



**East Texas A&M University
CJ 490.01H Honors Thesis**

COURSE SYLLABUS Spring 2026

January 12, 2026 – May 8, 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor:	Dr. Willie Edwards, Professor
Office Location:	Ferguson Hall, SS Bldg., Rm 217
Office Hours:	Monday 10:00am – 12:00pm TTH 1:00pm – 5:00pm
Office Phone:	(903) 886-5331
Office Fax:	(903) 886-5330
University Email Address:	willie.edwards@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication:	(email)
Communication Response Time:	(within twenty-four hours during the weekday)

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

There is no required textbook for this course. However, this course does require extensive reading of research articles, and additional book material. All material relating to the student's research focus is relevant.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Description/Explanation:

This course is the culmination of an Honor Student's honor thesis. The student has likely spent one or two prior semesters gathering research material (reading, writing), formulating a research plan or agenda and initiating the draft of a professional paper. In this process the student has also likely planned how, where, and when the final thesis will be present and defended.

Student Learning Outcomes/Core Competencies:

1. Illustrate critical thinking skills through written work, and oral presentation
2. Demonstrate the ability to formulate a critical research topic and move it through the stages/steps of research methods culminating in a finish research paper of professional caliber
3. Be able to present the research paper with confidence to a professional audience, with proper delivery and adequate response to critical questions asked about the entire research project

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods-Activities-Assessments

The focus and activity in this course, this semester is the completion of a professional type paper, which demonstrates the research ability and skills of the student. At this point the student has a rather firm idea and conception of the paper and its goal, direction, and methodological construction.

During this class the student will be expected to continue reading as much material on the research topic as possible and necessary.

The goal is to complete this research, develop an award winning paper that will be presented to a professional audience.

GRADING

Assignments for this course will be scored using a points system. Below is an explanation of how each assignment type will be scored.

Assignment Type	Point Value	Total Points
Final construction of paper	100	100
Submission of Abstract for presentation	50	50
Presentation of paper	100	100
	TOTAL	250

Grades earned on each assignment will be added together and will be divided by the total number of points possible in the course. Below is the overall point scale/grading schema for the course.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Total points possible for the term = 250.

250 - 225 = A
224 - 200 = B
199 - 175 = C
174 or below = F

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

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

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Interaction with Instructor Statement

Contact of Professor

Students wishing to contact the Professor should visit his office during the stated office hours or make an appointment. Students may also contact the Professor using the office telephone number or the email, both are provided on the first page of this class syllabus. Since it is an online class, the best method of contact is to email.

Research Assistance:

For research assistance, students should contact: Reference Librarian at Velma K. Waters Library Room 218; 903-886-5719 or <http://www.tamuc.edu/library>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Academic Honesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) receiving a failing grade on the assignment, the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. In **ALL** instances, incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head. Please be aware that academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating is defined as:

- Copying another's test or assignment
- Communication with another during an exam or assignment (i.e. written, oral or otherwise)
- Giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor
- Possessing or using unauthorized materials during the test
- Buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key

Plagiarism is defined as:

- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source

Collusion is defined as:

- Collaborating with another, without authorization, when preparing an assignment
- If you have any questions regarding academic dishonesty, ask. Otherwise, I will assume that you have full knowledge of the academic dishonesty policy and agree to the conditions as set forth in this syllabus.

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Students should also reference the following link for more detailed information.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/sociologyCriminalJustice/default.aspx>

APA Citation Format Policy

It is very important that you learn how to cite properly. In some ways, citations are more important than the actual text of your paper/assignment. Therefore, you should take this task seriously and devote some time to understanding how to cite properly. If you take the time to understand this process up front, it will save you a significant amount of time in the long run (not to mention significant deductions in points).

In the social and behavioral sciences (including Criminal Justice), we use APA (American Psychological Association) format. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they are paraphrasing other people's words or when they quote other's words directly. You may learn to cite from a variety of different sources including the APA Tutorial and the sources listed below and in the CJ 500 Orientation Course.

www.apastyle.org

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>

www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

It is the student's responsibility to understand how to cite properly. If you have questions, feel free to ask.

Late Work

The way this course is designed, every course hour should be spent either working on your paper/posting a discussion/answering discussion or waiting for comments from your professor. If late papers are routinely accepted, it would be impossible for you to complete your work and the program. Therefore, I **strongly** suggest that should you need to turn in an assignment late, you contact your professor **immediately**. It is completely within an instructor's discretion to allow or not allow late work in this course. Verifiable documentation will be requested/required.

Drop Course Policy

Students should take responsibility for dropping themselves from the course according to University policy should this become necessary.

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.

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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 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 Texas A&M University-Commerce 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>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

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

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

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legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring 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@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 based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination based on 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 people 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 University Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Counseling Center Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connections to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment

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services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

AI use policy [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

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

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Every effort will be made to adhere to the course schedule as noted below. However, unforeseen circumstances may require changes to the schedule. In that case, changes will be announced via University Email and in Announcements. The professor reserves the right to change the schedule if necessary and depend on the progress of the class.

Month	Activities
January	January 26, develop regular meeting schedule, identify writing plan
February	February 23, how is developing final draft of thesis looking?
March	
April	April 15, participate in the University Symposium What is due date for thesis to be submitted to Honor College?
May	

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