

**Texas A&M University - Central Texas**  
**COMM 5329-110 – Topics in Mass Media**  
**The Power of Social Media - Fall 2017**

**Instructor:** Charles R. Hamilton, PhD

**Office:** Online

**Phone:** (903) 573-5124 (cell)

**Email:** Please use CANVAS email for all communications.

**Office Hours:** Since this is an online course, in person office hours are not possible. However, I will be available through CANVAS email, located on the course menu, and will respond in 24 hours or less.

**Mode of instruction and course access:** This course is a 100% online course and uses TAMUCT *Canvas Learning Management System*: [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>].

**Student-instructor interaction:** Messages sent through *CANVAS Course Email* at any time will be answered within 24 hours, seven days a week. I will also make myself available between the hours of 1:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, for quick email response or online chat when requested.

**911 Cellular:**

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University – Central Texas

911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911 Cellular through their myCT email account.

Connect at [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management) [<https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management>] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**1.0 Course Overview and description: COMK 5329 - Topics in Mass Media (3)**

This course offers an in-depth study of particular issues within media studies. Topics will vary from semester to semester. A more specific course description will introduce the particular focus of a class. This course may be repeated when the topic changes.

**1.1 The Power of Social Media** is a study of mass media and the creation of a "Culture of online, and other media-based connections" - religions & denominations, individualism, intellectualism, the Internet, races and cultures, political groups, science, education, urban areas, etc. This course examines questions such as: Do media sources manipulate political events, topics, and comments in order to lure higher numbers of "loyal followers"? Are media sites fulfilling the needs of those concerned citizens who normally might not take the time to do the research necessary to find what they consider "the truth" about politicians and agendas? Does a media site encourage? conversation and expression of individual thought, or is it simply telling followers what they want to hear -- what they are comfortable with? What role does marketing play in online sites with a political agenda (i.e. what products and ideologies are being sold as necessities)? See the **Instructor's Personal Statement** at the end for more of an overview.

**1.2** **Students are expected to** write brief reviews of chapters from the text, as well as from several germane journal articles and public media articles, in order to begin building a useful library of such sources. You will also participate **actively** in online discussions of the assigned readings and other exciting topics. Finally, you will write a summation essay, discussing the chapters, articles, and research you have studied throughout the course, along with comparisons of policies you have chosen to highlight, and situations or genres in which they might apply. Since this is a graduate-level course, the rigor is extensive, especially during the last weeks. Do not get behind, or you will not only lose points, but you may find that you have to drop the course.

**1.3 Student Requirements**

- 1.3.1** Examine and then question current social media policies related to fairness & ethics.
- 1.3.2** Make intelligent observations about the benefits and shortcomings of weekly readings through both online discussions and in weekly reviews.
- 1.3.3** Collect and evaluate a library of sources concerning social media involvement in political issues and ethics used in communication with public audiences, and through a variety of modes.

**2.0 Course Objectives:**

**2.1 Student Learning Outcomes**

- 2.1.1** Students will be able to differentiate between the common social media methods of communication currently in use.
- 2.1.2** Students will select and highlight communication & social media usage methods they choose as most harmful/useful, based on their personal experience, and research.
- 2.1.3** Students will select the media devices they feel best fit ethical approaches to social communication.
- 2.1.4** Students will develop the ability to blend forms of social media communication to fit situations where one mode alone may not be sufficient to be affective.

**2.2 Competency Goals**

- 2.2.1** Students will read and respond, both in essay form, and through written, online discussion, to a variety of communication and agenda-setting tactics, described in the text, and used for the creation social media online cultures.
- 2.2.2** Students will read and respond, both in essay form, and through written, online discussions, to a variety of social media practices, described in journal articles they select, and used in a variety of communication modes and situations.
- 2.2.3** Students will discover, and apply, their *personal choices* of the "correct" practices necessary for specific scenarios of social media communication.
- 2.2.4** Students will discover and form personal philosophies for use in specific social media communication situations, through reading, research, written reviews, and written discussion responses, and record those in essay format.

**3.0 Required Reading and Textbook:** *Social Media: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Author: Christian Fuchs. Sage Publications, Ltd. 2017. ISBN: 978147396682 (PBK). (Text on reserve at the TAMU-CT Library.) Online articles as required.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**4.0 Course Requirements:** (Use MLA or APA guidelines on all the writing that you turn in – be consistent.. **All work must be in Microsoft Word format and submitted through CANVAS.** Also, as a rule I do not accept late assignments, without prior approval.)

**Participating in an online course** requires quite a bit of responsibility on the part of the student (see course calendar). You must log on daily in order to check for messages from the professor or other students, read daily postings on discussion forums, respond to prompts from the professor and other students, and to remain active for attendance purposes. Those students who reserve their comments for the last day the forum is accessible do not get the full impact of the course, and will not receive the full participation grade for the week. Also, simply making a comment in order to satisfy the participation component will not work. Comments should be substantive, insightful, and should generate further discussion. Students who do not keep up with assignments and discussion forums should consider dropping the course. If you do not feel that you are ready for an online course, you can gauge your readiness by taking this assessment for online learning at (<http://tamuct.smartermeasure.com>).

Since this is an online course, students are expected to log on a minimum of five (5) days each week and participate in online discussions by posting a minimum of one original comment, and responding to a minimum of two of their classmates' comments each week. Lack of participation will constitute an absence and reduce your weekly participation grade by a minimum of five points.

**4.1 Combined Chapter & Article Reviews:** You will compose (10) **combined reviews** of chapters from the *Social Media* text, and (20) journal/media articles of your choice. Each combined review will address the specific media tactic or practice you chose to investigate from each chapter in the text, along with two journal articles that correlate with that topic. Review that chapter and those two articles in 500-750 words. (**Example: Chapter Review + 2 Article Reviews = 1 Review**) For each review, begin with an MLA heading, the bibliographic information (citation) for each article (MLA or APA style), and a concise summary (250-350 words) of a specific topic you single out that is of great importance within the study of Social Media Culture. Address its usefulness to you and its general strengths and weaknesses. **You are not required to address/review the entire chapter, only a specific point, or points, you cite as most important.** Please supply short scenarios, if necessary, to illustrate your application of the practice. **Use Microsoft Word format Only.** Each Combined Review is worth (100) points. (**Examples are on the CANVAS home page.**)

**4.2 Discussion Participation:** You are expected to contribute to the course discussions each week. Count on providing at least one substantive original comment each of ten (10) weeks about your readings, or in response to my questions. Also included are comments you post as responses to others' posts. Each week you are required to post responses to at least two of your classmates' comments. Grades are not assigned to specific posts, but your contributions, after the first two introductory weeks, are worth fifty (50) points each for the next 10 weeks.

**In addition to the discussion of readings,** the discussion provides a forum for other course questions and comments. Please check the discussions often to see what your classmates are asking or commenting on. You might be able to help. Grades for this section will be collected and posted each week. Discussion is important to any course, and an online course is no different. Each participant's comments and points of view are essential to gaining knowledge about any subject or topic, and I put quite a bit of weight on active discussion. Comments should be substantive, and should be made early in the week so that active discussion can take place.

Students making comments in the final minutes or hours of the discussion window will not get full credit for participation/discussion.

**4.3 Abstract:** An abstract, or summation of your final paper, is required. Examples are on the Homepage or are available online from a variety of colleges and universities, as well as the Purdue OWL site. This assignment is worth 100 points.

**4.4 Annotated Bibliography:** An annotated bibliography is similar to a Works Cited page, but goes to the next level by annotating each source you find within your research. Examples are available on the Homepage, as well as the Purdue OWL site. This assignment is worth 100 points.

**4.5 Final Essay:** This will be an essay that gives you yet another opportunity to ponder the ideas of how media addresses cultural needs, changes, and values. You will write a summation essay, discussing the media practices you have studied throughout the course, comparisons of practices you have chosen to highlight, and communication situations, scenarios, or genres, in which they might apply. This is a very substantive assignment, and should reflect your critical insight into agenda-setting, and other methods that can be manipulated by media to fit specific situations. The average length of these papers has been 2000-2500 words, but feel free to go longer if necessary. (I really do not like limits, but some students feel they are necessary.) This final assignment is worth 300 points. *(Examples are available on the home page.)*

## 5.0 Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion

|            |                               |                  |             |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>5.1</b> | Chapter/Article Reviews       | 10@100 pts. each | 1000        |
| <b>5.2</b> | Blog Discussion Participation | 10@50 pts. each  | 500         |
| <b>5.3</b> | Annotated Bibliography        | 100              | 100         |
| <b>5.4</b> | Abstract                      | 100              | 100         |
| <b>5.5</b> | Final Essay                   |                  | 300         |
|            | <b>Total Points Available</b> |                  | <b>2000</b> |

## 6.0 Posting of Grades

Grades for Weekly Article Reviews, and Chapter Reviews, will be posted one (1) week from the due date. Grades for Discussion Participation will be posted every four (4) weeks.

*All student grades will be posted on the Blackboard Grade book. Students should monitor their grading status through this tool.*

## COURSE CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS

### 7.0 Complete Course Calendar

| Weeks   | Topics  | Readings/Assignments   |
|---|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b><br/><b>Aug.28-9/2</b></p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Welcome to COMK 5329</b><br/>The Power of Social Media<br/>Read – <b>Chapter 1</b><br/><i>Social Media: A Critical Introduction</i> (Fuchs)</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purchase and receive Text</li> <li>2. Read Syllabus in-depth</li> <li>3. Interactive Weekly Assignments 1:<br/>Read Welcome from the instructor and Post to Introductory Discussion, and Post course questions</li> <li>4. Read Chap.1 and post comments to Week 1 Discussion.</li> </ol>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b><br/><b>Sept.3-9</b></p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Part I - Foundations</b><br/><b>Chapter 2</b><br/>"Social Media &amp; Big Data"</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read and review Chapter 2, find 2 associated journal articles, and post reviews to assignment folder. <i>(Can be combined reviews or separate – see examples on the home page.)</i></li> <li>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Week 2 Discussion.<br/><b>Due -- 9/9@11:59 p.m.</b></li> </ol>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b><br/><b>Sept.10-16</b></p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chapter 3</b><br/>"Social Media as Participatory Culture"</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read and review Chapter 3 and 2 associated journal articles, and post reviews to assignment folder.</li> <li>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on article and Chapter to Week 3 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 9/16@11:59 p.m.</b></li> </ol>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b><br/><b>Sept.17-23</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b><br/><b>Sept.24-30</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>6</b><br/><b>Oct.1-7</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>7</b><br/><b>Oct.8-14</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>8</b><br/><b>Oct.15-21</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chapter 4</b><br/>"Social Media &amp; Communication Power"</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Part !! - Applications</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chapter 5</b><br/>"The Power &amp; Political Economy of Social Media"</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chapter 6</b><br/>"Google: Good or Evil Search Engine?"</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chapter 7</b><br/>"Facebook: Surveillance in the Age of Edward Snowden"</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chapter 8</b><br/>"Twitter &amp; Democracy: A New Public Sphere?"</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read and review Chapter 4 and 2 associated journal articles, &amp; post review to assignment folder.</li> <li>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Week 4 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 9/23@11:59 p.m.</b></li> <li>1. Read and review Chapter 5 and 2 associated journal articles, &amp; post review to assignment folder.</li> <li>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Week 5 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 9/30@11:59 p.m.</b></li> <li>1. Read and review Chapter 6 and 2 associated journal articles, &amp; post review to assignment folder.</li> <li>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Week 6 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 10/7@11:59 p.m.</b></li> <li>1. Read and review Chapter 7 and 2 associated journal articles. Post reviews to assignment folder.</li> <li>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Discussion - Week 7.<br/><b>Due – 10/14@11:59 p.m.</b></li> <li>1. Read and review Chapter 8 and 2 associated journal articles. Post reviews to assignment folder.</li> <li>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Discussion - Week 8.<br/><b>Due – 10/21@11:59 p.m.</b></li> </ol> |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>9</b><br/><b>Oct.22-28</b></p>    | <p><b>Chapter 9</b><br/>"Weibo: Power, Ideology, and Social Struggles in Chinese Capitalism"</p>  | <p>1. Read and review Chapter 9 and 2 associated journal articles. Post reviews to assignment folder.<br/>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Discussion - Week 9.<br/><b>Due – 10/28@11:59 p.m.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>10</b><br/><b>Oct.29-11/4</b></p> | <p><b>Chapter 10</b><br/>"Airbus and Uber: The Political Economy of Online Sharing Platforms"</p>   | <p>1. Read and review Chapter 10 and 2 associated journal articles. Post reviews to assignment folder.<br/>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Discussion - Week 10.<br/><b>Due – 11/4@11:59 p.m.</b></p> |
| <p><b>11</b><br/><b>Nov.5-11</b></p>    | <p><b>Chapter 11</b><br/>"Wikipedia: A New Democratic Form of Collaborative Work and Production"</p>                                      | <p>1. Read and review Chapter 11 and posted journal articles. Post reviews to assignment folder.<br/>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on articles and Chapter to Discussion - Week 11.<br/><b>Due – 11/11@11:59 p.m.</b></p>      |
| <p><b>12</b><br/><b>Nov.12-18</b></p>   | <p><b>Part III - Futures</b><br/><b>Chapter 12</b><br/>"Conclusion: Social Media and its Alternatives – Towards a Truly Social Media"</p> | <p>1. Read Chap. 12 – <b>No Reviews – last week for revisions</b><br/>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: <b>Post comments and conclusions from course research and Chapter</b> to Week 12 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 11/18@11:59 p.m.</b></p>       |
| <p><b>13</b><br/><b>Nov.19-25</b></p>   | <p><b>Begin work on Annotated Bibliography and Final Essay</b><br/><i>(Thanksgiving Break – 22-25)</i></p>                                | <p><b>No assignments due this week.</b></p>   |
| <p><b>14</b><br/><b>Nov.26-12/2</b></p> | <p><b>Work on Annotated Bibliography</b><br/><b>Due: 12/2</b></p>   | <p>1. <b>Annotated Bibliography Due: 12/2</b><br/>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on course to Week 14 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 12/2@11:59 p.m.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>15</b><br/><b>Dec.3-9</b></p>     | <p><b>Work on Final Essay</b><br/><b>Due: 12/9</b></p>  | <p>1. <b>Final Paper Due: 12/9</b><br/>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on course to Week 15 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 12/9@11:59 p.m.</b></p>   |
| <p><b>16</b><br/><b>Dec.10-15</b></p>   | <p><b>Work on Abstract</b><br/><b>Due: 12/12</b></p>  | <p>1. <b>Abstract Due: 12/12.</b><br/>2. Interactive Weekly Assignments: Post comments on course to Week 16 Discussion.<br/><b>Due – 12/12@11:59 p.m.</b></p>   |

### 7.1 Important University Dates:

August 28, Add/Drop/Late Registration begins  
 August 30, Add/Drop/Late Registration ends, 16-week and 1st 8-week classes  
 September 1, Priority Deadline to Submit Graduation Application  
 September 4, Labor Day, CAMPUS CLOSED  
 September 5, Last day to drop 1st 8-week classes with no record  
 September 13, Last day to drop 16-week classes with no record  
 September 22, Last day to drop a 1st 8-week class with a Q or withdraw with a W  
 October 6, Deadline to submit graduation

October 20, Last day to withdraw from the University (1st 8-week classes WF)  
 October 23, Add/Drop/Late Registration begins, 2nd 8-week classes  
 October 26, Add/Drop/Late Registration ends, 2nd 8-week classes  
 October 30, Last day to drop 2nd 8-week classes with no record  
 November 10, Veteran's Day  
 November 10, Last day to drop with a Q or withdraw with a W (16-week classes)  
 November 17, Last day to drop a 2nd 8-week class with a Q or withdraw with a W  
 November 23-24, Thanksgiving, CAMPUS CLOSED  
 December 15, Last day to withdraw from the University (16-week and 2nd 8-week classes)  
 December 15, Last day to file for Degree Conferral (Registrar's Office)  
 December 15, Commencement  
 December 25-January 1, WINTER BREAK

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

### 8.0 Technology Requirements

This course will use the TAMUCT Instructure Canvas learning management system.  
 Logon to TAMUCT Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>]  
 Username: Your MyCT username  
 (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)  
 Password: Your MyCT password

For this course, you will need reliable and frequent access to a computer and to the Internet. If you do not have frequent and reliable access to a computer with Internet connection, please consider dropping this course or contact me (your email and phone number) to discuss your situation.

#### **Canvas supports the most common operating systems:**

PC: Windows 8, Windows 7

Mac: Mac OS X 10.9 (Mavericks), 10.8 (Mountain Lion), and 10.7 (Lion)

**NOTE: Computers using Windows XP, Windows 8 RT and OS X 10.6 or lower are NO longer supported.**

Check browser and computer compatibility by following the "Browser Check" link on the TAMU-CT

Canvas logon page. This is a CRITICAL step as these settings are important for when you take an

exam or submit an assignment. Your ability to function within the **Canvas** system will facilitate your success in this course.

***Technology issues are not an excuse for missing a course requirement – make sure your computer is configured correctly and address issues well in advance of deadlines.***

### 8.1 Technology Support

For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: [helpdesk@tamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu.edu)

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

*When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student.*

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

### 9.0 Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form, found through

the [Registrar's web page](https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/business-office/droppolicy.php): <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/business-office/droppolicy.php>

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

### **10.0 Academic Integrity**

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

### **11.0 Academic Accommodations.**

At Texas A&M-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion webpage](http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/access-inclusion):  
<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/access-inclusion>.

TAMUCT supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. For more information, please visit <https://www.tamuct.departments/index.php>. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf), please visit: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>

### **12.0 Tutoring**

Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT students, both on-campus and online. On-campus subjects tutored include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-519-5796, or by

emailing Kim Wood at [k.wood@tamuct.edu](mailto:k.wood@tamuct.edu).

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over forty subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

### 13.0 University Writing Center

Located in 416 Warrior Hall, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10am-5pm Monday-Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library on Mondays from 6:00-9:00pm. Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [<https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu) to schedule an online tutoring session.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process.

While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the University Writing Center is here to help!

If you have any questions about the University Writing Center, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu).

### 14.0 University Library

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the TAMUCT main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our homepage: <https://tamuct.libguides.com/>

**15.0 Instructor's Comments.** I have learned to embrace technology for a number of reasons, one being the ease with which we can access information. I use a little social media, and like the ability to communicate with friends and colleagues, but my main use is in finding information quickly. Fortunately, or unfortunately, this ease of finding information has caused me to be able to write

more conference papers, answer more questions from students, and even teach this course without ever personally meeting students, or talking to them directly. The good and the bad of the situation end up being how we adapt, as a culture, to these technology changes - we may read fewer paper books, but we have so much more information at our fingertips. You all already know this, but I have actually lived through some of the greatest technology advancements the world has ever seen. Just the evolution of the cell phone from mobile radio phones, the bag phones, to hand-held phones, to smart phones has taken place in my lifetime - not to mention the evolution of the computer from room-sized to hand-sized, which would have been enough advancement to mystify most. But, with these advancements also come changes in communication techniques, news media development and delivery, and information access. These are not necessarily bad things, but sometimes they are used to pass on bad information. The instancy of delivery many times creates delivery before facts are checked, or as a provocation of anger, hate, and distrust - a feeling that news media do not care if the facts are correct, just that the story gets out first. Unfortunately, many now feel that there is no news source that can be trusted, news media is only here to set agendas and manipulate viewers, and that this situation has forced them to ignore any published news. This leaves a great void in our culture, where it should be providing a great abundance of quality news and information. This leaves a lot for you to sort out in the future -- I wish you luck!

#### **16.0 Copyright Notice.**

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#### **17.0 A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas**

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at A&M-Central Texas, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Counseling Services (254-501-5956) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall.

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php) [https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php].