

**Introduction to Liberal Studies**  
**LSTK 300-110**  
**Online**  
**Fall 2017**

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**Office Hours: Time by appointment.**

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course introduces students to the concepts and theories of interdisciplinary scholarship. Students will examine various academic disciplines, study approaches to integrating them into research, and learn to create inter- and multi- disciplinary academic work. As a blended course, face-to-face meetings will be held each Tuesday throughout the term, while the remainder of the course material will be accessed and completed off site through the Canvas learning management system.

**Mode of Instruction and Course Access:**

This is a fully online course with no scheduled face-to-face meetings.

This course uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System  
<https://tamuct.instructure.com>.

**Contacting the Professor**

All communications in this course between students and the professor should take place using the Canvas message system. You can expect to receive a reply to any message within 24 hours, except on weekends when the turnaround time may be up to 48 hours. In most cases, however, replies will be made much sooner than that. If for some reason you are unable to access Canvas, you may contact me via email. I can also be available on a very limited basis by appointment if you desire a face-to-face meeting. Telephone meetings are also a possibility. Please message me if you would like to schedule a meeting and we will work out the time and place on a case-by-case basis.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate factual knowledge and an understanding of fundamental theories: Students will examine and evaluate the major issues related to liberal studies and interdisciplinary scholarship
2. Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view: Students will analyze and critically evaluate different approaches to the disciplines covered and integrative methods

3. Apply course material to improve thinking, problem solving, and decision making: Students will apply course material to improve thinking and decision making by constructing and analyzing interdisciplinary methodology, and drawing conclusions from studied work.

4. Demonstrate specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course: As liberal studies scholars, students will evaluate and critically review of the work of other scholars and develop personal methodologies for interdisciplinary scholarship

5. Demonstrate skill in expressing themselves orally and in writing: Consistent with an upper-level humanities course, students will develop skills in written and/or oral communication including reviews, case studies, and examinations.

6. Use required resources and find additional scholarly resources for answering questions or solving problems: Students will utilize the learning management system Canvas and assigned books and articles as well as independent research in the completion of their course work.

### **Required Readings:**

Excerpts, films, and articles as assigned throughout the semester and located on Canvas

### **Grading Policy**

The final average will be calculated based on the number of points received out of a total of 1000. The following point ranges correspond to the final grade for the course: 900 and above = A; 800-899 = B; 700-799 = C; 600-699 = D; below 600 = F. (On the percentage scale: A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = 0-59 %.). Students will be graded and earn points for:

**FILM REVIEWS:** Students will turn in eight film reviews over the course of the session. Each film review is worth 50 points for a total of 20% of the course grade. Instructions on preparing the film reviews are located on Canvas under “Film Review Guidelines” in the “Assignment Instructions” folder. Reviews must be submitted as a Turnitin Direct Assignment on Canvas by the due date indicated in the course schedule at the end of the syllabus.

**INTERDISCIPLINARY EXERCISES:** Students will turn four interdisciplinary exercises during this course. Each is worth 50 points for a total of 200 points. These exercises total 20% of the class grade. Instructions on preparing the exercises are located on Canvas under “Interdisciplinary Review Guidelines” in the “Assignment Instructions” folder. Exercises must be submitted as a Turnitin Direct Assignment on Canvas by the due date indicated in the course schedule at the end of the syllabus.

**CASE STUDY:** Students will develop and create a case study of a problem or issue and explore the problem or issue with an interdisciplinary approach. Instructions for preparing the case study will be found on Canvas. The case study is worth 300 points or 30% of the course grade. Instructions on preparing the case study will be discussed thoroughly in class and further directions are located on Canvas under “Case Study Guidelines” in the “Assignment Instructions” folder. The case study must be submitted as a Turnitin Direct Assignment on Canvas by the due date indicated in the course schedule at the end of the syllabus.

**FORMAL PRESENTATION:** Students will create a powerpoint/prezi (or other electronic format) about their case study submit it via Canvas. Further guidance on the presentation will be located on Canvas in “Assignment Instructions” folder. The presentation is worth 100 points and 10% of the course grade.

**LATE WORK:** Late work will be accepted at a penalty of 10% of the assignment grade for each day past the due date. Make-up assignments will be given on a case-by-case basis and only for documented reasons such as hospitalization/illness, incarceration, military service etc. Students are responsible for securing all necessary documentation for consideration when asking for a makeup.

**INCOMPLETES:** Incomplete grades are reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as Hospitalization, Incarceration, Deployment etc. that arise after the university drop date and which prevent the student from completing any outstanding course work. Inability to complete assigned work for whatever reason before the drop date should be handled via dropping the course. Decisions to allow an incomplete are made at the sole discretion of the professor.

**FEEDBACK:** As all written assignments will be submitted electronically, feedback on papers will also be delivered electronically. In most instances, I will use a numbering system to indicate areas of concern. Written comments will be located in-text on the submitted paper. A key to numbered comments will be located in the “assignment instructions” folder on Canvas.

### **Withdrawals/Drop Date:**

It is the responsibility of the student to initiate a drop through the Records Office if they discover the need to do so. Professors cannot drop students. The last day to drop this course with a “Q” or withdraw with a “W” is Friday, November 10.

### **Technology**

As students registered for a course that utilizes online components, you and you alone are responsible for ensuring that you have reliable and regular internet access as well as a reliable computer or comparable device. It is not my responsibility to accommodate online

students who lack access to computers or the internet. No exceptions to course policies will be made for students who lose their ability to access the internet or complete the required coursework on a computer during the semester. Also, while it is possible to access the course materials using a dial-up internet connection, you should be aware that Canvas (as with most other programs and platforms) functions best with high speed internet access. Course policies apply equally to all students regardless of the quality of their internet access.

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>

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

### **The University Writing Center**

The University Writing Center at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students. The University Writing Center is located in 416 Warrior Hall. The center is open 1 pm-6pm Monday through Thursday during the spring semester. Students may work independently in the University Writing Center by checking out a laptop that runs Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Students may also arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor. Tutorials can be arranged by visiting the University Writing Center. Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. Sessions typically last between 20-30 minutes. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will help students develop more effective invention and revision strategies.

### **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 adhere 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.

NOTE: At the very minimum, students who violate the academic integrity policy will receive an “F” for this course, and the professor reserves the right to initiate further sanctions.

### **Access & Inclusion**

At Texas A&M University – Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to an education that is barrier-free. The Office of Access & Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability enjoy equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. Some aspects of this course or the way the course is taught may present barriers to learning due to a disability. If you feel this is the case, please contact Access & Inclusion at (254) 501-5831 in Warrior Hall, Suite 212. For more information, please visit their website at: <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/access-inclusion/>

Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

### **Library Services**

INFORMATION LITERACY focuses on research skills which prepare individuals to live and work in an information-centered society. Librarians will work with students in the development of critical reasoning, ethical use of information, and the appropriate use of secondary research techniques. Help may include, yet is not limited to: exploration of information resources such as library collections and services, identification of subject databases and scholarly journals, and execution of effective search strategies. Library Resources are outlined and accessed at: <http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/library/deservices.php>

### **Classroom Decorum and Other Policies**

Students are expected to behave as adults, be ready to listen and learn, and treat their professor and fellow students with the respect they would desire for themselves. Please ensure that cell phones are off, or on silent during class. Texting in class is unacceptable and instances of such behavior will result in a loss of points on the participation grade. If you use an electronic device in class, which is encouraged, please be sure to use it for academic purposes in line with the course content and discussion material.

OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY: Official communication is via your official Texas A&M University–Central Texas e-mail address, online via Canvas, and in-person in-class. Please check these places frequently for updates and information. It is the policy of the instructor to communicate sensitive information with students via e-mail only through an official TAMUCT e-mail address.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY: This course will use the TAMUCT Canvas Learn learning management system for class communications, content distribution, and assignments. If you have not yet activated the Canvas system, please do so, as this is critical for completing this course. The Canvas homepage for TAMUCT is: <https://tamuct.instructure.com/login/ldap>. Technology issues are not an excuse for missing a course requirement, so please make sure your computer is configured correctly and address issues well in advance of deadlines.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE AND COPYRIGHT POLICY: You may record class lectures (audio only), but recordings may *only* be used for personal, private, research and study purposes only, and *must not be disseminated publicly in any way*. Laptops, netbooks, tablets, etc., **may only be used for taking notes or accessing course materials in class**. If used for any other purpose, especially if it disrupts class, the instructor will ask you not to use a computer for the remainder of the semester. Cell phone use, for any purpose, **is strictly prohibited**.

Copyright Notice: The electronic content and materials in this course are for the sole purpose of instruction as part of this course offered by Texas A&M University–Central Texas, and are solely for university students registered in this course, and are subject to copyright protection law. Students who disregard United States copyright policy and institution policy do so at their own risk and assume all liability.

### **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 Outline:**

**Please Note:** This outline is intended a general guide only. As the instructor, I reserve the right to adjust this syllabus or the class schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

Each week of class beginning with Week 1 will have a specific Canvas page which contains the assignments for that week as well as any additional reading material so please be sure to check it regularly.

**Week 1 (Aug. 28)** Introduction to Liberal Studies; **Introductory Reading**

**Week 2 (Sept. 4); Worldview and Academic Analysis; Quiz Due Sun. Sept. 10 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 3 (Sept. 11); Geography and Cartography; History and Anthropology; Film Review #1 Due Sun. 9/17 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 4 (Sept. 18) Art and Art History; Interdisciplinary Exercise #1 Due Sun. 9/24 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 5 (Sept. 25) Literature and Philosophy;; Film Review #2 Due Sun. 10/1 at 11:59 p.m.;**

**Week 6 (Oct. 2) The Natural Sciences Film Review #3 Due Sun. 10/7 at 11:59 p.m**

**Week 7 (Oct. 9) Economics; Film Review #4 Due Sun. 10/15 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 8 (Oct. 16) Developing a Case Study Interdisciplinary Exercise #2 Due Sun. 10/22 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 9 (Oct. 23) Political Science and Criminal Justice; Film Review #5 Due Sun. 10/29 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 10 (Oct. 30) Psychology and the Behavioral Sciences; Film Review #6 Due Sun. 11/5 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 11 (Nov. 6) The Law and Criminal Justice; Film Review #7 Due Sun. 11/12 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 12 (Nov. 13) Developing a Case Study Part 2; Interdisciplinary Exercise #3 Due Sun. 11/19 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 13 (Nov. 20); Working Across the Disciplines; Putting it all Together; Film Review #8 Due Sun. 11/26 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 14 (Nov. 27) Work on Case Study; Thanksgiving Week, Campus Closed Nov. 24 and 25**

**Week 15 (Dec. 4) Student Presentations Due; Interdisciplinary Exercise #4 Due Sun. 12/11 at 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 16 (Dec. 12) FINALS WEEK- Case Studies Due Thurs. 12/15 @ 11:59 p.m.**

