

**Liberal Studies Capstone**  
**LIBS 4395-115**  
**Online**  
**Summer 2023**

**Dr. Jeff Dillman**  
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**Office Hours: By appointment.**

**Course Description and Objectives:**

Students will select a research topic and develop and demonstrate interdisciplinary research, writing, and presentation skills. Students will integrate and use fundamental concepts learned in previous courses within their degree concentrations.

**Mode of Instruction and Course Access:**

This course is 100% online (no face-to-face meetings) and 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 in about 24 hours, except on weekends (Fri. evening through Sunday evening) when the turnaround time may be a bit longer. 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. If you desire a face-to-face meeting, Webex, Telephone, or Skype meetings can be arranged. Please message me if you would like to schedule a meeting and we will work out a time on a case-by-case basis.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate factual knowledge and an understanding of fundamental theories: Students will research and explain the interdisciplinary nature of their selected topic.
  
2. Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view: Students will examine and apply the appropriate interdisciplinary theories and methodologies to their research topic. Students will also integrate and analyze works from other scholars pertaining to their research topic.
  
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 interdisciplinary scholars, students will evaluate and critically review of the work of other scholars and develop personal methodologies of interdisciplinary research.

5. Demonstrate skill in expressing themselves orally and in writing: Consistent with a degree capstone course, students will develop skills in written and oral communication including a research paper and presentation of research.

6. Use required resources and find additional scholarly resources for answering questions or solving problems: Students will engage in independent research of their selected topic utilizing books, journal articles, and other resources.

### **Required Readings:**

None

### **Grading Policy**

The final average will be calculated based on the number of points received out of a total of 500. The following point ranges correspond to the final grade for the course: 450 and above = A; 400-449 = B; 350-399 = C; 300-349 = D; below 300 = 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:

**RESPONSE/REFLECTION PAPERS:** Students will create 4 short essays in response to specific questions and topics as provided by the professor. Response papers will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. Each paper is worth 25 points, for a total of 100 points

**TOPIC PROPOSAL:** Students will compose and submit a formal research proposal outlining their research topic. The topic proposal is worth 50 points and 10% of the course grade.

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Students will create an annotated bibliography containing short summaries of their research material. The annotated bibliography is worth 100 points and 20% of the course grade.

**OUTLINE:** Students will submit an outline of their research paper. The research outline is worth 50 points and 10% of the course grade.

**RESEARCH PAPER:** Students will write a research paper of approximately 6000 words (~20 pages) not including notes, front matter, or bibliography. The paper is worth 200 points and 40% 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. Many of the assignments in the class will be assessed according to rubrics that you will be able to view prior to submission. It is strongly encouraged that you review these rubrics before beginning or submitting your work.

**POSTING OF GRADES:** All grades will be posted on Canvas in the “Grades” section. Turnaround times on grades will vary by assignment based on assignment length and complexity. In general, grades will be available with 7-10 of the assignment due dates (or submission date in the case of late assignments).

### **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 “W” is Friday, July 14.

### **Technology Requirements**

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. **We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.**

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [<https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

## **Technology Support**

For log-in and other TAMUCT system support needs, 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 Canvas help, 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.

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## **Tutoring**

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both virtually and in-person. Student success coaching is available online upon request.

If you have a question, are interested in becoming a tutor, or in need of success coaching contact the Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion at (254) 501-5836, visit the Warrior Center at 212 Warrior Hall, or by emailing [WarriorCenter@tamuct.edu](mailto:WarriorCenter@tamuct.edu).

To schedule tutoring sessions and view tutor availability, please visit [Tutor Matching Services](https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT) [https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT] or visit the Tutoring Center in 111 Warrior Hall.

Chat live with a remote 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 online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

## **University Writing Center**

University Writing Center: Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (A&M–Central Texas) is a free service open to all A&M–Central Texas students. For the Spring 2022 semester, the hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday in Warrior Hall 416 (with online tutoring available every hour as well) with satellite hours available online only Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. and Saturday 12:00-3:00 p.m.

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!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor 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) if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor 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) if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor.

### **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.

### **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, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information, please visit our [Access & Inclusion](#) Canvas page (log-in required)

## **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 [Student Affairs](#). 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

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.

### **Title IX Rights and Reporting Responsibilities**

A&M-Central Texas is committed to creating a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you or another student has experienced any form of gender discrimination or sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and/or sex-based stalking, help and support are available. Our university strongly encourages all members of our campus community to report incidents and seek support for gender discrimination and sexual misconduct through the Title IX Office. You may contact the Title IX Office at 254.519.5716, [titleix@tamuct.edu](mailto:titleix@tamuct.edu), Founders Hall 317B, or learn more by visiting the [Title IX webpage](#) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html>].

Please be aware that that under [Title IX](#), [Texas Senate Bill 212](#), and [System Regulation 08.01.01](#), [<https://policies.tamus.edu/08-01-01.pdf>] all university employees are mandated reporters and are required to disclose information about suspected or alleged violations as listed above and defined in System Regulation 08.01.01. If the Title IX Office receives information about an incident, they will reach out to offer information about resources, rights, and procedural options as a member of the campus community. Although I have an obligation to report, you will, in most cases, control how your case will be handled. When working with the Title IX Office you will have access to resources and accommodations but also have the opportunity to express if you wish to move forward with an investigation. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the options available to you as a student. Community members are not required to respond to this outreach.

If you or another student wishes to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the [Student Wellness & Counseling Center](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html), [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html], 254.501.5955, or swacc@tamuct.edu, located in Warrior Hall Room 207L or the Student Support Advocate, 254.501.5978 or ssa@tamuct.edu, located in founder Hall Room 317D.

## **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 400,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 96,000 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 virtually through WebEx, Microsoft Teams 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](#)

## **Classroom Decorum and Other Policies**

Students in an online course are expected to behave professionally and courteously with the professor and their peers. Although personal interactions in this course are limited, in the event that online discussion or meeting formats are utilized, please be respectful in your posting and comments.

**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.

## **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 TAMUCT, 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 Student Wellness and Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

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/compliance/titleix.html) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html>].

## **Behavioral Intervention**

Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. You can complete the [referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas) online

[<https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas>].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](https://www.tamuct.edu/bit) website for more information [<https://www.tamuct.edu/bit>]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5805.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICE AND COPYRIGHT POLICY:** You may download course recordings, but recordings may *only* be used for personal, private, research and study purposes only, and *must not be disseminated publicly in any way*.

**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.

## **Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas**

**SAFEZONE.** SafeZone provides a public safety application that gives you the ability to call for help with the push of a button. It also provides Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate emergency information quickly via push notifications, email, and text messages. All students automatically receive email and text messages via their myCT accounts. Downloading SafeZone allows access to push notifications and enables you to connect directly for help through the app.

You can download SafeZone from the app store and use your myCT credentials to log in. If you would like more information, you can visit the [SafeZone](http://www.safezoneapp.com) website [www.safezoneapp.com].

To register SafeZone on your phone, please follow these 3 easy steps:

1. Download the SafeZone App from your phone store using the link below:
  - [iPhone/iPad](https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756): [https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756]
  - [Android Phone / Tablet](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp)  
[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp]
2. Launch the app and enter your myCT email address (e.g. {name}@tamuct.edu)
3. Complete your profile and accept the terms of service

### **Course Outline:**

**Please Note:** This outline is intended a general guide only. As the professor, 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.

### **UNIT 1- Concepts**

**Week 1 (6/5)** Introduction to the course and interdisciplinary research. **Response Paper 1 Due Mon. 6/12 @ 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 2 (6/12)** Preparing for your project; **Response Paper 2 Due Mon. 6/19 @ 11:59 p.m.**

### **UNIT 2- Topic Selection**

**Week 3 (6/19)** Topic Ideas and considerations **Response Paper 3 Due Mon. 6/26 @ 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 4 (6/26)** Disciplines; Annotated Bibliographies **Response Paper 4 Due Mon. 7/3 @ 11:59 p.m.; Formal Topic Proposals Due Mon. 7/3 @ 11:59 p.m.**

### **UNIT 3- Research**

**Week 5 (7/3)** Research and Organization: Outlines; **Annotated Bibliographies Due Mon. 7/10 @ 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 6 (7/10)** Other research considerations and techniques; **Outlines due Mon. 7/17 @ 11:59 p.m.**

### **Unit 4- Writing**

**Week 7 (7/17)** Writing- No assignments due

**Week 8/FINALS WEEK (7/26)- Research Papers Due Friday, July 28 @ 11:59 p.m.**