



HC 350.1HW Leading with Inquiry
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Michael Gulden
Office Location: Waters Library 231S
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Phone: 903-886-5707
Office Fax: N/A
University Email Address: Michael.Gulden@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: email
Communication Response Time: 24 hours, if email is received from Sunday 5pm-Friday 5pm

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required: None. All structural case studies, reading assignments, and project design templates will be provided digitally via D2L.

Software Required: Access to Coursera (for the AI Microcredential pathway), an active myLeo Online (D2L) login, and an active ePortfolio tool shell will be provided digitally.

Course Description

HC 350 is an integrative Honors seminar that empowers students to take ownership of their learning—naming what they care about, investigating the complex problems that matter to them, and designing a capstone pathway that connects their academic interests, professional aspirations, and capacity for meaningful contribution. Through experiential and project-based learning, students practice the core Honors values of Connect, Create, and Contribute; explore leadership theories; analyze complex community challenges; and engage in interdisciplinary research grounded in both global frameworks and local contexts. Emphasis is placed on inquiry-driven learning, ethical reasoning, and professional readiness as students develop the skills necessary for independent undergraduate research and applied leadership. The course is structured around three inquiry-driven modules: scholarly investigation and capstone design; community-engaged research; and applied leadership. Students will demonstrate

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

integrative thinking, effective oral and written communication, and a clearly articulated direction for their Honors capstone experience.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Construct a researchable problem statement or question that addresses a real-world community or career-related challenge, using creative and open/free inquiry methods.
2. Complete all university-required ethical research trainings (CITI certifications) and explore ethical protocols as outlined by institutional research compliance, as well as ethical AI usage.
3. Plan and conduct informational interviews with career professionals, faculty/staff, and peer mentors, and evaluate the outcomes to inform career and networking strategies.
4. Compare at least two potential capstone options and select the one(s) that best align with personal career goals and next steps.
5. Revise the ePortfolio created in HC200 to demonstrate growth, competency, and synthesis of learning across the Honors experience.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Instructional Methods

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

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

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 451- 500 Points

B = 401- 450 Points

C = 351- 400 Points

D = 301- 350 Points

F = 300 & > Points

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Assessments

Assessment Category	Percentage of Final Grade	Total Points
Capstone Discovery & Project Proposals	25%	125 Points
CITI Training & Ethical Inquiry Modules	15%	75 Points
Career Preparedness & Professional Interviews	20%	100 Points
Experiential Learning & Community Engagement	15 %	75 Points
ePortfolio Synthesis & Updated Page	15%	75 Points
Discussions and Participation	10%	50 Points
TOTAL	100%	500 Points

Assessments

Capstone Discovery & Project Proposals (125 Points Total)

- Capstone Proposal (50 points): Based on the information you have gathered throughout this course, identify two potential capstone options. Reflect on why these are the most appropriate and how you feel they will support your future academic and professional career.

- Problem Identification Project (75 pts): Using the capstone proposal, identify a research topic, problem, or issue you would like to address or solve. Through the creative or open/free inquiry process, you should explicitly define the issue and state its significance. You will compile a fundamental literature review evaluating the current academic ecosystem of the topic and your expected outcomes.

CITI Training & Ethical Inquiry (75 Points Total)

- CITI Training Certifications (50 pts): Complete required operational modules detailing research compliance.

AI Microcredential Completion (25 pts): Complete a Coursera Microcredential module [Generative AI for Students: Ethics & Academic Integrity](#)

Career Preparedness & Professional Interviews (100 Points Total)

- Career Prototype Strategy & Informational Interview (35 pts): Pitch a target career path and interview an active professional in that field. Talk about real-world issues they are seeing in their profession and how that might affect a future in the career.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

- Peer Mentor Interview & Reflection (30 pts): Connect with a student enrolled in HC 400 to evaluate the capstone process from a peer perspective.
- Faculty or Staff Mentorship Chat (35 pts): Connect with a faculty or staff member on campus and talk about mentorship opportunities (cannot be an Honors College faculty or staff member). This can be related to your major or not, but it should be someone who is familiar with whatever discipline you are considering for your capstone. For example, if you hope to pursue a community-engaged project, you can choose someone in Sports & Rec Management, Nutrition, Public Policy, etc. If you plan to do a research experiment or project, you would find a faculty member who conducts a similar type of research. The goal of this assignment is to begin building practical ideas for your capstone and finding someone to mentor you through the capstone process.

Experiential Learning & Community Engagement (75 Points Total)

- Community as Text Field Log (50 pts): Field mapping of the Commerce community to isolate systemic assets and institutional needs. Based on the field log, conduct a preliminary community needs assessment.
- Student Transformative Learning Awards (STLA) Plan (25 pts): Based on your needs assessment, draft an actionable proposal seeking funding or institutional support to meet a community need you have identified.

ePortfolio Synthesis (75 Points Total)

- "Who Am I?" ePortfolio revision (75 pts): Revisit, expand, and launch the newly formatted EP Page compiling all semester-long creative insights and inquiry frameworks. Evaluate your journey through selecting your capstone utilizing the DEAL reflection model.

Discussions and Participation (50 Points Total)

A significant part of the inquiry and discovery process is brainstorming and feedback. Discussions and other related activities will count toward this grade.

Course Outline/Calendar

Module	Topic	Due
Module 1	Introduction to Course	Introduction Discussion Post
Module 2	What is Creative Inquiry and where do I fit?	Readings: Creative Inquiry Creative Inquiry: Confronting the Challenges of Scholarship Creative Inquiry in STEM Fields
Module 3	Experiential Learning and Capstone Opportunities	Capstone Discussion Post

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Module 4	Fundamentals of Research and Why It Matters	Evaluating Research Interests Discussion Post
Module 5	Ethical Inquiry and AI Usage	CITI Trainings Coursera Generative AI microcredential
Module 6	Connecting with Career	Career Prototype Interview Prototype Interview Reflection Discussion Post
Module 7	Community Engagement through Project Based Learning	Community as Text Field Log Needs Assessment STLA Application
Module 8	Mentorship	Peer Mentor Interview & Reflection Faculty or Staff Mentorship Chat
Module 9	Bringing It Together: Creating through Connecting	Capstone Proposal Problem Identification Project
Module 10	Demonstrating Competency	ePortfolio Synthesis and Reflection

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.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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 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>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID and Password

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.

Technology-Related Issues

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.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

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.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Learning Management System (LMS) – D2L

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:

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on 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

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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 their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Use of Artificial Intelligence

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

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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 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 ETAMU 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 University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health – Counseling Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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

Mental Health and Well-Being

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.



As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

Department and Accrediting Agency Statement:

School of Music Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.