INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Shirley M. Eoff
OFFICE: Library A304
OFFICE PHONE: 942-2722
OFFICE HOURS: 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. daily or by appointment
EMAIL: Shirley.Eoff@angelo.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW: Honors 3381 is designed to stimulate an exchange of ideas among advanced Honors students from various disciplines. The course seeks to engage students in a critical examination of contemporary issues that are significant, controversial, and multidisciplinary in nature. Students will collectively and independently investigate select issues in health care, technology, politics and geopolitics, and economic and cultural disparities with attention to the intertwined political, economic, scientific, and social/cultural implications of the topic under consideration.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- demonstrate a general understanding of the complex interplay of historical, political, social/cultural, scientific, and economic aspects of contemporary controversies
- gather, analyze, and critically evaluate information in the student’s chosen discipline that relates to or impacts the selected topics
- work collaboratively with individuals from various disciplines
- independently research and demonstrate a proficient understanding of the complexity of a multi-dimensional issue related to the student’s major (chosen in consultation with the instructor)
- present information effectively in both written and oral formats

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT: Student learning outcomes will be assessed through assignments outlined below, including a reflective reading journal, contributions to classroom discussion, independent and group research projects, a policy statement, and oral presentations on selected assignment.

REQUIRED READING: There is no required text for the course, though collective readings may be assigned from time to time to stimulate discussion and provide a basis for further study and reflection. For the most part, the individual student will find and read 15 to 20 pages from a combination of scholarly articles and substantive contemporary analyses of some relevant element of the assigned topic for each week. The reading should relate to the student’s academic discipline when possible to allow for a sharing of ideas and approaches from a variety of perspectives.

COURSE PROCEDURE: This seminar is designed to encourage an interchange of ideas about significant issues and concerns facing our nation today. The instructor’s role is to facilitate discussion and to provide responses to students’ written and oral presentations. Students will be expected to prepare thoroughly, to engage fully in all class activities, and to bring insights from their own academic disciplines into the topic under discussion. Students are expected to approach the discussions with an open mind and a willingness to consider various viewpoints reflective of the diverse population of the American nation and the complexity of a globalized world.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Each student will be responsible for the following:

1. **Individual Written Assignments:** Each student will complete
   - a reading and reflection journal with **two entries** per week for each topic. Reflections will be collected and assessed by the instructor approximately every 4 weeks. The first journal entry each week should be over the student’s individual readings and **must be completed and brought to class each Tuesday**; the second entry should be completed by Friday of each week and reflect on the group and class discussion for that topic.
   - an independent **8-10 page research paper** on a topic approved by the instructor
   - a **750-word policy proposal** on a relevant issue derived from the independent research paper

Note: Late work will be penalized in fairness to those students who completed the work as assigned. Late journal entries will receive a maximum of 60 points. (80%).

2. **Oral Presentations:** Each student will prepare two independent oral presentations – one an 8 – 10 minute report on the individual research paper with PowerPoint or other visual representations and the second a 3 – 5 minute presentation of the final policy proposal.

3. **Group Research Project:** Students will be assigned in groups of four or five to thoroughly research an issue and present it to the class in a format approved by the instructor. Student peer evaluations will form a portion of each group member’s grade.

4. **Daily Preparation and Performance:** Each student will be expected to openly and respectfully engage in class discussion and give attention to student presentations. Students are expected to prepare for each week’s discussion by finding and analyzing articles relevant to the topic as described above. The preparation and performance grade will be determined by
   - **attendance** (you cannot perform if you are not in attendance) – 3 pts. per class = **90 possible pts.**; tardy arrivals receive 2 pts. if within the first 15 minutes, and 0 to 1 pts. for later arrivals. **You cannot submit reflections on weekly discussions if you were not present.** For excused absences, an alternate reflection topic may be assigned.
   - analysis and in-class discussion of weekly readings and topics (instructor’s assessment of the overall engagement and the quantity, quality and relevance of contributions to class discussion and ability to link the work to issues in their own disciplines) – up to **110 pts.**
   - **There are no make-ups for missed assignments or classes except in cases of previously authorized university-sponsored travel or proof of some serious extenuating illness or family issue. It is the student’s responsibility to provide timely notification and appropriate documentation and the professor’s prerogative to assign suitable alternative assignments or accept late work.**

EVALUATION: Grades will be computed on the following scale.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily preparation and performance</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading/reflection journals (4@75 pts.)</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Research Paper</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Research Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Proposal &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
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**TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS** 1000 pts.
Grading Scale:

- A = 900 or more pts.
- B = 800 to 899 pts.
- C = 700 to 799 pts.
- D = 600 to 699 pts.
- F = 599 or fewer pts.

A grade of 70% (700 pts.) or above is required to earn Honors credit.

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance (in body and mind) is critical as discussion cannot be “made up.” Absences do not excuse the student from any assignments due for that class period, and work sent with other individuals will not be accepted, though work may be submitted as late work with the penalties described above or within the individual assignments. Absences do not excuse the student from being prepared for the subsequent class period. It is the student’s responsibility to consult with a classmate or the instructor to find out about any missed work or changes to the syllabus.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

**Academic Honesty**

“Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which may be found online at [http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/Honor_Code.pdf](http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/Honor_Code.pdf).”

**Disabilities Accommodation**

“Students with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations are encouraged to immediately contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, to request such accommodations. Accommodations may not be provided without formal notification and direction from the Office of Student Life.”

**Religious Holy Days**

“A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. “Religious holy day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code 11.20. A student absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to complete work scheduled for that day within a reasonable amount of time as set out by the instructor.”

**ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

Cheating on exams, plagiarism, or attempts to pass off the work of others as your own will result in a “0” on the assignment and possible referral for disciplinary actions; repeated violations will result in an “F” in the course, removal from the Honors Program, and referral for disciplinary actions.

Please exercise common courtesy and appropriate classroom etiquette. Disagreements and passionate defenses of one’s position are expected but must be conducted with civility and respect. **Turn off all cell phones, pagers and other electronic communication devices prior to entering the classroom.** Personal computers are not allowed as information should have been collected and processed prior to class and students need to be fully engaged in the discussion.

**DISCLAIMER:** As the semester progresses, the instructor reserves the right to make alterations, with proper and timely notification, as needed dependent upon the class progress or the need to accommodate guest speakers or Honors engagements.
**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

*Journal entries on reading choices for each class should be completed before the Tuesday class period; weekly reflections should be completed immediately following the Thursday discussion to ensure that reflections are fresh and accurate.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1: Jan. 16</th>
<th>Course Overview /discussion</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 18</td>
<td>Selection of topics for each week</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2: Jan. 23</th>
<th>Environmental/Resource Issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 25</td>
<td>Discussion of Environmental Issues</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 3: Jan. 30</th>
<th>U.S. Health Care: Right or Privilege?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 1</td>
<td>Discussion of Healthcare Access and Rights in the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4: Feb. 6</th>
<th>Health Care Issues: Biological and Technological Advancements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 8</td>
<td>Discussion of Biological and Technological Advancements in Health Care and their human, political, social, and ethical implications</td>
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Reading/reflection journal entries for Wks. 2-4 due in class Feb. 13

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<tr>
<th>Week 5: Feb. 13</th>
<th>Contemporary Racial and Ethnic Identity Issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 15</td>
<td>Discussion of Racial and Ethnic Identity Issues and their Implications</td>
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*Preliminary statement of Independent Research Topic due/begin research on individual topics

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<tr>
<th>Week 6: Feb. 20</th>
<th>Immigration and Refugee Issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 22</td>
<td>Discussion of Immigration and Refugee Issues</td>
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ATTEND FOREIGN AFFAIRS SPEAKERS PROGRAM

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<tr>
<th>Week 7: Feb. 27</th>
<th>Contemporary Cultural Divisions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 1</td>
<td>Discussion of Cultural Divisions and their implications</td>
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Week 8: Mar. 6  Technology Issues
[specifically, advances in social media and information technology]

Mar. 8  Discussion on costs, benefits, impacts, concerns of technical advances
Reading/reflection journal entries on issues 4 - 7 due by Friday at 5:00

Week 9: March 12-16  SPRING BREAK
Independent Research Presentations begin March 27

Week 10: Mar. 20  Summative Discussion

Mar. 22  Assignment of Groups/Initial Discussion
**Groups begin meeting outside of class time to plan research strategies and compile information as individual research presentations are underway

Week 11: Mar. 27  Independent Research Presentations
[Preliminary group topics/plans due]
Madison Burtch
Rachael Lindberg
Natalie Quesnel
C.J. Brewer
Aaron Smith

Mar. 29  Independent Research Presentations
Quint Stone
Connor Flanigan
Steven Bonner
Austin Maddox
Brenna Kleiber

Week: 12: Apr. 3  Independent Research Presentations
Final Research Paper Due for March 27 presenters
Talon Shoemake
Jamie Couch
Aaron Teinert
Jonah Bethune
Hailey Smith

Apr. 5  Independent Research Presentations
Final Research Paper Due for March 29 presenters
[Begin working on Policy Proposals while working on group projects]
Marisa Negley
Sarah Champagne
Luke Jordan
Cooper Jones

Week 13: Apr. 10  Final presentations (if needed)
**Final Research Papers Due for April 3 & April 5 presenters**
In-class Group Project Work

**Apr. 12**
In-class Group Project Work

**Reflection journal entries over individual presentations due in class**

**Week 14: Apr. 17**
In-class Group Project Work

**Apr. 19**
GROUPS I & II PRESENTATIONS – Topics TBD

**Week 15: Apr. 24**
GROUPs III & IV PRESENTATIONS – Topics TBD

**Apr. 26**
GROUP IV PRESENTATIONS
Policy Proposal Presentations
  Madison Burtch
  Rachael Lindberg
  Natalie Quesnel
  C.J. Brewer
  Aaron Smith

**Week 16: May 1**
Policy Proposal Presentations as Scheduled

**Final Journal Entries on group presentations due**
  Quint Stone
  Connor Flanigan
  Steven Bonner
  Austin Maddox
  Brenna Kleiber
  Talon Shoemake
  Jamie Couch

**May 3**
Policy Proposal Presentations as Scheduled
  Aaron Teinert
  Jonah Bethune
  Hailey Smith
  Marisa Negley
  Sarah Champagne
  Luke Jordan
  Cooper Jones

**Week 17: May 10**
FINAL EXAM PERIOD: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Policy Proposals Due
Final Policy Presentations