

General Studies 1181F30

Pseudoscience & Media



Instructor: Andrew B. Wallace

Email: awallace@angelo.edu

Phone: 3254866516

Office: Vincent 125

Office Hours: By email appointment

Course Information

Course Description

This course emphasizes the use of information literacy, oral communication, and writing skills for distinguishing science from pseudoscience. Contemporary topics taken from advertising, news, and other media are investigated and discussed to develop an understanding of scientific inquiry.

Prerequisite and Co-requisite Courses

Freshman with less than 30 semester credit hours

Prerequisite Skills

Ability to use Blackboard and presentation software such as PowerPoint or Google Slides are expectations of this course.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Develop and demonstrate a logical position that acknowledges ambiguities or contradictions (Critical Thinking CT)
- Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written and oral communication (Communications CS)

Course Delivery

This course is a face-to-face course with learning resources and supplemental materials posted in Blackboard.

Required Texts and Materials

There is no required text for this course. A student of this institution is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Technology Requirements

To successfully complete this course, students need to use Blackboard, PowerPoint or Google Slides, and complete the IDEA student ranking of instruction.

Marketable Skills

In this course you will work in small groups (ability to work in a team structure), evaluate information (solve problems), do research (obtain information), summarize information (process information), use Blackboard (show proficiency with computer software), and communicate with classmates (communication verbally with people inside the organization).

Communication

Faculty will respond to email and/or telephone messages within 24 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. Weekend messages may not be returned until Monday.

Grading

Evaluation and Grades

Course grades will be determined as indicated in the table below.

Assessment	Percent of Total Grade
Writing Assignments (CS)	20%
Information Literacy Quizzes (CT)	10%
Surveys and Assignments	25%
Class Participation	25%
Oral Presentation	20%
Total	100%

Grading System

Course grades will be dependent upon completing course requirements and meeting the student learning outcomes.

The following grading scale is in use for this course:

A = 90-100 points

B = 80-89 points

C = 70-79 points

D = 60-69 points

F = 0-59 points (half points are rounded up)

Assignment and Activity Descriptions

Two summaries and one oral communication project will be required. Writing should be treated as formal academic writing. The first summary will be written in-class. Students may pull contemporary pseudoscience topics from programming, internet sites, magazines, social media, etc... for the second summary and oral communication project. The second summary will be a 250-400 word abstract of the oral communication project. Oral presentations are 7-10 min each and include 7-10

PowerPoint type slides. There are also two surveys and two assignments to be completed outside of class time.

General Policies Related to This Course

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

- [Angelo State University Student Handbook](#)¹
- [Angelo State University Catalog](#)²

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

The College of Science and Engineering adheres to the university's [Statement of Academic Integrity](#).³

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](#).⁴ 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](#)⁵ for more information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU's [Academic Integrity policy](#)⁶ 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](#).⁷

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](#)⁸ for more information.

Title IX at Angelo State University

The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance.

Students are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU's Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator at:

Michelle Miller, J.D.

Special Assistant to the President and Title IX Coordinator

Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

325-486-6357

michelle.boone@angelo.edu

You may also [file a report online](#)⁹ 24/7.

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic and Counseling Center at 325-942-2173 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345.

For more information, visit the [Title IX website](#).¹⁰

Course Schedule

Date	Class Time	Important Due Dates
Aug 23	Science and Pseudoscience Blackboard Media Survey	
Aug 25	Recognizing Pseudoscience In-class Article Markup	Media Survey Due*
Aug 30	ASU Writing Center Information Literacy Quizzes (CT) Library Research (USearch) Presentation Project and Abstract (CS) Guidelines for Communication Style and Degree Works assignments	
Sep 1	Social Media and Pseudoscience In-class Writing (CS1)	Comm Style Survey Due
Sep 6	University Holiday	
Sep 8	Lunchtime Viewing of a Pseudoscience	
Sep 13	Discussion/Impromptu speeches	Info Literacy Quizzes Due
Sep 15	Lunchtime Viewing of a Pseudoscience	
Sep 20	Discussion/Impromptu speeches	
Sep 22	Planning Your Future with an Advisor	Comm Style Assignment Due
Sep 27	Lunchtime Viewing of a Pseudoscience	
Sep 29	Discussion/Impromptu speeches	
Oct 4	Lunchtime Viewing of a Pseudoscience	Degree Works Assignment Due
Oct 6	Discussion/Impromptu speeches	
Oct 11	Oral Presentations (CS)	Abstract Due
Oct 13	Oral Presentations (CS)	

*Due dates in Blackboard are 11:59 PM unless otherwise specified in class

¹ <https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/student-handbook/>

² <https://www.angelo.edu/academics/catalog/>

³ <https://www.angelo.edu/live/files/27603-student-handbook-2020-21#page=96>

⁴ <https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/disability-services/>

⁵ <https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures>

⁶ <https://www.angelo.edu/live/files/27603-student-handbook-2020-21#page=96>

⁷ https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/writing-center/academic_honesty.php

⁸ <https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14206-op-1019-student-absence-for-observance-of>

⁹ <http://www.angelo.edu/incident-form>

¹⁰ <https://www.angelo.edu/title-ix>