

**Texas A&M University-Central Texas**  
**LIBS 5310: Interdisciplinary Methods**  
**M 6:00p.m.-9:00p.m. Room 309, Founder's Hall**

**Instructor and Contact Information**

**Instructor:** Dr. Cadra P. McDaniel

**Office:** Founder's Hall 217B

**Office Hours:** MW 3:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Or by Appointment

**Email:** [cadra.mcdaniel@tamuct.edu](mailto:cadra.mcdaniel@tamuct.edu) (Please use this email address as the method of contact)

**Phone:** 254-501-5932

**Mode of Instruction and Course Access**

This course is a face to face course with some information and readings posted on Canvas. Students must turn in their assignments via Canvas. Should students have difficulty submitting their assignments online, then students MUST email a copy before the due date and time. However, students MUST upload a copy to Canvas as soon as possible. Only assignments submitted via Canvas will be graded.

**Student-Instructor Interaction**

If students have any questions regarding the class or assignments, they should contact the instructor. Please contact the instructor as soon as possible so that any concerns may be resolved before it becomes midpoint or later in the semester. Students may contact the instructor via email. The instructor will respond to all email in a timely manner, usually within one (1) business day. Also, students may come by the instructor's office during office hours, or students may make an appointment. Announcements for the class will be posted on Canvas under the Announcements section. Please check this section regularly. For all questions concerning upcoming assignments, please send all questions via email before 4:00p.m. the day before the assignment due date. The "cut-off" time for questions allows all students to have questions answered before the due date.

## **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 911Cellular 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**

#### **Course Description**

This course investigates interdisciplinary research methods and the application of these methods. Students research, write, and present projects on topic(s) related to their focus areas.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

#### **Overall Course Objective**

After successfully completing the course, students will be able to utilize interdisciplinary research methods to author an interdisciplinary research project based on scholarly research and original analysis.

#### **Specific Course Objectives (Student Learning Outcomes)**

After successfully completing the course, students will be able to

1. Examine interdisciplinary research models and processes
2. Investigate and select the works of leading scholars in chosen interdisciplinary field(s)
3. Design an original project that incorporates their chosen interdisciplinary field(s) and defend their choices
4. Author an original project that demonstrates their ability to use interdisciplinary research methods to conduct an in-depth project which constructs a solid argument and is supported with scholarly evidence and original analysis.

### **Required Text**

Repko, Allen F., William H. Newell, and Rick Szostak. *Case Studies in Interdisciplinary Research*. Los Angeles. Sage Publications, 2012. ISBN: 978-1-4129-8248-1.

## **Course Requirements**

### **Submission of Research Topic**

Early in the semester, students will submit a possible paper topic(s) for their final research project. Students should consider topics that will be inherently interdisciplinary. Students are free select their research topic, but the topic must be approved by the instructor. The discussion of research interests on the first day of class will aid students in selecting a topic.

### **Rubric for Research Topics= 4 points**

Submission of possible research topic(s)=4 points

### **Analyses of Interdisciplinary Case Studies**

At the beginning of the semester, students will read various interdisciplinary case studies, which provide examples of successful interdisciplinary scholarship. Students must select (2) of these case studies to analyze. Each analysis should examine the types of research methods used and the reasons that these methods proved successful. Moreover, students should examine the types of various sources used in these studies. Students' analyses should rely only on the readings and should not use other information. The analyses should be written clearly. Each analysis should be one to two (1-2) pages. Students should use 12 point Times New Roman Font and have one (1) inch margins. No citations are needed. Students should follow the above guidelines or two (2) points will be deducted from their grade.

### **Rubric for Analyses=6 points each (12 points total)**

Examine the author's or authors' research methods and reasons these methods proved successful= 3 points

Examine the various types of sources used=3 points

## **Digital Polarization Project Tutorials**

TAMUCT has opted to participate in the American Democracy Project's (ADP) initiative *Digital Polarization: A Project to Promote Online Civic Information Literacy*. The Digital Polarization Initiative, or "DigiPo", is ADP's national effort to build student civic, information, and web literacy by having students participating in a broad, cross-institutional project to fact-check, annotate, and provide context to the different news stories that show up in our Twitter and Facebook feeds. Students may refer to the ADP's website for more information, <http://www.aascu.org/AcademicAffairs/ADP/DigiPo/> As part of this class, students will complete four (4) digital literacy tutorials that will strengthen their abilities to assess and critique online content. The completion of each module is worth three (3) points for a total of twelve (12) points.

Students will be expected to utilize skills learned in these tutorials as well as other critical analytical skills to assess online content's varied approaches to their research project's topic. Students will be required to include in their final research projects an analysis that addresses the manner in which online content approaches their topics and specifically focus on any distortions surrounding their topics. For more information, students should refer to the syllabus' section describing the Final Research Project.

### **Rubric for Digital Polarization Tutorials=12 points**

Completion of each tutorial=3 points each

### **Literature Review**

After examining interdisciplinary research methods and studies, students will create an in-depth literature review of relevant works related to their research topics. This review will consist of fifteen (15) scholarly items that relate to students' chosen topics. For each item listed, students should analyze the item's scholarly significance and relevance to their research project. All items

listed should conform to the citation style chosen by the student. Students are encouraged to select the scholarly citation style used by their main emphasis area. Examples of some scholarly citations styles are posted on Canvas.

**Rubric for Literature Review=15 points**

Analyze each item's scholarly significance and relevance=15 points

**Research Project Outline**

In early October, students will submit an outline of their entire research project. Students' outlines will need to address their entire project and not solely focus on the initial sections of their project. Examples of acceptable outline forms are posted on Canvas. Students should review these examples.

**Rubric for Outline=15 points**

Thorough outline of the research project=15 points

**Class Meetings and Individual Meetings**

Students will have some class periods when they meet as a class or meet with the instructor on an individual basis to discuss their research progress. For individual meetings, students will sign-up for a meeting time in class, and individual meetings will take place during the class period, Monday, 6:00p.m.-9:00p.m. in the instructor's office, 217B in Founder's Hall.

It is important that students come to the class and individual meetings. Each unexcused absence for a class or individual meeting results in a ten (10) point deduction on the student's final paper. Though the scheduled individual meetings will occur toward the midpoint of the semester, students should work on their paper throughout the semester. At any time should students have questions about their papers, they should feel free to contact the instructor with any questions and feel free to schedule a meeting with the instructor.

### **Research Project Presentation**

At the end of the semester, students will give a ten (10) minute in class presentation of their research. The presentation should provide an overview of the major points in the project. Also, students may use PowerPoint. Students should begin with their topic, explain their thesis, and provide three to four (3-4) detailed points that support their thesis.

### **Final Paper Presentation Rubric=30 points**

Clearly introduce topic and state thesis=10 points

Explanation of examples that support the thesis (including student's original analysis)= 10 points

Professional and clear delivery of material=10 points

### **Final Research Project**

The final component of each student's grade will be a thorough interdisciplinary study of a topic chosen at the beginning of the semester. Students may take notes during class or individual meetings, but there is NO recording of class or individual meetings.

The paper will be twenty to twenty-five (20-25) pages in length, will utilize primary and secondary sources, and rely ONLY on scholarly resources. The paper should have one (1) inch margins, double spaced, twelve (12) point Times New Roman Font, and proper citations.

An effective paper will have a well-developed thesis clearly stated in the first paragraph, thirty-five (35) points; will use material from scholarly sources, including primary and secondary sources, and include an analysis of online content related to the topic, to support the paper's thesis, seventy-five (75) points; will be written clearly with correct grammar and be free generally of typographical errors and misspellings, twenty (20) points; and will have all information cited properly using one of the major scholarly methods for citing material such as MLA, APA, or Chicago, twenty (20) points. The paper is worth one hundred fifty (150) points. Students may use only four (4) quotations, and each quotation must be twenty (20) words or less.

All material that is either quoted or paraphrased MUST be cited using the students' selected citation style. Students are encouraged to use the style adopted by their main emphasis area. Examples of some scholarly citations styles are posted on Canvas. Students should be aware that any reference pages such as endnotes, appendices, bibliographies, works cited pages, or other reference pages do NOT count toward the required twenty to twenty-five (20-25) pages.

It is important that students follow the paper guidelines closely. Not following the guidelines will lower a student's grade. For example, the use of more than four (4) quotations or quotations of more than twenty (20) words will reduce students' grades by five (5) points. The emphasis is that students paraphrase the material. When students paraphrase the material, they have to engage critically with the material, which leads to a more thorough understanding of the text. Also, students should keep their papers to the fifteen to twenty (15-20) page limit. Papers that exceed the length limit will reduce students' grades by five (5) points. One of the objectives in graduate school is to be very specific and precise when expressing written ideas. Students should proofread their papers before the due date, and the papers should be free generally of typographical errors and misspellings.

### **Rubric for Research Project=150 points**

Well-developed thesis clearly stated in the first paragraph=35 points

Use material from primary and secondary sources to support the thesis including an analysis of online content related to the topic=75 points

Clearly written, correct grammar, and be free generally of typographical errors and misspellings=20 points

Have all information cited properly using a scholarly citation method=20 points

**Since this may be the first time that students have composed a research project at the graduate level, students have the entire semester to ask the instructor various questions**

**about their research project. While the instructor will not read drafts of the projects, the instructor is more than willing to answer specific questions. Only in cases of documented extreme hardship will an extension be granted for the final project.**

### **Class Grading Scale, Grading Criteria Rubric, and Conversion**

This class follows TAMUCT's traditional grading scale of 100-90=A; 89-80=B; 79-70=C; 69-60=D; and 59 and below=F.

Possible Research Topic(s)=4 points  
Analysis of Interdisciplinary Case Studies=12 points  
Digital Polarization Tutorials=12 points  
Literature Review=15 points  
Research Project Outline=15 points  
Final Project Presentation=30 points  
Final Research Project=150 points  
Total Points Possible=238 points

Students may determine their grade by taking the total number of points earned and dividing by the total number of points possible.

### **Posting of Grades**

Grades will be posted online in Canvas and assignments are returned via Canvas. All assignments are graded usually within one (1) week of the due date.

### **Course Schedule (Course Outline and Calendar)**

The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to the syllabus and the course schedule as needed based on time and other factors. Should this need occur, then an updated schedule will be posted online in Canvas. **All assignments are due at 6:00p.m. on the due dates listed below.**

**August 27:** Introduction to the Course and Discussion of Research Interests, Read Repko, pages 1-315

**September 3: No Class, Labor Day**

**September 10: Submission of Possible Research Topics and Submission of Analysis of Two (2) Interdisciplinary Cases Studies from Repko Due,** and Discussion of Interdisciplinary Research Methods

**September 17: Completion of Digital Polarization Project Tutorials Due**, Discussion of Incorporating Accurate Digital Information into Scholarship

1: Introduction to Web Literacy: <http://tamuct.libsurveys.com/WebLiteracyIntroduction>

2: Investigate the Source: <http://tamuct.libsurveys.com/InvestigateSource>

3: Find the Original Source: <http://tamuct.libsurveys.com/FindOriginal>

4: Look for Trusted Work <http://tamuct.libsurveys.com/TrustedWork>

**September 24: Literature Review Due** and Discussion of Research Progress

**October 1:** Individual Meetings to Discuss Literature Review and Research Progress

**October 8: Outline of Research Project Due, No Class Meeting**

**October 15:** Individual Meetings to Discuss Outline and Research Progress

**October 22:** Class Meeting, Discussion of Research Progress

**October 29:** Class Meeting, Discussion of Research Progress

**November 5:** Class Meeting, Discussion of Research Progress

**November 12: Veterans Day Observed, No Class**

**November 19:** Individual Meetings, Discussion of Research Progress

**November 26:** Class Meeting to Discuss Research Progress and Presentations

**December 3: Presentations**

**December 10: All Final Research Projects Due, Submit Online via Canvas, No Class Meeting**

## **Instructor and Course Policies**

### **Absences**

Absences in graduate school are generally not acceptable. The instructor does understand that in some circumstances, such as a major illness, there may be missed classes. Should students miss class, then they need to contact the instructor as soon as possible. Unexcused absences will affect negatively students' grades. Only excused absences are allowed. Should students miss a class, make-up assignments will be allowed only for excused absences. Students, when they

return, must give the instructor written documentation, such as a note from their doctor, which covers the days that they missed. ONLY with documentation will students be granted an excused absence and be able to make up work. Students cannot make up work or turn in late work with unexcused absences. Should students miss a class or an individual meeting, then they will need to meet with the instructor within one (1) week of returning to class. Only in cases of documented extreme hardship will the student be allowed to have an excused absence for the presentation. In order to make up this assignment, students will need to include an additional five (5) pages of material to their final paper. In this instance, the final paper grade will include the thirty (30) points for the presentation for a total of one hundred eighty (180) points. The paper is still due on December 10 before 6:00p.m.

**ALL make-up work must be turned in no later than one (1) week after students return to class. No work will be accepted after the one (1) week period. Toward the end of the semester, there may be a shorter amount of time for make-up work. No make-up work will be accepted after the Final Project is due on December 10.**

#### **Incompletes**

A grade of an Incomplete is granted rarely. Incompletes will be granted only after the last day to drop a course and will be granted only to students who have experienced a major catastrophic event. Students must provide some form of written documentation that provides evidence of the catastrophic event.

#### **Withdrawal, Drop Dates, and Assignment Due Dates**

Students who feel that they need to drop the class must go to the Registrar's Office and complete the withdrawal forms. It is each student's responsibility to withdraw from a class. Also, it is each student's responsibility to be aware of all add and drop dates for classes and to be aware of all guidelines in the syllabus and due dates for class assignments. Students should refer

to the University Calendar for important dates, such as graduation deadlines. The calendar can be viewed at <https://www.tamuct.edu/>

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is copying or imitating the language, ideas, and thoughts of another individual(s) and submitting that work as one's own original work. This action will not be tolerated. All material taken from any source, including books, articles, journals, the Internet, or other sources, must be paraphrased (put in your own words), cited correctly, and if quoted, set off in quotation marks, and cited correctly. Plagiarism will be discussed in detail on the first day of class. **Should students have any questions about paraphrasing, using quotations, citing material, or documenting sources, please ask questions before, during, or after class, via email, or come by the instructor's office and discuss these concerns.**

Assignments will be checked for plagiarism using Vericite. If students receive a mark of fifty percent (50%) or more for plagiarism from Vericite, then they will receive a grade of a zero (0) for the assignment. This fifty percent (50%) from Vericite will not count the bibliography, other source materials, or quoted materials as being plagiarized. Also, students will earn a failing grade of a zero (0) when there is evidence that the plagiarism is from a "purchased" paper or when there is evidence of blatant copying of sources without citations. When there is evidence of plagiarism, students' work will be submitted to the Division of Students Affairs for review.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is assisting other students with completing class projects. Also, cheating includes the use of any unauthorized materials to complete any assignments. **The penalty for cheating will be a zero (0) for the assignment.** When there is evidence of cheating, students' work will be submitted to the Division of Students Affairs for review.

### **Technology Requirements**

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system.

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>].

Username: Your MyCT username (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address) Password: Your MyCT password

### **Canvas Support**

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select "Chat with Canvas Support," submit a support request through "Report a Problem," or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

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

Other Technology Support

For log-in problems, 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>]

*Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.*

## **University Resources, Procedures, and Guidelines**

### **Drop Policy**

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a [Drop Request Form](#) [[https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop\\_Request\\_Form.pdf](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf)].

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic 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.

### **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.

### **Academic Accommodations**

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 a barrier-free education. The Office 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 Office 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](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html) web page [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html].

### **Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students**

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related 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. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit the [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html) web page [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines online](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf), please visit the website [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

### **Tutoring**

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online.

Subjects tutored on campus 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 have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 519-5796, or by emailing Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at [deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu](mailto:deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu).

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

### **University Writing Center**

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

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/) at [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu) for any assistance needed with scheduling.

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 out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, 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 UWC is here to help!

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

### **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 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas 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 24 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 A&M-Central Texas 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 [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].