**Common Course Policies**

These policies are not required, but provided here for you to download and edit as needed for your own syllabus.

**Disclaimer**

This syllabus is provided for informational purposes regarding anticipated course content and schedule of courses. It is based upon the most recent information available on the date of its issuance and is as accurate and complete as possible. I reserve the right to make any changes necessary and/or appropriate. I will make every effort to communicate any changes in a timely manner through email, Blackboard and in class. Students are responsible for staying up to date on any changes to the syllabus that may occur during the term of this course.

**Communication**

I will communicate with you exclusively through Blackboard and the email address you provide. Please check your email regularly to ensure you receive the most up-to-date announcements for this course.

**Preparation**

This course is designed to engage class members in a thoughtful, ongoing conversation about the subject. Many of the class activities are based on readings and group work completed prior to and during class. It is, therefore, your responsibility to keep up with the readings and assignments and come to class ready to participate.

**Blackboard**

All of the documents you need for this course will be posted in Blackboard. It is your responsibility to check Blackboard on a regular basis throughout the semester. I will often post important messages regarding assignments and schedules through the Blackboard mailbox, as well as any changes to the syllabus. These messages may require a response from you, so you won’t want to miss them. You will submit all of your assignments in Blackboard, and I will check Blackboard frequently during the semester. To learn how to navigate Blackboard, you can view these tutorials: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLontYaReEU1seUE3ACG3sEc3zR7Br7URU>.

**Electronic Devices**

Phones must be on silent or vibrate during class time. Electronic devices should be used only if required for classroom activities. If it is apparent that you are using your device in a way that is distracting or if it is clear that you are doing something else, you will be asked to either put away the device or to leave class. Also, please do not sit in class with headphones or earbuds in your ears. This is very distracting and is considered to be unprofessional in any academic or professional environment.

**Submission of Coursework**

All assignments are due Sunday at 11:59 pm unless otherwise noted. All assignments will be submitted online through the UTSA Blackboard course site for grading purposes unless otherwise noted. For a video tutorial, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv1KOhABlBE&index=3&list=PLontYaReEU1seUE3ACG3sEc3zR7Br7URU>. When submitting to Blackboard, assignments must be submitted on or before the specified due date and be submitted to the location designated in the assignment description. Send all assignments as a Microsoft Word attachment and as one document (Do not copy and paste your typed assignment into the assignment box). Make sure you save your assignment somewhere that you can easily retrieve it later (i.e. on a travel drive, on your personal computer, in your email, etc.) If something goes wrong with your submission, you will want to be able to retrieve your assignment for resubmission. Also, you will be surprised at how many assignments you will refer back to later in your college career. I suggest you save all of your assignments until well after you graduate. Some employers ask for examples of college work as part of the interview/selection process. Trust me, you won’t be sorry. Also, be aware that Blackboard goes down occasionally for maintenance and you cannot get on the Blackboard system or send documents during those times. It is always a good idea to submit assignments early to account for times the Blackboard system might be down.

**Quality of Work**

All written work submitted, unless otherwise noted, must be of professional quality, neatly presented, grammatically correct, and free of spelling and punctuation errors. I recommend you use an online proofreading tool such as [Grammarly](https://www.grammarly.com/) to help check your work for errors. All written assignments should be prepared on a computer and submitted as a Microsoft Office document (see individual assignment details). Computer labs are available on campus for this purpose if you don’t own a computer. You can also borrow a laptop from the library. To improve readability of papers, standard print styles should be used (e.g. Times, Geneva, New York). Font size must be 11- or 12-point and all work should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins all around (normal margin setting). Do not use bold lettering except as headings. You must use APA format with written assignments. You can find excellent resources for APA formatting and style here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>. Full credit cannot be earned for work that does not meet these standards.

**Audio Recording**

Feel free to record any lectures or presentations in my class.

**Religious Holidays**

If you have a religious holiday for which you need to miss class, just let me know in advance so we can ensure you don’t miss important information.

**Course Evaluation**

I use the feedback provided by my students in course evaluations to improve my teaching. Additionally, course evaluations are a strategy used by the University as one factor in evaluating an instructor’s effectiveness. As a faculty member, I encourage you to complete the course evaluation during the availability period later in the semester so that I can make improvements for my next group of students.

**Classroom Conduct and Civility**

We will discuss ideas and topics that you may not agree with during this course, and it is possible you will present ideas and topics that others will not agree with as well. It is vital that we respect the opinions of others and behave in a civilized manner during discussions. To that end, be prepared to back up any opinion you may have with facts rather than emotions. This is a university where we encourage everyone to openly share their ideas and opinions without penalty or judgment, but learning should always be based on facts and research.

**Excused Absences**

Excused absences include personal illnesses, deaths in the family, religious holidays, and UTSA sponsored activities. For illnesses, you must provide documentation (physician’s statement/note, etc.) within 3 class meetings in order to be excused. Absences in observance of religious holidays are authorized only if you notify your instructor in writing (email or physical note) at least one week in advance. UTSA sponsored events require an original signed letter on UTSA letterhead from the faculty or staff sponsor.

**Make-up Exams**

Make-up exams will not be allowed unless previously cleared with me. If a make-up exam is permitted, you must take the exam prior to or during the next scheduled class meeting.

**Late Work**

Late work is allowed for any assignment that is required to be posted to Blackboard. Points will be deducted at a rate of 5 percentage points per day, including weekends and holidays. If an assignment is not submitted, the grade will always be a 0. In-class assignments cannot be made up.

**Extra Credit**

There are no extra credit opportunities in this course, but there are opportunities to earn multiple badges that could result in more than 100% credit.

**Incompletes**

Course incompletes will be given only in extreme cases and only discussed during the last 4 weeks of the semester. If you feel you have extenuating circumstances that warrant an incomplete for the course, contact me.