

Course: CID 2301 The Human Experience, introduces students to humanities-based inquiry by guiding students through an exploration of important humanistic questions. Students will 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 into student degree pathways and encourage students to see the relationships between larger questions about the human experience and their own lives and goals. The course is based upon Transformative Texts and a Transformative Project.

This section, CID 2301.05E, will explore the themes of Self, Identity, and Memory within The Human Experience. We will use two texts - Art Spiegelman's *Maus* and Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*. These are detailed below.

The great use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts it" William James

Texts: Originally published in German just after the close of WW II, Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning* is available in many English language editions. Which one you obtain is up to you. The book makes many "top 10 lists" for the most significant works of non-fiction ever written.

Maus is most often printed as two volumes in the form of a "trade paperback" or "graphic novel" that would collect several issues of a serial comic. It began in the late '70s, but takes its final form in the early '90s. It was the first "comic" to win the Pulitzer Prize.

Other short (and no cost) readings may be provided in class, via D2L, or as matters for you to find for yourself.

"When in doubt, tell the truth" Mark Twain

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 below) as presented during the Celebration of Student Learning held on the Wednesday of Exam Week, 6 May, 3-5 pm.

"Chance favors the prepared mind" Louis Pasteur

Course Format: For most of my (long) career my undergraduate courses have been lecture based. But, for this course, we are going to do something a bit different. Specifically, while I will lecture now and then, most of our class sessions will involve discussions. These will include some "class" discussions, but mostly will involve discussions in small groups.

This Human Experience course culminates with a Transformative Project that 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 students should gain a greater appreciation of the complexities of the world and their place within that complexity. These skills should provide a key foundation for the college experience and bolster students' employability after graduation.

Students will prepare a Transformative Project that articulates the connections between the larger issue they studied and discussed, and their own lives, goals, and experiences. This final Project must be presented using the Adobe Creative Campus suite of programs, in a format that makes the most sense to the student. This allows for 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.

Assignments points are broken down as follows:

Attendance and Participation: Up to 80 points

Transformative Project Presentation: Up to 40 points

Three Reflection Papers: Up to 10 points each (30 points total)

Bonus points for selected campus activities: Up to (at least) 10 points

“Never interrupt your enemy while he is making a mistake” Napoleon Bonaparte

Grades:	A	135 points and above
	B	120 - 134 points
	C	105 - 119 points
	D	90 - 104 points
	F	89 points and below

Attendance and Participation: Up to 80 points

On 23 of the class meetings you will take part in a graded small group discussion. Each student will grade each other student within the group using this scale:

- 0 - Not present or did not participate
- 1 - Participation was not good (as compared to others the group)
- 2 - Participation was "dull average" -- minimally acceptable
- 3 - Participation was good (as compared to others the group)
- 4 - Participation was exceptional (as compared to others the group)

Your grade for the day will be the average of how your group mates scored you.

We will use your 20 best scores - so the lowest 3 will be dropped

Transformative Project Presentation: Up to 40 points

This will be your in-class presentation. Note, however, you will receive a 0 if you do not also make your presentation at the Celebration of Student Learning.

We will cover this assignment in more detail in class.

You will need to meet with me around the end of March so I can approve what you plan to do for your Project.

As needed we can negotiate what you do for your in-class presentation, and potentially use the Final Exam period if required. That said, the idea is that this will be a "dress rehearsal" for the Celebration of Student Learning.

By default, you will earn 30 points if you do something appropriate.

You may earn (or lose) up to 10 additional points based on the quality of your work.

Three Reflection Papers: Up to 10 points each (30 points total)

These are NOT book reports, but instead should talk about what that reading meant to you. These should be 3-5 pages in length. These will NOT be accepted late, and there are no "do overs." Given the subjective nature of the assignment I am not grading these "with a fine-toothed comb." If you take the task seriously, you should earn the full points.

And so...

It is my expectation that this class will be easy for you to make a "B," in but should require something more for an "A." At the other end, if you attend regularly and do what is required in terms of the reading and writing, it is unlikely that you will make below a "C." But, if you don't attend, read, and complete the assignments, you will make a "F."

"I have worked as hard and as well as I could, and no man can do more than this" Charles Darwin

Other Basic Course/University Information:

•Attend class!

•>>>>Do the reading! This will determine your success in this course, and in college overall.

•>>>>Pay attention. Do NOT be a phone/computer junkie. Seriously, do not browse the web, shop online, text friends, troll enemies, or play mindless games on your device during class. It is selfish, it is rude, and even if you think you can multitask without distraction to yourself and others - empirical studies show that you are wrong.

•Be a good university citizen. This applies to all aspects of class, but especially the small group discussions.

Although I do not anticipate that any of the course content will be "controversial," people will have differing opinions about what they have read. That is a good thing! All that said, students enrolled at the University must 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](#).

•Additionally, ETAMU complies 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, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

•Keep in mind that a syllabus sometimes shifts a little as the course unfolds - at some point we may get behind (or maybe ahead). I say that by way of again noting the importance of class attendance, as you will be held responsible for any change in plans announced in class.

•Cheating (broadly defined) is not allowed. Or, as the university likes me to say: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See the aforementioned Student Guidebook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)." If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating please see me.

•>>>>AI Use: For this course you are welcome to use AI to assist with wording, grammar, structure, etc to your written assignments and Transformative Project. Note, the "critical thinking" nature of these assignments/projects is not something that AI can "do for you." I do ask this however: Please take a minute and using whatever sources (even AI) you choose research the environmental impact of AI (or any technology that requires intense computational resources).

•Although the Technology requirements in this course are minimal, you will need to have the ability to access and navigate University online resources. 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.

•All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS) - aka, D2L. We will use this as a gradebook and as needed a place to post supplemental materials. If you have any questions about how to access this site, or need help using the site, a good place to start is to contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu. Alternatively, you can also contact: Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

•Students who have questions or concerns about course policies or the conduct either of the instructor (or a classmate) should first consult with me. In the event that the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the student may bring their concerns to the head of the history department, Dr. Sharon Kowalsky (Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu) in her capacity as director of the Human Experience initiative. If again the matter is not satisfactorily concluded, students may bring the issue to the Associate Dean of Students per procedures outlined on p. 15 of the [Student Guidebook](#).

•Students with Disabilities — 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 the: **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services** at the Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162; by phone at (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835; or via email at studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

•Be advised that only qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, even license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

•And "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/."

"The fewer the words the better the prayer" Martin Luther

The Instructor: I am Tracy B. Henley, PhD. I should generally be around Henderson 225/226 every Monday and Wednesday from just after class until 12 noon for office hours. If that is not good for you, see me before/after class and we can find an alternative time for an appointment. You can also contact me at: tracy.henley@etamu.edu - whatever works best for you (note, I do not have an office phone). I am not a phone/computer junkie, so I am not likely to respond to you immediately. Nevertheless, I do check email often, so you can reasonably expect a response within 24 hours.

"We will either find a way, or we will make one" Hannibal

The Schedule of Events (have the reading listed that day done **before** class)

January

- 12 M Course Overview and Introductions
- 14 W Create Groups and then discuss Student Success
- 16 F Continued General Discussion of Student Success - Guest(s)
- 19 M NO CLASS - MLK HOLIDAY - What follows he wrote as a student in 1948 for the Morehouse campus paper

As I engage in the so-called "bull sessions" around and about the school, I too often find that most college men have a misconception of the purpose of education. Most of the "brethren" think that education should equip them with the proper instruments of exploitation so that they can forever trample over the masses. Still others think that education should furnish them with noble ends rather than means to an end.

It seems to me that education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of man and in society: the one is utility and the other is culture. Education must enable a man to become more efficient, to achieve with increasing facility the legitimate goals of his life.

Education must also train one for quick, resolute and effective thinking. To think incisively and to think for one's self is very difficult. We are prone to let our mental life become invaded by legions of half truths, prejudices, and propaganda. At this point, I often wonder whether or not education is fulfilling its purpose. A great majority of the so-called educated people do not think logically and scientifically. Even the press, the classroom, the platform, and the pulpit in many instances do not give us objective and unbiased truths. To save man from the morass of propaganda, in my opinion, is one of the chief aims of education. Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction.

The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but with no morals. The late Eugene Talmadge, in my opinion, possessed one of the better minds of Georgia, or even America. Moreover, he wore the Phi Beta Kappa key. By all measuring rods, Mr. Talmadge could think critically and intensively; yet he contends that I am an inferior being. Are those the types of men we call educated?

We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate. The broad education will, therefore, transmit to one not only the accumulated knowledge of the race but also the accumulated experience of social living.

If we are not careful, our colleges will produce a group of close-minded, unscientific, illogical propagandists, consumed with immoral acts. Be careful, "brethren!" Be careful, teachers!

- 21 W About the Transformative Project and Associated Resources; More on Student Success
- 23 F WWI, WW II, and the origins of German Anti-Semitism
- 26 M Self, Identity, and Memory: Biography as Psychology?
- 28 W Have Completed the FOCUS2 Assessment by this date; **Group Discussion¹** of it/Career Plans
- 30 F **Group Discussion²** of Preamble and Book One Chapter One

February

- 2 M **Group Discussion³** of Book One Chapter Two
- (3 Tu) Career Bash 3:30 in the SSRC
- 4 W NO CLASS
- 6 F **Group Discussion⁴** of Book One Chapter Three
- 9 M **Group Discussion⁵** of Book One Chapter Four
- 11 W **Group Discussion⁶** of Book One Chapter Five
- 13 F **Group Discussion⁷** of Book One Chapter Six

16 M General Discussion of *Maus* Book One
 18 W *Group Discussion*⁸ of Book Two Chapter One
 20 F *Group Discussion*⁹ of Book Two Chapter Two
 23 M *Group Discussion*¹⁰ of Book Two Chapter Three
 25 W *Group Discussion*¹¹ of Book Two Chapter Four
 27 F *Group Discussion*¹² of Book Two Chapter Five

March

2 M General Discussion of *Maus*; Reflection Paper One Due (*Maus*)
 4 W About Existentialism
 6 F More About Existentialism
 9 M NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
 11 W NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
 13 F NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
 16 M *Group Discussion*¹³ of Preliminary Plan for Transformative Project
 18 W *Group Discussion*¹⁴ of *Experience in a Concentration Camp* Part 1 of 6
 20 F *Group Discussion*¹⁵ of *Experience in a Concentration Camp* Part 2 of 6
 23 M *Group Discussion*¹⁶ of *Experience in a Concentration Camp* Part 3 of 6
 25 W *Group Discussion*¹⁷ of *Experience in a Concentration Camp* Part 4 of 6
 27 F *Group Discussion*¹⁸ of *Experience in a Concentration Camp* Part 5 of 6
 30 M *Group Discussion*¹⁹ of *Experience in a Concentration Camp* Part 6 of 6

April

1 W General Discussion of Frankl's *Experience*
 3 F *Group Discussions*²⁰ of Final Transformative Project Plans
 6 M On Psychotherapy...
 8 W *Group Discussion*²¹ of *Logotherapy in a Nutshell* Part 1 of 3
 10 F *Group Discussion*²² of *Logotherapy in a Nutshell* Part 2 of 3
 13 M *Group Discussion*²³ of *Logotherapy in a Nutshell* Part 3 of 3
 15 W General Discussion of Logotherapy
 17 F Final Discussion of the Readings Reflection Paper Two Due (Frankl)
 20 M Have Completed your Transformative Project by this date
 Final Discussion *Maus* with *Man's Search for Meaning*
 22 W Group One Presentations
 24 F Group Two Presentations
 27 M Group Three Presentations
 29 W Group Four Presentations

May

1 F Group Five Presentations
 4 M (10:30) Final General Discussion, Wrap up, Odds & Ends - Final Reflection Papers due
 6 W (3pm) **Celebration of Student Learning**

"You cannot teach a man anything; You can only help him find it within himself" Galileo