



CID 2301: The Human Experience

Self, Identity, Memory: Metamorphoses

COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: **Dr. Sharon Kowalsky**

Office Location: **Ferguson 111** (inside the Main Office for the History Department, First Floor of Ferguson Social Sciences Building)

Office Hours: **Wednesdays from 10-2; Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-3** (this is when I am generally in my office and you can drop by to see me, although I encourage you to make an appointment. You can do that through [email](#) or [Navigate](#))

Office Phone: **903-886-5928** (you can call, but I don't check the messages)

University Email Address: Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu (This is the best way to get a hold of me. If you want to discuss something, please send me an email, and I will respond as soon as I can within my response time frame)

Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: within 24 hours (except on weekends)

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.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

The theme for this section is Self, Identity, and Memory. We will be exploring the concept of *Metamorphoses*, as people transform into animals and animals into people, and also some other sorts of transfigurations. Starting with Ovid's epic poem of the same name and tracing the use of this literacy device into contemporary times, we will explore how the idea of metamorphoses creates a way to offer an assessment of society. Through this exploration, we will better understand the development of different societies and critically examine the ways that metamorphoses might help us understand change and their relevance to our own society, experiences, and trajectories.

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:

Please PURCHASE through the Bookstore or from any other source:

- Kafka, *Metamorphosis* (Norton, 2014) ISBN 978-0393347098, \$10.95
- Bulgakov, *Heart of a Dog* (Ingram, 1968) ISBN 978-0802150592, \$16.00
- Wells, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* ISBN 98-1840227406, \$8.00

Additional readings will be provided for you on D2L and are listed in the Course Schedule below.

Student Learning Outcomes

The focus of this class is to build student skills in critical analysis and communication by developing students' ability to think critically, empathetically, and holistically about big issues and to develop, hone, and communicate their ideas about those big issues. The common student learning outcomes for this class are:

- 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 is 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 greater appreciation of the complexities of the world and their place within those complexities, 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 Texts 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, allowing students creativity of expression in making the connections between their humanities inquiry and their personal experiences.

Throughout the course, discussions and assignments are 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.

Students in this course will engage in both individual and group activities. Group assignments will depend on the work of all members of the group. It is incumbent on each student to show up and contribute to all aspects of their group's work. If there is a group assignment in class, only those students present to complete the group assignment will receive credit for it.

In the event of a campus closure, we will follow the instructions given by the university. If the university permits, cancelled class meetings may be converted to recorded lectures and/or discussion boards on D2L. If you have any concerns about class attendance or have family or work responsibilities that may interfere with your class attendance, please contact me to discuss this as soon as is practicable.

Enrolling in this course is an implicit commitment to make class attendance a priority. If at any time you are confronted with circumstances outside the classroom that limit your ability to complete the coursework or arrive on-time to class, please let me know. I am willing to work with students to ensure

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that they have the best opportunity to succeed in the class. Proactive communication is the key to resolving such situations.

A Note on Electronic Devices

We will, at times, use smartphones and computers as **tools in class** to look up information, access readings, explore historical sources, engage in assessments, and examine alternate interpretations. At all other times cellular phones (and computers not being used for note taking) should be silenced and put away, lest they become **devices** used to distract and alienate us. Please do not spend our class time doing work for other classes; focus your attention on the here and now. In addition, smartphone use before and after class tends to squelch the lively and engaging classroom community I hope to build. For this reason, students are asked to put away their phones upon entering the classroom. Students who would like to spend the time between classes on their phones should do so in the hallway or lounges. Upon entering the classroom, students should be prepared to engage socially and intellectually with their fellow students and professor in an in-person format. Please join me in shaping our classroom spaces for intellectual community.

Assignments and Expectations

Details of assignments and expectations are set out here and can also be found on D2L, sometimes with greater detail.

Engagement

Engagement encompasses how a student interacts with the course, through attendance and participation. Showing up is one of the most important factors for success in any realm of life. This is an in-person class and your presence in class is essential for your success in the class. During our in-class discussions, we will build skills and resourcefulness that will help students better navigate not only college but also their career pathways. To gain the most benefit from our class meetings, students are expected to attend each class, arriving on time and staying through the entire period. Attendance will be taken on a daily basis. I understand that life happens and you may become sick or need to care for a family member, or that some other life experience may prevent you, on occasion, from attending class. In such events, please communicate with me as quickly as you can, in advance if possible, so we can note your absence. If you are participating in a university-sponsored event that requires you to miss class, I need to know about that as well. If you miss class, regardless of the reason, you will need to contact a peer to identify the material you missed. In-class individual and group work cannot be made up.

Another element of your Engagement grade is class participation. In addition to showing up, success requires students to prepare for and engage in our course activities. Students are expected to come to class each day prepared. This means students have read or completed the assignment for that day in advance, have brought their course materials with them, and are ready to engage in class activities in a thoughtful manner. Thoughtful participation does not mean talking frequently, but rather demonstrating a knowledge of the material, a willingness to think critically about both the material and colleagues' comments, and a willingness to listen to and learn from others. Students are encouraged to engage not only with the professor, but with each other as appropriate. The professor will create, and students will help maintain, an intellectual classroom environment that is open to a range of opinions where we can listen to and consider others' arguments with an open mind, that provides a safe space to discuss all ideas, and where we can respect viewpoints other than our own, and learn to support our own viewpoints with evidence and examples.

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The third element of the Engagement grade is group participation. The group participation grade will be based on collaboration with other members of the student's group for in-class activities and discussion, as well as group projects. At the end of the semester, students will complete a self-assessment reflecting their participation in their group's work as well as their perception of the work of the other students in their group, which will contribute to the assessment of students' group participation.

The final element of the Engagement grade are the various other quizzes and activities that make up the student success elements of the course. These include various activities that are intended to develop skills for success in this class, in college and beyond.

Engagement builds skills toward the learning outcomes in critical thinking, communication, social responsibility, and ethical responsibility, addressing SLO1-4.

We have 26 class meetings scheduled over the course of the semester. Attendance will be taken at 24 of those meetings. Students may miss up to four class periods for any reason whatsoever (this is basically two weeks of work). After four absences, students will be penalized for each additional class they miss.

Reflections

A key element of this course is developing students' ability to think and reflect. To practice this skill, students will write regularly in class, usually at the start of class, in response to a prompt. Most of these reflections will encourage students to think about the issues being discussed for the day and gather their thoughts for class discussion. Students will be assessed for their completion of the assignment and its relevance to our topics, and NOT for any opinions or perspectives they produce.

Reflections focus on developing student ideas and thoughts in preparation for classroom engagement, and to that end support the learning outcome for critical thinking (SLO1).

Projects

Over the course of the semester, students will complete four projects. The first three will help to build the foundation for the final Transformative Project, which represents the culmination of the skills developed over the course of the semester and encourages students to reflect on the ways that the concept of metamorphoses contributes to their understanding of society and their personal journey. More details of each of these projects can be found on the D2L site. Each project will encourage students to engage with Adobe Creative Campus suite of programs. The projects align with and assess all Student Learning Outcomes for the course (SLO1-4).

Myths Project: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* uses stories about change to describe the world around us and the ways that mortals negotiated with gods and their environmental challenges. Being sure to reference at least one of the myths we have discussed, students will think about how they see transformations as a tool to help understand the world around us. This can be offered as a presentation or an essay, or students can write their own explanatory myth.

Fairy Tales Project: Fairy tales often provide warnings about certain behaviors, and the ways that transformations are used often is to teach a particular lesson or caution about certain behaviors. For this project, students will consider a particular behavior or lesson that is taught through transformation in a fairy tale and discuss it, or develop their own transformation fairy tale.

Science Fiction Project: The science fiction tales we have explored show efforts of scientists to use technology (medicine, operations, devices, etc) to transform animals into people or vice versa. These stories are sometimes horrific, and sometimes attempt to offer lessons about the nature of society or

the value of humanity. In their project, students will consider the ways that science fiction transformations might offer an assessment of society, or develop their own transformation science fiction tale.

Transformative Project: For the Transformative Project, students will work in small groups to create a podcast that explores what it means to be human and how animal metamorphoses/transformations can help us understand the ethics of the human experience, drawing on our readings and class discussions. The project should reflect on how these ideas might be relevant to students' personal or career trajectory. Additional details are on D2L. Students will also create a short summary slide deck for the Learning Showcase presentation. Students should be creative and make an effort to present their work using Adobe Creative Campus.

For all written work, students will cite the sources they use and be held to the highest standards of academic honesty. Students should not use AI to produce their submitted assignments.

Due Dates and Deadlines

Because this course is designed to help students develop skills of analysis by scaffolding assignments, it is essential for students to submit work on time. Due dates are listed in the Course Schedule and on D2L. These are established to ensure that work is spread throughout the semester and that students are able to receive feedback on their work with a view toward continual improvement. Improvement can only occur when there is adequate time for feedback. Students are expected to meet the day and time deadlines for submitting assignments, and should submit all assignments to the appropriate dropbox on D2L, except where otherwise noted. All assignments (except quizzes, reflections, and other in-class activities) must be completed or students will earn a D or F in the class. Late assignments will be accepted until 11:59pm on the last day of classes, must be submitted through D2L, and will be penalized 2 points per day late, or one letter grade per week. Students experiencing emergencies should speak with the professor immediately to make alternative arrangements for submitting assignments.

Technologies We Will Use

This semester, we will experiment with a variety of learning technologies. In addition to D2L, where you can find all course information, assignment due dates, and course schedule, you may engage with:

Adobe Creative Campus: As a student at East Texas A&M, you have FREE access to all of the programs in the Adobe Creative Campus suite, including Photoshop, Illustrator, Premier, Audition, Express, etc. You are encouraged to play around with these tools and to use them for assignments. All projects must engage with Adobe in some fashion, although students may determine how based on their comfort level and interest. The university has several Adobe tutors and Adobe Ambassadors to assist you should you wish to improve your skills and facility with the Adobe programs.

Padlet: Padlet is a site that allows you to post just about anything on a wall where everyone in the class (and in the class only—it is not public) can see and comment on the posts. We will use this to share our projects as we work collaboratively to develop our ideas and our perspectives. Our class Padlet can be accessed here: <https://padlet.com/sharonkowalsky/cid-2301-the-human-experience-fall-2025-invqpn88kgavp4cz>.

Kahoot or other Collaborative Quiz Software: We may have quizzes or other games through Kahoot. In such instances, you will get a code to join the game and will be able to use your smartphone in class to access it.

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

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

Engagement	30%
<i>Attendance</i>	30%
<i>Participation</i>	40%
<i>Group Participation</i>	20%
<i>Success Activities</i>	10%
Reflections	20%
Projects	50%
<i>Myths</i>	20%
<i>Fairy Tales</i>	20%
<i>Technologies</i>	20%
<i>Transformative Project</i>	40%
TOTAL	100%

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

What	When	To Read or Do	To Submit
Unit 1: Introductions	Tues, Aug 26	Let's get to know each other	Syllabus/D2L Activity
	Thurs, Aug 28	Everything is Water	Adobe Graphic Assignment
	Tues, Sept 2	TBD	
	Thurs, Sept 4	TBD	Campus Scavenger Hunt
Unit 2: Myths and Interpretations	Tues, Sept 9	Ovid	
	Thurs, Sept 11	Ovid Book 1 (Daphne and Io)	Research Skills/Using Adobe
	Tues, Sept 16	Ovid Book 2 and 3 (Callisto and Echo)	
	Thurs, Sept 18	Ovid Book 6 (Arachne and Procne)	Academic Integrity Activity
	Tues, Sept 23	Book 9 (Iphis Atalanta)	

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	Thurs, Sept 25	Strauss	Myths Project Due
Unit 3: Fairy Tales and Fantasy	Tues, Sept 30	Beauty and the Beast	
	Thurs, Oct 2	Beauty and the Beast	Focus2 Assignment
	Tues, Oct 7	TBD	
	Thurs, Oct 9	TBD	Time Management Activity
	Tues, Oct 14	TBD	
	Thurs, Oct 16	NO CLASS MEETING	
	Tues, Oct 21	Kafka, 9-51	
	Thurs Oct 23	Kafka, 52-118	Fairy Tales Project Due
Unit 4: Science Fiction and Transfiguration	Tues, Oct 28	TBD	
	Thurs, Oct 30	Wells	Mentor Map Activity
	Tues, Nov 4	Wells	
	Thurs, Nov 6	Wells	
	Tues, Nov 11	Bulgakov, 1-65	
	Thurs, Nov 13	Bulgakov, 65-123	
	Tues, Nov 18	Bulgakov	
	Thurs, Nov 20	NO CLASS MEETING	Science Fiction Project Due
	Tues, Nov 25	NO CLASS MEETING	
	Thurs, Nov 27	NO CLASS MEETING	
	Tues, Dec 2	The Fly (D2L-all)	
	Thurs, Dec 4	TBD	
Final Exam	TBD		Transformative Project due
Learning Showcase	Wed, Dec 10 3:00-5:00		Transformative Project presentations

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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

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.etamu.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@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, an 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

Students are encouraged to interact with the instructor and call their attention to any problems or issues they might have over the course of the semester. Better communication equates to better student outcomes and success. The instructor can be reached according to the information at the top of this syllabus or through D2L. Students should use their university email address for all communication related to this course, and should practice good correspondence etiquette (as they should for all professional correspondence): when

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contacting your professor, refer to them by their appropriate title, identify yourself and the relevant course name/number, and clearly state your reason for contacting them. Be sure to put the course name and brief reason in the subject line of the email or offer that information at the start of the conversation. For this class, please address your instructor as Dr. Kowalsky. This course is CID 2301: The Human Experience. You can expect a response within 24 hours, during the work week (excluding the weekends). Please do not expect any responses after 9:00pm.

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 with as much advance notice as reasonably possible.

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.etamu.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>

East Texas A&M Attendance

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

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

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

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

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Statement on AI Use

At East Texas A&M University we recognize that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that can generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words. AI is a powerful tool for generating text and for consolidating information. As a tool it requires that both students and faculty think through how to use it wisely and responsibly to accomplish our goals. AI is also a powerful tool for gathering the work of others and combining it, without citation, into a polished product. In this it is morally dubious.

For this course our goals are to practice critical thinking, to interpret evidence, and to grow in our understanding of the Human Experience. As a tool, AI does little to help us in these tasks. On the contrary, using AI for course assignments would undermine your learning in these areas—the learning you are paying for. For this reason, students and faculty are not authorized to use any AI software in this course. Any use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). As a student you are fully responsible for the content of any assignment you submit.

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

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.etamu.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.

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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.etamu.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.etamu.edu/counsel