

**Texas A&M University-Central Texas**  
**F A 4301-115: The Arts in Contemporary Society**  
**Fall 2019 Course**

**Online via Canvas | 1<sup>st</sup> 8 Weeks | Writing Intensive Course**

**Instructor:** Ryan S. Bayless, MFA  
Adjunct Professor, Fine Arts and English  
**Email:** ryanbayless@tamuct.edu  
**(please use our course Canvas email whenever possible)**  
**Office Hours:** Regularly available by email through Canvas.

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**Mode of Instruction and Course Access**

This Writing Intensive (WI) designated course meets 100% online with materials made available through the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System. To access online components: <https://tamuct.instructure.com>

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**The Operation of the Online Course and Being an Online Student**

Online learning requires students to be very self-disciplined, so be sure you understand and are prepared to comply with all required class assignments and deadlines. Please check the Announcements, Calendar, and Email/Messages on Canvas regularly for assignment details and due dates.

Because this course operates solely online and via the Canvas Learning Management System, students are expected to familiarize themselves with the features and submission systems in the class and be able to navigate the course site. Basic computer skills, ability to access the internet, download documents, play audio and video files, and competency with programs like Microsoft Word and PowerPoint are expected and required to succeed in this virtual setting. *(See Sections 10.1 and 10.2 below for information regarding Canvas access, help, and support.)*

**The Writing Intensive (WI) designation** indicates that this course utilizes a variety of written assignments (which make up 100% of a student's final grade) to not only assess the student's comprehension of content, but to also make assessments of writing style, academic tone, essay structure, and clarity of expression. The "WI" designation can also be thought of as "Writing Instructive," as each student will receive regular feedback from the professor on writing elements, structure, and strategies related to each assignment. In an attempt to emphasize ongoing improvement, assignments will often be repeatable in their key objectives and format so that students can use the professor's feedback to improve and

enhance their academic writing. (See Sections 5 and 6 below for a discussion of written assignments, general grading expectations, and grading feedback.)

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### **1.0 Course Prerequisite**

Senior or junior standing *or* approval of department chair and professor.

### **2.0 Course Description**

FA 4301 is an interdisciplinary course which emphasizes the relationships of art, music, and drama in contemporary American society.

In order to understand the current standing and objectives of contemporary American art, this course will explore the rise of popular culture in the United States and the art forms that resulted from the advent of a democratic society infused by multiple ethnic and artistic backgrounds. The course will also focus on the technological, economic, and social changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that both created and challenged artistic forms and expression.

Course work includes weekly online lectures and discussions, reading assignments, listening exercises, extensive viewing of works of art, and writing projects that involve formal analysis of individual works and themes of contemporary art.

*FA 4301 ensures that students gain a broad knowledge of contemporary arts across disciplines and acquire an understanding of the relationship and interdependence of all art forms in any particular discipline. Students should be able to tolerate innovation, viewpoints different from their own, as well as creative and cultural diversity in all of the arts.*

### **3.0 Required Text**

Jim Cullen, *The Art of Democracy: A Concise History of Popular Culture in the United States*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Monthly Review Press, 2002.

*This course also makes use of a number of other texts, images, songs, and film clips. Links to these sources will be made available on a weekly basis through Canvas.*

### **4.0 Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Understand and define the functions and purposes of contemporary art
- Understand and define the role of artists in American society
- Understand and define the evolution of art forms through the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present
- Situate art works within the cultural, technological, and economic concerns in which they exist

- Respond to works of art through writing and online discussions
- Write a formal critical analysis of an individual work of art
- Prepare and write a documented essay analyzing the larger themes, functions, and/or purposes of contemporary American art

*These course objectives and learning outcomes are measured through a variety of graded requirements which are described below in Section 5.0.*

## **5.0 Course Requirements**

This course has two non-gradable and four gradable categories of assignments. A discussion of each follows:

*Non-Gradable Requirements:*

### Regular Reading and Viewing/Listening Assignments:

The reading in this course serves as a catalyst for everything we do. I have worked to keep the required reading to a minimum with the hope that students will have time to read and comprehend all that is assigned. Those who attempt to complete other assignments without first absorbing and actively engaging with the readings and various links to art works and related materials might be able to approximate the course requirements, but they will not be able to accomplish them.

### Weekly Worksheets:

Weekly Worksheets focus your reading and direct the dialogue on the discussion board. The worksheet offers a written version of what we would do in-class were this a face-to-face section. It clarifies or redirects the readings, provides links and clips to illustrate points, introduces prompts for weekly response papers, and provides a context for online discussion.

*Gradable Requirements:*

### Weekly Response Papers (40% of final grade):

Response Papers offer students the opportunity to demonstrate a command of the concepts introduced in the readings and worksheets, as well as provide analysis and critique of the art forms that accompany them.

The exact task for each assignment varies. In most cases, these assignments ask students to produce a 400-600 word discussion that responds to a specific topic and/or art work. Specific prompts, directions, and due dates are provided in each week's worksheet.

*These “papers” will not be submitted directly to the professor, but instead will be posted on the Discussion Board on Canvas, which will allow other students to read and analyze/respond to your ideas. In this sense, each student will continuously provide new content and discussion topics for the course. (These papers will be graded on a ten point scale each week and averaged at the end of the semester.)*

#### Discussion Board Responses (10% of final grade):

The Discussion Board is the place where course content is negotiated, personalized, and connected to broader issues than those outlined in the readings. Students should expect to use this space regularly to initiate, support, and advance critical discussion of the assigned material.

Discussion Board Responses will be graded holistically on the basis of engagement with the ideas and art works explored in the Response Paper being commented on. Comments need not always be refined, but they do need to initiate meaningful discussion or contribute meaningfully to some discussion already underway. (Posts that simply say, “I (dis)agree,” or that praise or critique the writer will not be deemed “meaningful.”)

*Students are expected to reply to at least 2 posted Response Papers per weekly assignment. Consider this the “participation” element of your overall grade. The quality, not the quantity, of comments is what I’m looking for, but feel free to comment and discuss as much as you like.*

#### Short Analysis Paper (20% of final grade):

The Short Analysis Paper assignment (1000-1500 words) asks students to produce a close reading/explication of an individual art work explaining and analyzing how its collective components work to produce meaning and express a theme. (Specifics about the assignment requirements will come around week 4 of the course.)

#### Final Analysis Paper (30% of final grade):

The Final Analysis Paper assignment (1500-2000 words) asks students to produce a thesis-based analysis about the current state of contemporary art. Students will choose a particular genre of art (music, art, film, literature, or drama) and analyze specific works to provide evidence for their argument. Students will make a case for how contemporary works express a certain theme we’ve discussed during the semester (i.e. the effects of technology on art or artists, how the social tensions of gender, race, or class inform artistic expression, etc.) and use primary and secondary sources to support their thesis. (Specifics about the assignment requirements will come around week 6 of the course.)

The Final Analysis Paper should adhere to the conventions of MLA (see the link that follows for help: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> ).

### **6.1 Grading Computation**

Final Grades will be calculated using the following percentages:

Weekly Response Papers = 40%  
Discussion Board Responses = 10%  
Short Analysis Paper = 20%  
Final Analysis Paper = 30%

The distribution of final grades is as follows:

Semester grade: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; and, F=0-59 (Borderline grades will not be automatically rounded up.)

### **6.2 Grading Standards and Expectations**

Along with the students' adherence to the assigned prompt and engagement with artistic concepts and themes, the papers assigned in this course will be assessed and graded by the following standards:

**C** C indicates a satisfactory performance. A C paper demonstrates positive qualities and avoids serious errors. The positive qualities include the presentation of a central idea that is adequately developed and competently organized. The errors to be avoided include serious flaws in the construction of paragraphs and sentences, in the selection of appropriate words, and in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally clear.

**B** The B paper surpasses the C paper by demonstrating a higher level of effectiveness in the organization and development of a central idea. The B paper shows greater complexity of thought and development, while sustaining clarity in expression. It has few or none of the common errors in the use of conventional written English. The style of the writing is generally fluent and polished.

**A** The A paper is outstanding work. It is clearly a superior performance according to the criteria of clarity of expression and logical development of a central idea. It shows originality of thought and imaginative competence in the development of the material. It engages and holds the reader's attention and invites rereading. The style of the writing is consistently fluent, polished, and distinctive.

**D** D indicates an unsatisfactory performance. A D paper is flawed by any one or several of the following: weakness in establishing or developing a central idea; serious errors in sentence or paragraph construction; serious errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

**F** indicates an unacceptable performance. An F paper is flawed by one or more of the following: failure to follow the assigned topic; failure to conceive, state, or develop a central idea; serious repeated errors in sentence construction or paragraph development; serious repeated errors in grammar, spelling, or the mechanics of written expression.

***In addition to these general guidelines, I will assess your writing on the two analysis papers based on the following criteria:***

I will be looking for solid thesis statements that clearly articulate and put forth the central argument of your essay. In order for a thesis statement to be strong, its stated intention must be sustained throughout a paper. I will constantly ask: How does each statement/paragraph/example in your paper relate to the central idea of your thesis?

Beyond cohesion of this central thesis throughout your paper, I will be paying close attention to how well you transition between different paragraphs/claims/examples. This is essentially the structure and flow of your paper. Ideally, the reader should not wonder how any one of your statements relates to another. Consider the appropriate use of topic sentences, supporting points, illustrations and examples as evidence, and sufficient explanation or analysis of the evidence provided as it relates to your thesis.

***And remember...***

Write to your academic audience. Stay objective in tone and use appropriate, professional language. Also, do not assume that the reader already knows what we go over in class. Be clear and specific with your wording. Proofread carefully for clarity and use the proper MLA formatting for citing quotations and secondary sources.

### **6.3 Posting of Grades**

Grades will appear in the comment box in “Grades” in our Canvas course site once completed. I make every effort to provide prompt feedback, and will always provide a grade and written commentary on an assignment before the next one of its kind is due in order to use the feedback to improve on the next assignment.

### **6.4 Grading Feedback**

Each response paper and essay will be provided written feedback from the professor in addition to the letter/number grade. The goal of this feedback will be to offer commentary on the paper’s strengths and weaknesses in an attempt to help the student see where to improve, revise, and/or restructure their written answers to the prompts. Feedback will vary based on the assignment and needs of each student, but will generally include commentary on a student’s grasp of course themes and content, as well as the ability to incorporate and integrate textual evidence to support their answer to the prompt.

As a Writing Intensive (WI) designated course, this written feedback will also emphasize points of improvement in the academic tone, organization, clarity, and correctness of a student's writing assignments based on the expectations outlined in section 6.2.

### **6.5 Late-work/Make-up/Extra Credit Policy**

Neither late work nor make up work will exist in this class. Assignments that fail to be submitted by the deadline posted on the calendar in Canvas for that assignment will not be accepted (unless you get specific approval from me for unexpected and uncontrollable extenuating circumstances that occur before the due date). Likewise, I do not assign extra credit; therefore, students should focus on providing their best work on assignments throughout the semester.

### **6.6 Incomplete Policy**

Students are responsible for turning in all assignments during the scheduled timeframe for the course. Incompletes should be reserved for unexpected, life altering situations that develop after the drop deadline. Students should drop a course should something happen that prevents them from completing the course ahead of the drop deadline. Failure to do so may result in failing grades on assignments or the course if missing work is not completed and submitted before the last day of the semester. Please let me know immediately if serious health or life issues prevent you from attending class or submitting assignments. (*Also see the university "Drop Policy" below.*)

### **6.7 Classroom Conduct and Discussion**

When participating in discussion, keep in mind that the university classroom is one of the most diverse spaces within our society. Thus, you need to understand that there will be other members of the class with whom you disagree or who will disagree with you. This is fine; in fact, it is welcome. It is only through considering the beliefs and ideas of those with whom we disagree that we can truly decide on what we believe. So feel free to disagree with, refute, and/or challenge the ideas of others. However, when doing so, remain calm, polite, and respectful at all times toward your classmates, instructor, and their ideas. Anyone who engages in discrimination and/or vulgarity, or who is personally disrespectful in any way towards the professor or other students will receive a zero on the assignment in question and may be reported to Student Affairs.

### **7.0 Course Calendar**

This calendar outlines the general themes covered in the course each week. Because we will build upon the topics and themes explored in each section, the material and assignments will be posted to Canvas on a weekly basis.

Each Tuesday morning, a new Worksheet will appear on our home page, which will provide and direct reading assignments, supply additional sources and links, and propose prompts for your weekly Response Paper. This will allow students to concentrate solely on the

material as it is presented each week. There is no reason (or ability) to skip ahead. Due Dates for all assignments will be posted on the Calendar in Canvas, as well as the Weekly Worksheets and paper prompts.

*\*This calendar is tentative, but will most likely be followed as written. I will make announcements and distribute revisions as I adapt instruction and materials to your needs.*

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**Week 1: Introduction to course; discussion of syllabus; individual introductions**

I Hear America Singing: The Rise of Democracy and Popular Culture

**Week 2:** Painting vs. Photography: The Effect of Technology on the Arts

**Week 3:** Music and American Society: the Blues and Jazz

**Week 4:** The Performing Arts and Broadcasting: Radio and Television

**Short Analysis Paper assigned**

**Week 5:** The Rock-n-Roll Era: Social Rebellion and Cultural Synthesis

**Short Analysis Paper due (Fri. Sept. 27)**

**Week 6:** The Evolving American Identity in Film and Song

**Final Analysis Paper assigned**

**Week 7:** The Rise of the Internet and the Future of the Arts in 21st Century America

**Week 8: Conclusions; Final Analysis Paper due (Thurs. Oct 17)**

***\*This 8-Week Online Course begins August 26 and ends October 18, 2019.\****

## **8.0 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 record's office will provide a deadline for which the form must be returned, completed and signed. Once you return the signed form to the records office and wait 24 hours, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. Should you still be enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the records office immediately. You are to attend class until the

procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course.

## 9.0 Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

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. More information can be found at

<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/studentconduct/academicintegrity.php>

Depending on the severity of a student's act of academic dishonesty, a student found to have committed any of the above will receive nothing less than a zero on the assignment on which the infraction occurred and nothing more than expulsion from the university. A minor infraction includes but is not limited to improper citations or allusions to an outside source (one not directly assigned or approved by me before submission). A major infraction includes but is not limited to the undocumented lifting of ideas, phrases, or any text from a source that finds its inspiration some place other than the student.

## 10.1 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

## 10.2 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>

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

For issues with Canvas, select “chat with Canvas support,” submit a support request to Canvas Tier 1, or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953, links to all are found inside of Canvas using the “Help” link.

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

### **10.3 Protecting Your Data and Privacy**

Students should always save a copy of their work submitted in Canvas in another location to ensure it is not lost in the event of a technical malfunction or issue. The student is responsible for being able to access their work outside of Canvas in the event it is deleted or doesn't properly upload or post.

Canvas and its parent company, Instructure Inc., are committed to protecting user privacy. Instructure's Privacy Policy can be found through this link:

<https://www.instructure.com/policies/privacy/>

### **10.4 Vendor Accessibility Statement for Canvas Learning Management System**

WebAIM.org, a third party authority in web accessibility, has evaluated the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) by Instructure and certifies it to be substantially conformant with Level A and Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0. While not fully conformant, conformance issues that pose a significant barrier for users with disabilities have been addressed in the sample evaluated.

Further information on accessibility in Canvas can be found through this link:

<https://www.canvaslms.com/accessibility>

### **11.1 TAMUCT Student Affairs and Academic Support**

Student Affairs encourages personal growth and enriches the quality of campus life through innovative student-centered programs that foster service, diversity, and integrity. Students will have the opportunity to engage socially, professionally, and academically to enhance lifelong learning. For more information please visit: <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html>

Academic Support exists to provide support to all TAMUCT students! Regardless of your major, your year of study, whether you are an online or on-campus student, we're here to help you succeed and accomplish your academic goals! We offer tutoring support on-campus and online, workshops and resources to help you succeed, and even study abroad opportunities. For more information please visit: <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/academic-support.html>

Other services and resources provided by the university can be found through this link:  
<https://www.tamuct.edu/University%20Resources.html>

### **11.2 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 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](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html) webpage:  
<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>

### **11.3 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 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, 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.

### **11.4 Tutoring**

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas 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 Larry Davis at [lmDavis@tamuct.edu](mailto:lmDavis@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 A&M-Central Texas 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.

### **11.5 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 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 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).

### **11.6 Library Services**

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 students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at TAMUCT 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:

<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/library/index.php>

### **11.7 911 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>] 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.

### **12.0 Copyright Notice**

Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

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*\*The professor reserves the right to amend this syllabus at any time during the semester as issues or needs arise. Written addendums will be distributed should this need occur.*

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