE Career Competency Presentation
- Week #11 *Lifelong Learning*
Read: Keith Keating's The Mindset of a Lifelong Learner
Journal Reflection #11 – *What is one thing that you have always wanted to learn about?*

Section 3 – Designing Your Future Work

- Week #12 *Designing Your Career*
Read: Burnett & Evans Chapters 5 & 7 – *Mind-set, Grit, and ARC, Don't Resign, Redesign*
Journal Reflection #12 - *As a result of the first section of the course focused on Life Design and the second section of the course focused on workplace trends, how might you connect the two to develop your next career steps?*
Due: Written Analysis #3: The Value of Lifelong Learning Paper
- Week #13 *Learning From Failure*
Read: Burnett & Evans Chapters 6 – *Power and Politics*
Journal Reflection #13 – *We have all failed in work. After reading chapter 6 how have power and politics played into challenges in the workplace.*
- Week #14 *Building Your Team & the Value of Your Network*
Read: Burnett & Evans Chapter 14 & Conclusion – *Human and Permission to Be Happy*
Journal Reflection #14 - *As Burnett & Evans mentioned, having a team is imperative to designing your life. Who are some of the individuals that are on your team? What are their roles?*
- Week #15 *Developing Your Narrative: Storytelling for the Future of Work*
Journal Reflection #15 - *After reading the HBR article, what is your story or narrative? How would you tell your story in an interview?*
- Week #16 *Designing Your Future Work*
Due: Final Presentation or Paper