

INF 391D.12

Disciplinary Foundations for Information Studies

Unique ID: 27840

Spring 2024. Thursdays, 12:30-3:30PM, UTA 1.204

Instructor: Amelia Acker. I prefer to be addressed as "Dr. Acker" or "Professor Acker" in email correspondence and in seminar discussion.

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Office: UTA 5.434

Office hours: By appointment, please email me three times and days when you are able to meet. I endeavor to offer 5-10 contact hours a week for students.

Email: aacker@ischool.utexas.edu

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas.

Course Description

UNIVERSITY CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

An overview of concepts, results, and perspectives from philosophical, social science, humanistic, design, and technological disciplines that provide important underpinnings for information studies.

PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE COURSE

Graduate Standing.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

INF391D.12 Disciplinary Foundations for Information studies is one of three core courses that doctoral students in the iSchool must complete before advancing to candidacy. As a core course that focuses on the foundations of information studies, I have designed seminar materials to introduce participants to various concepts, significant works, and intellectual threads from various scholarly traditions that have historically studied information phenomena. Participants will be introduced to major concerns and approaches from library science, archival theory, human computer interaction, social informatics, science and technology studies, and cognate disciplines such as linguistics, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and history. All these disciplines have various subjects of interest, but a variety of methods relevant for scholarly investigation of information too. Thus, an aim for this seminar is for participants to investigate and articulate their own scholarly interests within a few (or across many) overlapping traditions of information studies in the academy.

A **primary course objective** of this seminar is to provide an introduction to multiple scholarly approaches that have been taken to studies of information, laying the foundations for you to evaluate epistemological accounts of the information sciences. As it is broad review of many different approaches, I will make efforts to provide you with connections to secondary literature and to provide connections to specialized doctoral coursework available to you in our School and here at the University of Texas at Austin.

A **second course objective** is for participants to become more fully integrated into our field by appreciating the rich intersections of scholarly traditions that shape information studies. This exposure to various rhetorics, publication venues, and many types of discourse are likely to be unfamiliar to participants and beyond their current declared research interests but are intended to help guide the development of their scholarly identity and build a foundation for their long-term research agenda.

A **third course objective** is to invite participants to consider what our field recognizes as convincing evidence, strong argumentation, and scholarly excellence. The course materials are designed to increase your abilities of clarification, critical analysis, and the evaluation of (sometimes conflicting) epistemological accounts of information.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, you will:

1. Develop a sustained, deep reading practice that involves contemplation and study, appropriate to an independent, doctoral-level researcher designing a research agenda.
2. Develop critical academic work skills needed to carry out scholarly writing and professional research, including note taking, reference management, and searching skills relevant to the evaluation and intensive scientific investigation.
3. Increased your understanding and knowledge of the theory, interpretation, explanation, and methods of information studies from various scholarly perspectives.
4. Apply various theories and methods from information traditions drawn from different disciplinary foundations to your own research agenda.

HOW WILL YOU LEARN?

1. From sustained engagement by reading and discussing the assigned readings (as well as secondary readings that you evaluate) that will cover many epistemologies, forms of evidence and methods of analysis.
2. From engaging in seminar discussion, whether contributing comments, active listening, asking questions, or leading focused conversations amongst your peers.
3. By proposing, preparing, and writing a final course offering (an academic book review or a mock qualifying exam) that engages with materials assigned in class and secondary sources you have gathered independently.

STATEMENT OF LEARNING SUCCESS

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and everyone struggles sometimes. You are not, ever, the only one having difficulty. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT and I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

Please make an appointment with me to discuss your concerns as you have them and as matters arise. Given the few assignments in this course, it is always better for us to meet earlier than after a deadline or duty has passed.

TEACHING MODALITY INFORMATION

Barring inclement weather or COVID-19 issues, this course will be held in-person. We will meet each week in seminar, for three hours. This requires in-person attendance. There is no alternative to in-person attendance, but you may ask your colleagues for notes and discussion updates.

COMMUNICATION

This course does not have a canvas website. Instead, students will primarily access course materials through a shared UT BOX folder, the course listserv, email, and Google Docs. You are responsible for ensuring that the primary email address you have recorded with the university is the one you will check for course communications because that is the email address that I will use for communications.

DISABILITY & ACCESS (D&A)

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability & Access (D&A). Please refer to the D&A website for more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Course Requirements

Required Materials

- A list of assigned readings are found in the course Reading Schedule and are required for seminar discussion and final assignment preparation. Unless otherwise noted, all reading excerpts are available through UT Library catalog. If unavailable, scans will be made available for download to participants in advance. You will need to do additional readings to complete your final term assignment and to lead class discussion.
- An analog or digital notebook is required for reading and seminar preparation. Please be sure to bring your notes from readings to class meetings and office hours. Separate notebooks (for readings and for seminar discussion) are encouraged.
- Reference Management Software for gathering citations are required to be successful in this course and to undertake doctoral dissertation research. I recommend Zotero, Endnote, Mendeley or PapersApp

Required Devices

There are no required devices or textbooks for this course, though generally I encourage students to avoid laptops or limiting digital screens for assigned readings if they can printout, purchase affordable used copies, or borrow materials from the UT Library.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Instructor Communication: E-mail is the official mode of communication for the university and the most reliable means of contact for me. It is always helpful if your e-mail includes a targeted subject line that begins with “INF 391D.” Do not use the messaging facilities in Canvas; these messages do not arrive in my e-mail in-box. Please allow a 24-hour window for email responses and plan accordingly. Please limit emails to 5 sentences or less. If your query about a reading or an assignment for the class takes more than 5 sentences to express, please come see me face to face in office hours. If you do not receive a sufficient answer to a question in more than one follow-up email (that is, a total of 2 personal emails from me) about the same question, please come meet with me. These policies are based on my belief in the sanctity and value of high-bandwidth communication (that is, face to face conversations, video conferencing, or voice calls). I prefer meeting in person, but if you prefer call or teleconference, please let me know.

Class attendance: Attendance is not taken (see grading contract for more info). You do not need to inform me of absences, nor do you need to “make up” anything if you are absent. While participation is an important part of your grade, and attendance is important, there are no specific requirements for mandatory attendance. However, please be aware that a substantial in-class assignment is leading one course discussion. If you miss the day you have signed up to lead course discussion, you will unlikely be able to make up the assignment due to scheduling.

Behavior expectations Please come on time to class prepared, bringing soft or hard copies of readings for reference; bring appropriate tools for writing and note taking. Bring personal machines powered up, or plug them in before class begins, silence phones. Phones should not be used for reading or notetaking during seminar. *Drinks are welcome but food is not. Please eat before class or during the break period.* Students are also subject to Section 11-400 of the Institutional Rules in the General Information Catalog.

Names and Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by your chosen name and by the gender pronouns you use. Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s chosen (not legal) name if you have provided one. If you would like to update your chosen

name with the registrar's office, you can do so [here](#), and reference [this guide](#). For additional guidelines prepared by the Gender and Sexuality Center for changing your name on various campus systems, see the Resources page under UT Resources [here](#).

Professional Standards Please be respectful in class discussion and in all modes of communication. Please be aware that student conduct standards extend to mobile communication apps and social media platforms as well.

Assignment Overview

1. Class participation(30%)
2. Three self-evaluations
3. Four précis, shared with colleagues (20%)
4. One class facilitation lead or co-lead (10%)
5. Final term paper, selected option (40%)

ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

1. Class participation. Because most of our learning takes place in seminar where we discuss the assigned readings, all readings are required, and attendance is presumed to be mandatory. If you need to miss a class due to illness or personal reasons, there is no need to notify me (unless you are missing a facilitation day). Absences are only excused for situations outlined by university policy.

Participation is critical to seminar, but it is more than just attendance and speaking about the readings. Indeed, it may involve other forms of active engagement such as listening, reflecting, notetaking, elaborating for colleagues, or facilitating a transition in topic discussion. You should come to class ready to discuss all the assigned readings, as well as your personal perspective on the week's topics and key concepts. You should also bring an awareness to your contributions in class (consider whether you have spoken in the first, second, or third hour of each class and modify your contributions). Consistent participation is something you should strive for, but you should also aim to target areas for your own personal growth in terms of soft communication skills. For some participants, this will mean directly engaging with colleagues in class; while for other participants it may mean developing extemporaneous contributions and following visual cues for speaking up or in some cases, tapering down.

2. Three self-evaluations. Every fifth week of class you will write a brief self-evaluation of your progress and participation in the course. Please describe your duties and commitments that you have devoted to the course and whether you are following your commitments to your grading contract with me (more on grade contract commitments below). Formally, this means that your three self-evaluations, including a final self-evaluation through which you will assign yourself a grade for this course. Barring extreme circumstances (see the Adjustment Caveat below) this final self-evaluation will determine your grade for the semester. Ideally, knowing this process in advance will free you to do more ambitious work from the beginning of the semester and to plan your efforts in and outside our seminar.

The three self-evaluations are due Weeks 5, 10, and 15. Evaluations should be brief (100-300 words) descriptions of evaluating your efforts, and describe any deviations from your original grading

contract commitment from Week 2. Please email me a message or attach a document to a message and send to my email aacker@ischool.utexas.edu before class starts on the day the self-evaluation due. Please use our course number in the beginnings of email subjects (Subject: INF391D self-evaluation) and always put your last name in the file title of documents (e.g., LastName_3rd self-eval.PDF).

3. Four précis. You will turn in four précis to be shared with your colleagues throughout the course. This means that you can choose which four weeks in which you will not turn in a précis for review. A précis cannot be turned in late, if you do not attend class or leave early the précis that you submit will not be counted. Please note that missing even one précis can severely impact your grading contract commitment with me.

I will format a weekly précis document in google docs for you to insert and share your writing before class. Each précis should be approximately 400-500 words. A précis is a concise summary or essay on a specific topic. It may take the form of commentary, a few questions, and analysis. Each offering should focus on 2 or more sections of assigned readings for that week. You may engage with prior assigned readings in the course, if relevant to your summary. I discourage negative critiques and encourage readers to focus on making an argument tied to precise parts of works (using page numbers or brief quotations). Please avoid using a lot of your prose on summation (as we have all read the assigned readings!). Please be prepared to verbally discuss the kernel of your précis and to have it read and discussed by colleagues.

4. One class facilitated (independent or collaborative) discussion. Once during the semester, you will be responsible for leading (or co-leading) our class discussion for 20-30 minutes. Signing up for class facilitations will be offered in week 2 of seminar. When facilitating discussion, please be sure to do all these things:

- If you sign up for a week with a co-facilitator, please meet with your colleague and decide which readings will be divided (if at all) and how you plan to co-facilitate the discussion.
- You should read all the readings—including any optional readings—for your week carefully and well in advance.
- You may also modify our assigned readings for your week by adding one additional article and possibly moving one required reading into the optional category. You should speak with me well in advance about either, as I might see something essential in a piece that is not obvious to you. Any decision to change the reading schedule should be made at least one week prior to your assigned session, so that your colleagues have time to adjust their preparations.
- You should come to your assigned class ready with a few questions or points you would like to discuss. I do not expect you to steer us for the entire discussion period, but certainly for the first 20 minutes or so.

- You may create handouts, slides, or discussion activities but please take care to focus on specific elements of each assigned readings in your offerings. Background and historical context are helpful, however deep engagement with the texts are important for leading discussion.

5. Final term paper. Participants will be given a choice between two options for the final term paper. Participants will be asked to decide about which option they prefer and declare it in week 14 of the semester.

- **Option 1. Book Review:** A 3,000 word book review, not including references, in APA format. The book should be selected from the assigned course reading list. Read the complete monograph and prepare a scholarly review targeted to a journal of your choice (e.g. JASIST, InterActions, Information & Culture, Human-Computer Interaction, etc.). Please be sure to supplement your review of this book with other work by the author and the research which inspires their broader scholarship. The Book Review will be due to Dr. Acker via email by Friday 5pmCST of Week 16. You may not work with colleagues or AI tools in preparing your book review.
- **Option 2. Two mock QP written exam questions:** Questions will be developed based on themes from the course and sent to participants on Friday morning of Week 15, answers are due on Friday 5pmCST of Week 16. These mock questions will closely follow the doctoral program qualifying process, where "the committee chair will send the student the four questions on a [...] morning by 9:00 AM and answers must be submitted to the committee by 5:00 PM that Friday. The student may work anywhere. Each response is ordinarily 1,000 – 3,000 words long. The bibliography is not included in the word count" (iSchool Doctoral 2023 Handbook, p. 8). In the Option exam you will have approximately 7 days to complete 2 questions (instead of 5 days to complete 4 questions in the official Qualifying Process). All course participants who choose option 2 will receive the same exam questions. You may not work with colleagues or AI tools in preparing your answers to the exam questions.

Contract Grading and Course Commitments

Adapted from Megan Finn, Miriam Posner [here](#) and Ryan Cordell [here](#).

In this class, participants decide in advance what grade you will receive. You are all learning to be scholars and teachers as well -- here is an opportunity for you to experience contract grading if you have not already. Contract grading has been proven effective in higher education contexts, particularly with doctoral students. It allows participants to make commitments and plans based on their own agency. It does not mean that students grade themselves, instead, it is considered a contract commitment that binds students and the instructor in a series of commitments.

MY COMMITMENTS TO COURSE PARTICIPANTS

In order to foster your progress this semester, I commit myself to:

1. Hold myself to the highest standards. I will work to the best of my abilities to assist you in engaging with the course material.
2. Providing timely commentary on your assignments aimed at cultivating your analytical abilities and scholarly voice.
3. Making myself available for consultation and practical help during office hours and class time.
4. Working with you to understand your goals and encouraging you to take intellectual risks in assignments, even if the final product does not turn out as expected.
5. Respecting your identity, perspectives, and intellectual commitments in class discussions and assignments. I may push you to consider other perspectives, but I will not dismiss your thoughts or take them lightly. If you feel I am doing either of those things, I will listen and adjust my responses as necessary.

YOUR COMMITMENTS TO YOURSELF, THE INSTRUCTOR, AND OTHER COURSE PARTICIPANTS

This system will only work, however, if you also commit to:

1. Holding yourself to the highest standards. You should work to the best of your abilities throughout the semester in your reading, seminar discussion, and assignments.
2. Taking intellectual risks when possible, pushing yourself to think, write, and create in new modes and grow as a scholar and teacher. This may prompt anxiety, which you can work through by doing and with support from me and your colleagues.
3. Experimenting with new theories and approaches to research with enthusiasm and an open mind.
4. Assisting your colleagues when they are overwhelmed or feeling challenged.
5. Clearly articulating your goals and methods when you take intellectual risks in assignments so that I can understand what you are seeking to do, even if the final product does not turn out as expected.
6. Respecting your colleagues' identity, perspectives, and intellectual commitments in class discussions and assignments. You may push them to consider other perspectives, but you should not dismiss their thoughts or take them lightly. If someone feels you are doing either of those things, you should listen and adjust your responses as necessary.
7. Meeting with me, at least once during the semester to discuss your work and ensure you are meeting expectations (my own and yours) for work in this course.

ADJUSTMENT CAVEAT

I reserve the right to adjust grades as appropriate if a student takes undue advantage of the contract grading paradigm. However, I do not anticipate needing to exercise this right.

4.0 Grade

- Miss a maximum of one class.
- Completing all four précis for class discussion.
- Participate with good faith and generosity in all course discussions and assignments.
- Consistently demonstrate deep and thoughtful engagement with the readings and best effort at mastery of the subjects in weekly writing activities, including précis, peer reviewing, and self-evaluations.
- Lead or co-lead one weekly discussion, helping your colleagues engage with the readings of the week.
- Complete the grading contract and three self-evaluation with sincere self-reflection and thorough familiarity with course readings and discussions.
- Submit a final term paper option that adheres to all requirements and demonstrates familiarity with class discussions of assigned readings and shows that you've made new and original connections.
- Meet with me during office hours to discuss your performance in the class, areas of improvement, and lingering questions.

3.5 Grade

- Miss a maximum of two classes
- Miss a maximum of one précis, turning in a total of three précis for class discussion.
- Participate with good faith and generosity in all course discussions and assignments.
- Consistently demonstrates deep and thoughtful engagement with the readings and best effort at mastery of the subjects in weekly writing activities, including précis, peer reviewing, and self-evaluations.
- Lead or co-lead at least one weekly discussion.
- Complete the grading contract and three self-evaluation with sincere self-reflection and thorough familiarity with course readings and discussions.
- Submit a final paper that adheres to all requirements and that demonstrates familiarity with class discussions and readings.

3.0 Grade

- Miss a maximum of three classes
- Miss a maximum of two précis, turning in a total of two précis for class discussion.
- Participate with good faith and generosity in all course discussions and assignments.
- Mostly demonstrates deep and thoughtful engagement with the readings and best effort at mastery of the subjects in weekly writing activities, including précis, peer reviewing, and self-evaluations.
- Lead or co-lead one weekly discussion.
- Complete the grading contract and three self-evaluation with sincere self-reflection and thorough familiarity with course readings and discussions.
- Submit a final term paper that adheres to all requirements and demonstrates some familiarity with class discussions and readings.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What if I sign up for a 4.0 but mess up on one thing like missing 2 précis instead of 1?

I will drop your grade by .2. Same thing if you sign up for a 3.5 or a 3.0. If you miss more than 1 item on the contract, then you should revise your contract at the next self-evaluation. Please remember that this is a core course, and you must receive a B (3.0) or higher for your degree.

What if I change my mind about what grade I want?

Great! Email me to meet for a discussion and we'll renegotiate your contract.

What if I think I've fulfilled the requirements of an assignment, but you think I haven't?

If I decide you haven't fulfilled the requirements of a written précis assignment, you get a week to revise and resubmit.

Course Outline

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be shared in class on the first day and via this Syllabus. Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion if circumstances require. I will announce any such changes in class and will also communicate them via email or listserv announcement. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced, and I will do my best to ensure that you are notified of changes with as much advance notice as possible.

Due to the length and policies of the syllabus, the complete Reading Schedule v.1 will be shared with course participants on the first day as a separate handout. All readings are available through the UT Library or will be made available as scans to participants.

SPRING 2024 COURSE AT A GLANCE

Week, Date	Topic	Note or Major Deadline
Week 1, January 18	Introductions	
Week 2, January 25	Disciplines, Professions, Faultlines	Grade commitment due
Week 3, February 1	Beginnings, Pre-Information	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 4, February 8	Information and Documentation	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 5, February 15	Representation and Classification	Self-evaluation due
Week 6, February 22	Knowledge Work and Culture	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 7, February 29	Internet History, Virtual Communities	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 8, March 7	Users, Interfaces, the Web	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 9, March 14	Spring break	No Class*
Week 10, March 21	Race, Technology, Cybercultures	Self-evaluation due
Week 11, March 28	History and Myths of Computing	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 12, April 4	Futures, Promises, Positionality	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 13, April 11	Networks, Maintenance, Repair	<i>Précis week</i>
Week 14, April 18	Access	Declare final option plans
Week 15, April 25	Conclusions	Final-evaluation due
Week 16, May 2	Exam Week	Final term papers due

Notes on Deadlines:

Unless otherwise noted, please email me a message, or attach a document to a message and send to my email aacker@ischool.utexas.edu before class starts on the day something is due. Please use our course number in the beginnings of email subjects (Subject: INF391D self-evaluation) and always put your last name in the file title of documents (e.g., LastName_3rd self-eval.PDF).

Week 2: Participants need to email their grade commitment to instructor.

Week 5: First participant self-evaluation due.

Week 9: Spring break, no class meeting.

Week 10: Second participant self-evaluation due.

Week 15: Final participant self-evaluation due.

Week 14: Participants need to declare final term paper options they prefer.

Week 15: Option 2 exam questions released to students on April 26, 9:00amCST.

Week 16: Final term paper due to instructor on May 2, 11:59pmCST.

Course Policies and Disclosures

HONOR CODE

The University of Texas at Austin strives to create a dynamic and engaging community of teaching and learning where students feel intellectually challenged; build knowledge and skills; and develop critical thinking, creativity, and intellectual curiosity. As a part of this community, it is important to engage in assignments, exams, and other work for your classes with openness, integrity, and a willingness to make mistakes and learn from them. The UT Austin honor code champions these principles:

I pledge, as a member of the University of Texas community, to do my work honestly, respectfully, and through the intentional pursuit of learning and scholarship.

The honor code affirmation includes three additional principles that elaborate on the core theme:

- I pledge to be honest about what I create and to acknowledge what I use that belongs to others.
- I pledge to value the process of learning in addition to the outcome, while celebrating and learning from mistakes.
- This code encompasses all of the academic and scholarly endeavors of the university community.

The honor code is more than a set of rules, it reflects the values that are foundational to your academic community. By affirming and embracing the honor code, you are both upholding the integrity of your work and contributing to a campus culture of trust and respect.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EXPECTATIONS

Students who violate University rules on academic misconduct are subject to the student conduct process. A student found responsible for academic misconduct may be assigned both a status sanction and a grade impact for the course. The grade impact could range from a zero on the assignment in question up to a failing grade in the course. A status sanction can range from a written warning, probation, deferred suspension and/or dismissal from the University. To learn more about academic integrity standards, tips for avoiding a potential academic misconduct violation, and the overall conduct process, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

POLICY CLASS RECORDINGS

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor and every class session participants, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use. Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. If recordings are approved in advance they should not be

shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

SHARING OF COURSE MATERIALS IS PROHIBITED

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, my written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials may facilitate cheating. The University is aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#) in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in initiation of the student conduct process and include charge(s) for academic misconduct, potentially resulting in sanctions, including a grade impact.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The creation of artificial intelligence tools for widespread use is an exciting innovation. These tools have both appropriate and inappropriate uses in classwork. The use of artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT) in this class shall be permitted on a limited basis. You will be informed as to the assignments for which AI may be utilized. You are also welcome to seek my prior approval to use AI writing tools on any assignment. In either instance, AI writing tools should be used with caution and proper citation, as the use of AI should be properly attributed. Using AI writing tools without my permission or authorization, or failing to properly cite AI even where permitted, shall constitute a violation of UT Austin's Institutional Rules on academic integrity. If you are considering the use of AI writing tools but are unsure if you are allowed or the extent to which they may be utilized appropriately, please ask.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

By [UT Austin policy](#), you must notify me of your pending absence for a religious holy day as far in advance as possible of the date of observance. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Important Safety Information

CARRYING OF HANDGUNS ON CAMPUS

Students in this class should be aware of the following university policies related to Texas' Open Carry Law:

- Students in this class who hold a license to carry are asked to [review the university policy regarding campus carry](#).

- Individuals who hold a license to carry are eligible to carry a concealed handgun on campus, including in most outdoor areas, buildings and spaces that are accessible to the public, and in classrooms.
- It is the responsibility of concealed-carry license holders to carry their handguns on or about their person at all times while on campus. Open carry is NOT permitted, meaning that a license holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible handgun on campus premises or on any university driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area.
- Per my right, I prohibit carrying of handguns in my personal office. Note that this information will also be conveyed to all students verbally during the first week of class. This written notice is intended to reinforce the verbal notification and is not a “legally effective” means of notification in its own right.

TITLE IX DISCLOSURE

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Education Code, Section 51.252 (formerly known as Senate Bill 212) requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report to the [Title IX Office](#) any information regarding incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive information about incidents of this type (including, but not limited to, written forms, applications, one-on-one conversations, class assignments, class discussions, or third-party reports) must report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, please remember that I will be required to report this information.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Education Code, Section 51.252, they are [mandatory reporters](#) under federal Title IX regulations and are required to report [a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct](#), including the types of misconduct covered under Texas Education Code, Section 51.252. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex – including pregnancy and parental status – in educational programs and activities. The Title IX Office has developed supportive ways and compiled campus resources to support all impacted by a Title IX matter.

If you would like to speak with a case manager, who can provide support, resources, or academic accommodations, in the Title IX Office, please email: supportandresources@austin.utexas.edu. Case managers can also provide support, resources, and accommodations for pregnant, nursing, and parenting students.

For more information about reporting options and resources, please visit: <https://titleix.utexas.edu>, contact the Title IX Office via email at: titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

CAMPUS SAFETY

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Emergency Management](#), 512-232-2114:

- Students should sign up for Campus Emergency Text Alerts at the page linked above.
- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- For more information, please visit the [Office of Emergency Management](#).

University Resources

For a list of university resources that may be helpful to you as you engage with and navigate your courses and the university, see the [University Resources Students Canvas page](#).