

Zombies and Brains (GS 1181-F41)

Fall 2021 MCS 214

MW 12-12:50 pm



*Archer College of Health and
Human Services*

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Office Hours: M & W: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

T & R: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

F: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (Virtual);

Or by appointment.

Course Description

Zombies are everywhere! They have invaded movies, television, video games, and print media and it appears only a shot to the head will stop them. We seem to love these shambling, rotting, brain eating creatures. This course will explore basic neuroscience and neuroanatomy through the lighthearted (or rotting hearted) lens of Zombies. We will watch and read zombie related media to discuss the behavioral aspects of what constitutes a zombie and relate those behaviors to actual neuroscience. The overarching goal of this course will be to focus on skills you need as a beginning college student (written communication, oral communication, and information literacy) within the context of zombies and neuroscience. The skills you develop in this course are the skills you will need in every college course.

Prerequisites and skills required:

1. The ability to email and use web based search engines.

2. Blackboard Course Management System

(<https://blackboard.angelo.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>). This class will use Blackboard in conjunction with face-to-face class time. Therefore, you must have access to Blackboard on a daily basis. Information and updates will be posted to Blackboard. You should set your notifications in Blackboard to make sure that you

receive important updates. It is recommended that you run Blackboard using an internet browser other than internet explorer.

3. ASU e-mail address. You are responsible for checking your ASU e-mail address on a daily basis. Notifications about the course will be sent via blackboard to your ASU e-mail address. No other e-mail address is acceptable for use in this course.

Course Objectives:

- 1) Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing
- 2) Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems (University Resources)
- 3) Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view

Core Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to

- 1) Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written communication
- 2) Locate campus resources to solve problems/answer questions
- 3) Gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to the course topic and neuroscience

Classroom Policies/Expectations

COVID-19 information

COVID-19 continues to significantly impact every sector of our lives. Angelo State University no longer mandates the wearing of masks but does require completion of the wellness check prior to coming to campus or leaving their residence hall. Current research on the COVID-19 virus indicates there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. I encourage you to safeguard your health and of those around you by wearing a mask in the classroom where social distancing is not always possible. If you fail the daily wellness check, please don't come to class but let me know as soon as you can.

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in these documents:

- [Angelo State University Student Handbook](#)ⁱ
- [Angelo State University Catalog](#)ⁱⁱ

Required Materials

Email and internet: You have access to both as ASU students. Please activate your email account if you have not already done so.

Blackboard: This course will require that the student access Blackboard to check for updates, feedback and assignments.

Course Policies and Procedures

It is expected that each student will have completed any assigned media assignment (i.e. reading assignment, movie or video assignment) prior to the day of discussion.

Policies/Expectations

1. Students are expected to take responsibility for their success in class. You are encouraged to be *active participants* in the education process by asking questions and being alert in class.
2. Distracting or disrespectful students will be asked to leave the class (this includes use of cell phones and other electronic devices).
3. If you have any concerns related to this class, you are encouraged to speak with your instructor *in a timely manner*. **As a general rule, you should raise any issues within one week of receiving a grade or completing a given project.**
4. Students will be expected to access the Blackboard online classroom on a regular basis for announcements, course materials, assignments, and grades. See TWU Help desk or course instructor for assistance.
5. The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism prevention software.

Communication

1. Email is the best way to contact your instructor.
2. All emails should include "GS 1181" in the subject line.
3. All emails should include your first and last name.
4. Emails will typically be answered within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays), if an email is not answered within 24 hours please verify the email address and speak with your instructor during office hours or the next class period.

Method of Assessing Learning Outcomes

Written assignments:

Article summaries: Students will produce two APA style summaries. Summary one will cover a peer reviewed neuroscientific/biopsychology paper of the students choosing (with instructor approval). Summary two will cover a popular article, movie, video or other media. The summaries (250 to 500 words) will describe the main points of the paper, article, or movie. The peer reviewed paper must relate the information to “zombie” behavior as discussed in class. Summary two will include a section that speculates on the part(s) of the brain (as discussed in class) that may be involved in producing the observed behavior. Each summary will be worth 50 points for a total of 100 points.

Participation in a University or College Wide Even (Virtual): Students will write a brief summary of the attended event and what the student thought of the experience. Attendance of one approved event is mandatory and is worth 50 points.

Information Literacy Videos and Quizzes: There are a total of 12 videos and 12 short quizzes you need to take. These videos will inform you about a number of research-related topics, such as how to find sources and how to tell if a source is likely credible. The information contained in these are crucial for academic success and are a core component of this course. I would recommend doing this assignment on an ASU computer, not on your laptop, since ASU Wi-fi is sometimes sketchy and you need to watch the videos to complete this assignment.

The important thing is that you are familiar with the content of the videos, as that is what will actually be useful when you begin your research.

Quizzes must be completed by 12 pm (noon) on the day they are due. You can reference the videos as you take the quizzes if you wish, you are able to take the quizzes as many times as you would like, and your highest score (as of the due date/time) will be the score taken. You can still take the quizzes after this 12 pm deadline, but the grades you get after 12 pm will not be considered.

Attendance

A role sheet will be passed around at the beginning of each class. When you miss class, you miss out on important information and it is up to you to find out what you missed. In the event you miss a class, do not email me to ask if you have missed anything important, every class is important. I will not respond to emails framed in such a manner. You are given a pool of 40 attendance/participation points on the first day of class. Each day you miss will result in a loss of 5 points. In addition, failure to participate can result in a loss of points. The college experience should be more than attending class and it is up to you to make the most of it.

Grades

Attendance/participation	40
Information Literacy Quizzes (12 @ 5 pts ea)	60
Written Assignments:	
Peer reviewed article summaries (2 @ 50 pts ea)	100
University or College Event summary	50
Total	250

A=225-250

B=200-224

C=175-199

D=150-174

F= 149 or below

Tentative Course Schedule *

8-23/25	Syllabus/course introduction (What are Zombies?)
8-30/9-1	Content Discussion. Discuss information literacy/using the library resources/discuss summary assignments
9-6	Labor Day
9-8	Content Discussion. First 4 information literacy quizzes to be completed by noon (9-6) Students will bring one peer-reviewed neuroscience/biopsychology article to class
9-13/15	Content discussion.
9-14/16	Content discussion. Quizzes 5-8 to be completed by noon (9-16). Topic discussion for the 2 nd summary article.
9-20/22	Content discussion. Campus event summary due.
9-27/29	Content discussion Last 4 information literacy quizzes to be completed by noon (9-30).
10-4/6	Content discussion.

10-12	Content discussion.
10-14	Final Exam (2 nd summary due)

Schedule is subject to change at instructor's discretion

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student's responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the [Student Disability Services website](#).¹ The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:

Dallas Swafford
Director of Student Disability Services
Office of Student Affairs
325-942-2047
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu
Houston Harte University Center, Room 112

Incomplete Grade Policy

It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 [Grading Procedures](#)² for more information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU's [Academic Integrity policy](#)³ in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list.

Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the [ASU Writing Center](#).⁴

Student Absence for Observance of 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. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for [Observance of Religious Holy Day](#)⁵ for more information.

Copyright Policy

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

Syllabus Changes

The faculty member reserves the option to make changes as necessary to this syllabus and the course content. If changes become necessary during this course, the faculty will notify students of such changes by email, course announcements and/or via a discussion board announcement. It is the student's responsibility to look for such communications about the course on a daily basis.

Title IX at Attnghelo State University

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Boone, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manner:

Online: www.angelo.edu/incident-form

Face to face: Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

Phone: 325-942-2022

Email: michelle.boone@angelo.edu

Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171).

For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State's policy please visit: www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

Student Evaluation of Faculty and Course

Students in all programs are given the opportunity to evaluate their courses and the faculty who teach them. Evaluations are most helpful when they are honest, fair, constructive, and pertinent to the class, clinical experience, or course. Faculty value student evaluations, and use student suggestions in making modifications in courses, labs and clinical experiences.

Angelo State University uses the IDEA (Individual Development and Educational Assessment) system administered through Kansas State University for all course evaluations. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment administers IDEA for the entire university, online and has established a policy whereby students can complete course evaluations free from coercion.

End of Syllabus

¹ <https://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/>

² <https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures>

³ <https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/community-policies/academic-integrity.php>

⁴ https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php

⁵ <https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14206-op-1019-student-absence-for-observance-of>