University 1301: Seminar in Critical Inquiry (22823)  
MWF 930-1020 (BELL 130A)

**Instructional Team**

Instructor: Ms. Sycora A. Wilson-James (sajames@utep.edu)
Office Location: Undergraduate Learning Center, Rm. 132  
Phone Number: (915) 747-6088  
In-Office Hours: M-F 10:30AM-12:30PM; Mobile office hours TBD

Peer Leader: Misuky Martinez (memartinez49@miners.utep.edu)  
Office Location: Undergraduate Learning Center, Rm. ________________  
Phone Number: ________________  
Office Hours: ________________

Librarian: Mr. Sebastian Diaz (sdiaz@utep.edu)  
Office Location: Library 322  
Phone Number: (915) 747-6721

Academic Advisor: Mr. Sergio Contreras (scontreras@utep.edu)  
Office Location: Academic Advising Center  
Phone Number: (915) 747-5391

**Entering Student Program Goals**

✓ Students will begin to understand their roles, opportunities, and responsibilities that impact their success within the contest of the university.
✓ Students will learn about and practice essential academic skills in order to strengthen performance in the university setting.
✓ Students will begin to build a network of faculty, staff, and peers in order to create a supportive and positive learning experience/environment.
✓ Students will begin to access and better understand their own interests, abilities, and values in order to more efficiently pursue their academic, career, and life goals.
✓ Students will become involved in the UTEP activities and utilize campus resources.

**Course Theme & Description**

*Contemporary Topics in Higher Education*

This course will explore the changes and challenges in Higher Education. Students will think critically about how Higher Education is influenced by social, political, environmental, financial, and scientific, etc., arenas; and explore the multiple ways technology transforms education. Students are also encouraged to be active leaders and agents of change in their communities. This course is taught in lecture and dialogue format.

**Course Objectives**

1) Students will gain knowledge about contemporary topics in higher education.
2) Students will develop an understanding of UTEP traditions and campus resources.
3) Students will learn the value of a quality education.
4) Students will develop skill in critical thinking, time management, oral & written communication and reading.
5) Students will begin to have a positive attitude about the university experience.

**Required Textbook & Materials**

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct
Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts (Handbook of Operating Procedure Section 1.2.2.1 Scholastic Dishonesty).

Any student who, acting singly or in concert with others, obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any teaching, educational, research, administrative, disciplinary, public service, or other activity or public performance authorized to be held or conducted on campus or on property or in a building or facility owned or controlled by the U.T. System or University is subject to discipline. Obstruction or disruption includes but is not limited to any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, University computers, computer programs, computer records or computer networks accessible through the University’s computer resources (Handbook of Operating Procedure Section 1.2.2.5 Disruptions).

You may not submit work for this class that you have done for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing you will be subject to disciplinary action. All suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty and/or disruptive behavior are referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. All standards of conduct policies are set out in the Handbook of Operating Procedure http://admin.utep.edu/hoop.

Accommodations
If you have or suspect a disability and need an accommodation, you should contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 747-5148 or go to Room 106 Union East. For more information on services provided by CASS visit http://sa.utep.edu/cass.

Attendance
Satisfactory attendance is important for your academic success and a course requirement. You are expected to attend class on time and to be prepared. Unsatisfactory attendance consists of absences, tardiness, leaving the classroom early, or coming to class unprepared to participate. Attendance is taken daily. Excessive absences and tardiness will affect your overall grade. Upon obtaining three absences, a warning will be verbally expressed to you. At the fourth absence you may be dropped from the course. If you will be absent due to officially recognized University activities, an OFFICIAL “Explained Absence” memorandum from a UTEP official must be provided to the instructor prior to the first absence. For students observing religious holy days, notification for all missed days must be given to the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. Students called to and participating in active military service shall provide notification of absences. These explained absences will not count against you however, as stated before excessive absences will affect your overall grade.

Blackboard
Blackboard Learn is the online course management system we will use throughout the semester. In Blackboard you can view the syllabus, course calendar, and other supplemental material related to the course. You can also send e-mails to your classmates or instructional team. You must check Blackboard daily for course announcements, assignments and updates. Blackboard is accessible from your page on My.Utep.edu, using your UTEP email user id and your Goldmine password. Call the Help Desk if you need help with access.

Cellular and Electronic Devices
Cellular and music devices MUST be set to silent mode or turned off, removed from your person and put away PRIOR to the start of class. The use of headphones or earbuds is not acceptable during class time. The use of laptops and tablets to take class notes is acceptable during class time. As a courtesy to your instructors and
classmates, do not answer your phone, check email and/or social media sites, take pictures of presentations, send/reply to text messages or IM in class. The course instructor will determine any exceptions to this course policy.

**Deadline Policy**
All online assignments are due no later than 11:00PM on the deadline date. See course calendar for dates.

**Final Exam Policy**
Exemption from final examination may not be given. Final examinations are scheduled to be two hours, forty-five minutes in length and take place during the final examination period. It is the policy of the university not to administer a second final examination in the course. It is also university policy that students shall not have more than two final examinations in a single day. In the unlikely event that the examination schedule results in a student having three final examinations on a single day, the faculty member upon the request of the student shall reschedule the second of that student’s three examinations. See course calendar for final exam date.

**Grade dispute**
If you feel the need to dispute a grade on an assignment, presentation or examination, you must meet with the course instructor during posted office hours. Grades will not be disputed or discussed during class hours.

**Peer Leader, Librarian & Academic Advisor**
This course is team-taught and the peer leader, librarian and advisor are here to assist in the learning process. Each student must meet with peer leader outside of class for a grade. Students should also meet with the peer leader for questions on readings and clarification of class notes. Seek assistance from the course librarian for resources and internet research tips regarding assignments. Students are expected to meet with an academic advisor at least once during the semester outside of normal class meetings.

**Withdrawal**
The last day to drop a course with a grade of “W” is Friday, April 1st. A “W” is not calculated into your grade point average, but it does count as a course attempt. After, April 1st a grade of “F” will be given for faculty or student initiated course drops.

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**COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

**Assignments**
Each student is expected to complete all in-class and out-of-class assignments given by the instructional team. These homework assignments are designed to reinforce ideas and tips presented in class and the Borders book. The assignments relate to specific topics and class lectures, i.e. note taking, goal setting, critical writing, etc. Assignments must be typed. Hand written or late assignments may or may not be accepted by instructional team. If accepted, 30% point reduction will occur for each hand written and/or late assignment. Late work will not be accepted after 4 calendar days past the due date. All online assignments must be turned in no later than 11:00PM on the due dates.

**Class & Reading Notes**
You must take notes during each class session. Class notes do not have to be submitted to Blackboard. You are expected to complete all assigned readings before the beginning of each class session. Reading notes must be: typed in a Microsoft Word document with size 12pt font and 1” margin all around, a full 1-3 page in length, single-spaced, organized in bullet, outline or paragraph form, and highlight the most important facts from the reading. All reading notes are due via Blackboard no later than 11:00PM on the due dates (see course calendar for dates). You are expected to study and read daily. A lot of detailed information is presented and you are expected to know it. Completing all readings, attending class, taking notes every day and studying will greatly enhance your understanding of the material presented and meet course objectives.
**Event Reflections**
Part of your success in this course is attendance at on-campus UTEP sponsored events and activities. Events can be, but not limited to: film at the Union Cinema, athletic event, Centennial lecture, art exhibit, music recital, theatrical production, dance performance, study skills workshop, etc. You are required to attend **two** UTEP events. Each event reflection must be: typed in a Microsoft Word document with size 12pt font and 1” margin all around, a full 2-page in length, double-spaced, in essay format. A reflection describes the event attended in detail and adds your personal thoughts on the meaning of the event in your life as a college student. See course calendar for date.

**Exam**
There are four exams and a final exam for this class. You are expected to study and read daily. The exams will cover material presented in class and all readings up to the lesson before the exam. Exams can only be made up with advanced notice. If you are absent due to a University related function or religious holy day (with prior notice), arrangements should be made with the instructor for exam make up. The final for the course will be comprehensive and administered via Blackboard. Students who do not take the final exam will receive a failing grade for the course. See course calendar for exam dates.

**Extra Credit**
Extra credit will only be given to students who fully participate in all scheduled study sessions for exams 1, 2, 3 and 4. Extra credit will only be counted toward the final exam; otherwise extra credit is not an option.

**Learning Plan/Career Reflection**
You will complete an online worksheet that will help you to identify goals you want to accomplish this semester and for the next 4 years. You will identify the resources you will use to meet each goal and keep track of your goals throughout the semester. You will type a 1-page essay describing your career goals as they relate to the goals you set out to accomplish over the next 4 years. See course calendar for due dates.

**One-on-One Meetings**
Instructor and Peer Leader will meet with each student individually the 3rd through 6th weeks of the semester. During the meetings we will talk about your adjustment to college life, your thoughts on the course and clarification of assignments.

**Online Discussions**
You will write at least 200 words in your discussion posting in response to guided questions. You will also reply (at least 50 words each response) to the entry of one of your fellow classmates per topic. You are expected to read articles related to the topic to help formulate your individual response to the guided question. We are interested in your thoughts and ideas as they relate to the topic and further the conversation, not just your opinion!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postings due on Friday 11:00p.m.</th>
<th>Responses due on Sunday 11:00p.m.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>March 20</td>
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<td>March 25</td>
<td>March 27</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>April 3</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>April 10</td>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td>April 17</td>
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**Oral Presentations**
You are expected to do research on topics either assigned to you or of your own choosing. Students will give one (1) group oral presentation on Leaders in Education. You will research the topic and give a 15-25 minute group
presentation. A minimum of five sources per group member should be used for the Leaders in Education presentation.

**Participation**
To be successful in this course, it is imperative that you participate in all in-class and online discussions, study daily, contribute meaningfully in group activities, and complete assignments on time. You MUST attend class, listen and participate during class discussions, and take useful notes. In class you are expected to be attentive, involved, and focused on the subject at hand. **Participation points are given daily.**

**Surveys**
Students must complete two (2) surveys for this course for a grade: the UNIV 1301 End-of-Semester Feedback survey and the Faculty Course Evaluation.

**Course Requirements**

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership Presentation</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning/Career plan</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online discussions</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event reflections</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Notes</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>Exams</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>End-of-Semester Surveys</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>One-on-One meetings</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>300</td>
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**Grading Scale**

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<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1250 - 1125</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1124 - 1000</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>999 - 875</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>874 - 750</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>749 - below</td>
<td>F</td>
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“And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it”. ~~Paulo Coelho~