



*LB-492: Fall 2021 (4 credits)*

## ARGUMENTS AND EVIDENCE

### Controversies in Society & History of Science

Studio is room C-2 Holmes Hall, **zoom** classroom is: [9424-167-2427](https://msu.zoom.us/j/94241672427) (pass: 492)

#### *Overview:*

This course is designed to engage you in critically examining emerging as well as historical controversial issues in science and society. The course will include discussions, debates, oral reports, and group projects. The purpose of this class is to enhance your understanding of the sciences and humanities. You will work individually as well as in research groups. You will use digital technologies to film, edit and produce short documentaries.

#### *Learning Goals:*

You will strive to:

- (1) learn to recognize the topics and controversies in the history of science.
  1. Provide examples of the differences in the work of Darwin, Pasteur and Galileo etc.
  2. Identify some similar current day controversies in scientists.
- (2) gain practice and confidence in your ability to communicate.
  1. Become more confident... (via communicating aloud and in creative work)....
  2. ...in identifying and formulating arguments.
  3. ...in aligning appropriate and clear sources of evidence.
  4. ...in who you are as an author and scholar.

#### *Course info:*

Meeting time: Mondays & Wednesdays 12:40-2:30pm, Zoom & C-2 Holmes Hall classrooms

Office hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30pm, Luckie's **zoom** office is [5173534606](https://msu.zoom.us/j/5173534606) (pass: Doug)

Instructor: Douglas B. Luckie, Ph.D.

Textbooks: *Great Feuds in Science* and *Great Feuds in Medicine*, both by Hal Hellman

Website: [ctools.msu.edu/492](https://ctools.msu.edu/492) (we also will use D2L.msu.edu for files and gradebook)



*What will students do?*

1. **GROUP WORK:** You will join a semester-long documentary team that pursues a 30-days experiment and focuses on filming that experience. Your team will storyboard your film plan and do presentations as your research project progresses. Your documentary team will produce a short film (5-10 minutes) comprised predominately of still images that presents the story you chose to tell. Each group will submit your final film to the East Lansing Film Festival (deadline expected to be May 1, 2022; ELFF, <http://elff.com/>).

#### Groups:

While each group member will be expected to participate in **all** roles, you will have one as your *primary* job:

1. **Director:** planning/storyboarding/organizing/writing treatment for film.
2. **Editor:** writing treatment, mastering of the digital editing of the film.
3. **Cinematographer:** capturing, obtaining excellent photography for film.
4. **Sound Engineer:** capturing, obtaining excellent audio/narration for film.

2. **INDIVIDUAL WORK:** You will read, write, be quizzed on readings, and present your group's findings to the class. Readings from historical sources will serve to frame controversy in the sciences and media. You will participate in discussions, formal debates and constructive controversies and generate a public service announcement film.

#### Course assignments:

In this class your learning/performance will be assessed by:

- **Public service announcement (PSA)** -Filming/editing an individual 60-second film.
- **Oral Presentation** -Give a formal professional talk (recorded video and live talk).
- **Group Documentary Film** -Filming/editing a group 5-10 minute documentary film.
- **Attendance/Participation:**
  - Keeping a Journal - Maintain an online journal/notebook for group like a professional.
  - Quizzes on readings - Demonstrate participation via quizzes on assigned readings.
  - Class/Group Participation - Participate fully in class and groupwork (CATME GEA).

(2021 pandemic options)

**Thesis Paper** -(10-20%)- Individual thesis paper on a subtopic related to film (8-10 pages).

**Tardis Pass** -- One-Time Time Travel RE-DO permit, improve work via revision.

*Components of final grade:* PSA film=10%, Oral Presentation=20%, Documentary Film=30%, Attendance and Class/Group Participation=40%

## Schedule

### ●Week 1: Introduction

Wednesday (Sept. 1): Syllabus, Groups, PSAs assigned, view trailers, Eugenics.

Reading assignment: *Ch. 1 Great Feuds in Science: Urban VII vs Galileo.*

### ●Week 2: Media

Monday (Sept. 6): **NO CLASS**- Labor Day Holiday (MSU/USA holiday)

Wednesday (Sept. 8): Quiz, "This is ME, this my IDEA," Constructive Controversy on Galileo.

Reading assignment: *Ch. 4 Great Feuds in Science: Voltaire vs. Needham.*

### ●Week 3: Plans & PSAs

Monday (Sept. 13): S T U D I O T I M E - (work: digital editing images/sound on PSAs)

Wednesday (Sept. 15): Quiz, Shotgun Discussion on Voltaire, **PSAs DUE.**

### ●Week 4: Framing & Presenting Your Argument

Monday (Sept. 20): S T U D I O T I M E - (groupwork: on project ideas)

Wednesday (Sept. 22): **"Group Idea" Presentations Today**

(**Editor** is presenter and graded for this Presentation).

### ●Week 5: Storyboards

Monday (Sept. 27): S T U D I O T I M E - (groupwork: on project plan)

Wednesday (Sept. 29): **"Group Storyboard/Treatment" Presentations Today**

(**Director** is presenter and graded for this Presentation).

Reading assignment: *Ch. 5 Great Feuds in Science: Darwin's Bulldog.*

### ●Week 6: Thesis Paper Arguments and Outlines

Monday (Oct. 4): S T U D I O T I M E - (individual work on thesis sources) (**CATME GE1**)

Wednesday (Oct. 6): Quiz, Constructive Controversy on Darwin; **Paper Outlines DUE** (optional).

(If choose to do paper, outline must be 3-page double-spaced followed by annotated bibliography)

Reading assignment for Week 6: *Ch. 1 Great Feuds in Medicine: Harvey*

### ●Week 7: Fall leaves Fall

Monday (Oct. 11): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project)

Wednesday (Oct. 13): Quiz & Discussion on the Feuds reading on Harvey.

Reading assignment: *Ch. 5 Great Feuds in Medicine: Pasteur*

### ●Week 8: What's Your Point?

Monday (Oct. 18): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project)

Wednesday (Oct. 20): Quiz & Shotgun Discussion on the Feuds reading about Pasteur.

Reading assignment: *Ch. 8 Great Feuds in Medicine: Sabin vs Salk.*

●**Week 9: Critiques on The House**

Monday (Oct. 25): **NO CLASS**- Fall Break Holiday (MSU holiday)

Wednesday (Oct. 27): Quiz & Constructive Controversy of Sabin vs Salk.

Reading assignment: Vote for which reading you prefer for next week.

●**Week 10: Thesis Papers**

Monday (Nov. 1): S T U D I O T I M E - (individual work on thesis) **(CATME GEA2)**.

Wednesday (Nov. 3): Quiz & Discussion of Feuds reading chosen by class.

●**Week 11: Thesis Projects**

Monday (Nov. 8): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project)

Wednesday (Nov. 10): **"Final Photography" Presentation Today** (final film photography).  
**(Cinematographer** is presenter and graded for this Presentation)

Reading assignment: Vote for which reading you prefer for next week.

●**Week 12: Push!**

Monday (Nov. 15): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project)

Wednesday (Nov. 17): Quiz & Discussion of Feuds reading chosen by class.

●**Week 13: and Panic!**

Monday (Nov. 22): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project)

Wednesday (Nov. 24): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project)

●**Week 14: Documentary Films**

Monday (Nov. 29): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project) **(CATME GEA3)**

Wednesday (Dec. 1): ***Final Presentations***

**(Sound Engineer** is presenter and graded for this Presentation).

●**Week 15: Documentary Films**

Monday (Dec. 6): S T U D I O T I M E - (group work on project) **(CATME GEA3)**

Wednesday (Dec. 8): ***Final Presentations***

**(Sound Engineer** is presenter and graded for this Presentation).

●**Finals Week** (on official Final Exam day/time period): (optional) **Individual Thesis Paper DUE**  
(8-10 page Individual thesis paper on a subtopic related to film)

## SCHEDULE

The course schedule is provided in the syllabi pages. We reserve the right to modify the schedule if necessary. You will be given advance warning if the schedule needs changed.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

**Turnitin.com** will allow you to review written assignments prior to submission. If you are caught cheating, you will be assigned a “0” for the assignment or the entire course. The policy for academic honesty at LBC is available online -> <https://lbc.msu.edu/advising/academic-policies.html>

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

It is essential that you not only come to class but also participate in order to construct your own knowledge. While attendance is being on time/present in class and at group meetings, participation includes preparing and sharing ideas. This will also be assessed by in-class quizzes and GEA surveys.

## GRADING

Your grade in this course is on a flat scale (for more details see page 11).

4.0= 90-100%    3.5= 85-89.9%    3.0= 80-84.9%    2.5= 75-79.9%    2.0= 70-74.9%    1.5= 65-69.9%    1.0= 60-64.9%    0.0= <60

A “3.0” score is considered Excellent. It is impressive work, top of the class, and the work was done extremely well but nothing beyond what was expected.  
A “3.5” is Most Excellent. Every detail of the work was done extremely well, and they found additional papers and evidence beyond what they were told.  
A “4.0” is Outstanding. It has the 3.0, 3.5-level elements + student impresses instructor with how much/well they did the work. They taught Prof something.

**Late Policy:** Assignments are due at the beginning of the session indicated unless otherwise specified. If an assignment is 1 day late, 1 point will be deducted from the final score. After this 24 hr grace period, the penalty becomes more severe: 20% off for two days late, 30% off for three days and so on. After 5 days, you will receive a “0” for the assignment.

**Blind grading:** Whenever possible we will score assignments "blind" and ask you not indicate your name but list your provided "B-PID". This enables grading to be fairer and not be impacted by subjectivity etc.

**\*Formal written grade appeal process:** If you feel that your assignment was not graded properly, you must submit your concern via appeal in writing via email. You must concisely explain why you object to the assigned grade and what elements of your work in fact demonstrate you mastered the material. Please be advised that if you submit a formal grade appeal about one element of an assignment, we always re-grade your entire exam, paper or quiz and the score may increase, decrease or stay the same. For group assignments, all authors must sign the written request since re-grading may impact all. How well you provide your claim, evidence and reasoning will be assessed, and students who provide good logical arguments supported well by solid relevant evidence will earn approval (you may cite pages of textbooks, or even better, published research papers). Avoid emotional arguments that blame others or arguments based on hearsay, e.g. “I heard from a student” “A TA told me this was correct.” If you neither make logical arguments or provide thoughtful evidence to support them, your appeal will not gain traction or be approved. All discussion concerning score changes must be completed within 7 days from the date the grade was officially posted (on the returned assignment or online). No grade changes will be considered after this time. If illness or other emergency prevents you from completing assignments on time, you must make arrangements with your instructor before the due date



## MSU & LBC INFORMATION AND POLICIES



### **Absence due to illness:**

Students who need to quarantine themselves, have been sick with COVID-19 symptoms, tested positive for COVID-19, or have been potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19 must follow CDC guidance to self-isolate or stay home. Illness or self-isolation will not harm performance or put one at disadvantage.

### **Technical Assistance**

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:

- Visit the Distance Learning Services Support Site
- Visit the Desire2Learn Help Site (<http://help.d2l.msu.edu/>)
- Or call Distance Learning Services: (800) 500-1554 or (517) 355-2345

### **Mental Health Resources**

College students often experience issues that may interfere with academic success such as academic stress, sleep problems, juggling responsibilities, life events, relationship concerns, or feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, or depression. If you or a friend is struggling, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Helpful, effective resources are available on campus, and most are free of charge.

- Drop by Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) main location (3rd floor of Olin Health Center) for a same-day mental health screening.
- Visit <https://caps.msu.edu> for online health assessments, hours, and additional CAPS services.
- Call CAPS at (517) 355-8270 any time, day or night.
- 24-Hour MSU Sexual Assault Crisis Line (517) 372-6666 or visit <https://centerforsurvivors.msu.edu/>

### Resource Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)

- To make an appointment with a specialist, contact: (517) 353-9642  
Or TTY: (517) 355-1293
- Web site for RCPD: <http://MYProfile.rcpd.msu.edu>

### **LBC Student Success and Advising Team**

LBC advisors work to educate, coach, and support students in our College. For more information about the Student Success and Advising team visit: <https://lbc.msu.edu/advising/index1.html>

To make a zoom or phone appointment with an advisor visit: <https://lbc.msu.edu/advising/advising-appointments.html>

To review LBC Academic Policies, including LBC's Academic Grievance Policy, visit: <https://lbc.msu.edu/advising/academic-policies.html>

## **Library Information**

Chana Kraus-Friedberg is the Lyman Briggs College and Public Health Librarian at MSU's library. Feel free to contact Chana Kraus-Friedberg for any research or resource support for your LBC classes. Phone: 517-884-8462; Email: [krausfri@msu.edu](mailto:krausfri@msu.edu); MSU Library: [www.lib.msu.edu](http://www.lib.msu.edu)

## **MSU Writing Center**

You can read about the goals and mission of MSU's Writing Center here: <https://writing.msu.edu/language-statement/> To schedule an appointment at the writing center to review an outline and/or drafts, visit: <https://msuwriting.mywconline.com/>

**Course Recordings:** Meetings of this course may be recorded. The recordings may be available to students registered for this class. This is intended to supplement the classroom experience. Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. MSU requires recordings may not be reproduced, shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments. Due to FERPA laws, MSU states doing so may result in disciplinary action. If the instructor or another University office plan other uses for the recordings beyond this class, students identifiable in the recordings will be notified to request consent prior to such use.

### *Related Policies:*

Institutional Data Policy:

<https://tech.msu.edu/about/guidelines-policies/msu-institutional-data-policy/>

Student Privacy Guidelines and Notification of Rights under FERPA

<https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.aspx>

## **Commitment to Integrity: Academic Honesty**

Article 2.3.3 of the [Academic Freedom Report](#) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](#) and/or the MSU Web site: [www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu).)

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the [www.allmsu.com](http://www.allmsu.com) Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](#) webpage.)

## **Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed**

From the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD): Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at [rcpd.msu.edu](http://rcpd.msu.edu). Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

## **LINKS TO UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

- [Spartan Code of Honor](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [RVSM Limits to Confidentiality](#)
- [RCPD Disability Accommodations Statement](#)
- [Mental Health](#)
- [Tolerance and civility](#)
- [Religious Observance Policy](#)
- [Student Athletes](#)
- [Pronouns](#)
- [MSU Final Exam Policy](#)

## **Owner's Manual**

(with lots of ideas and text stolen from great authors, Drs. Alice Dreger and Tanya Noel)

### **Why is this an "owner's manual" instead of a syllabus?**

Most syllabi contain only class schedule information. By contrast, this is more like an "owner's manual" like the sort that comes with a new car. If you read and use this manual, you will understand how this course works, and you will be able to keep the course running smoothly, and do the regular maintenance required to avoid breakdowns. Of course, this course isn't a car. It's more like a bus tour. I believe that a university course is in its essence not a number, and not a topic, but a group of people who share a common goal of learning about some particular thing. In this sense, a course is like a bus tour, a tour to a place which is unfamiliar to most of us. As the teacher, I am the bus driver and chief tour guide. Each member of the course starts off at "home" intellectually and emotionally and comes to the bus station which is the classroom. We agree to "take the tour" together, to get on the bus and travel together for the length of the course even though many of us may never have met before. Together we visit a number of different "places."

### **So why is this "owner's manual" so long?**

I've discovered that the more information I give students, the more comfortable and in control they feel, and the better they learn. This packet contains lots of information. Besides telling you about the mechanics of the course, this packet tells you a lot about my teaching style. I used to provide my students with a separate "statement of teaching philosophy." It now occurs to me it is weird to separate that teaching philosophy from my teaching materials. So now my philosophy is embedded throughout this packet. My teaching style, methods, and philosophy change over time, thanks to students who tell me what works and what doesn't work. I'm counting on you to give me lots of feedback about what is working for you and what is not, and most importantly why. It is very important to me to do a good job for you. In addition to the course learning objectives provided earlier, be aware this course aligns with the following



## MSU Undergraduate Learning Goals:

### **Analytical Thinking**

*A successful student uses ways of knowing from mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and arts to access information and critically analyzes complex material in order to evaluate evidence, construct reasoned arguments, and communicate inferences and conclusions.*

- *Acquires, analyzes, and evaluates information from multiple sources.*
- *Synthesizes and applies the information within and across disciplines.*
- *Identifies and applies, as appropriate, quantitative methods for defining and responding to problems.*
- *Identifies the credibility, use and misuse of scientific, humanistic and artistic methods.*

### **Effective Communication**

*A successful student uses a variety of media to communicate effectively with diverse audiences.*

- *Identifies how contexts affect communication strategies and practices.*
- *Engages in effective communication practices in a variety of situations and with a variety of media.*

### **Integrated Reasoning**

*A successful student integrates discipline-based knowledge to make informed decisions that reflect humane social, ethical, and aesthetic values.*

- *Critically applies liberal arts knowledge in disciplinary contexts and disciplinary knowledge in liberal arts contexts.*
- *Uses a variety of inquiry strategies incorporating multiple views to make value judgments, solve problems, answer questions, and generate new understandings.*

## **How does this course work in terms of the day-to-day?**

We will meet two times a week yet one is protected time for you to work with your group either in-person in the studio or via Zoom, and the other time is synchronous, LIVE in-person in the classroom unless the pandemic forces us to use Zoom, and our meetings will consist of discussions of the readings and activities related to the topics we are investigating. Do the readings assigned for the day **before** you come to class and spend enough time thinking about the readings before class. You should come to class ready to summarize the readings and to ask and answer questions about them. Homework and quizzes will often be given on the readings.

Always give yourself plenty of time to do your work, and feel free to contact me whenever you need help or clarification. I like teaching and not only do I feel good when you learn, often when you learn something new, I learn, too.

Generally, we will stick very closely to the attached schedule, however, the point of this class is for you to learn, so if we need to change our scheduled plans to achieve that goal, we will do so. If you feel that you need things to be done somewhat differently in class in order for you to learn better, please let me know and I will work to adjust our schedule or classroom dynamics so that we can maximize learning.

## **So what's my feeling about teaching?**

I love it! And I think it shows – my students have voted me “honorary member of the graduating class of Lyman Briggs” (“teacher of the year”) about five times in the last fifteen years, I was given the Teacher-Scholar Award of MSU, and most recently the 2015 MSU Alumni Club of Mid-Michigan Quality in Undergraduate Teaching Award (nominated by MSU faculty and alumni for teaching) and the 2017 Outstanding Faculty Award by the ASMSU Senior Class Council (nominated by MSU graduating seniors for teaching). If you hear that I am tough, I am, but that’s because I care about your learning. If I didn’t care about your learning, I would have stayed at Stanford University.

## **What else besides being in class will be required of you?**

Note that this course uses a range of assignments rather than just exams. This spreads out risk and stress so it's lower level, day to day, and allows you to assess your own learning with lower-stake quizzes to avoid any surprises when facing the higher stakes assessments. All assignments are weighted via percentage in the syllabus and in that sense, grades are pretty simple – and you can always check your grade levels earned on each assignment on the online D2L gradebook –and be sure to alert me if my gradebook has an error.

- *Quizzes on readings:* I will frequently give short quizzes on a day's assigned reading at the beginning of the class meeting. These quizzes accomplish two things: (1) reward you for keeping up-to-date on the readings; (2) reward you for spending enough time on the readings to really understand them. If you read carefully, you should have little problem with the quizzes. If you miss a quiz because you are late or absent, you will receive a "0". These cannot be made up.

**Table 1- University-level grading system:** The table below describes the relationships between grades, percent, and performance in the University-level grading system used in our lab and lecture courses. The first column describes the letter/number grade. The second column describes the percentage associated with that grade. The third column describes the performance-level required. Remember, if at any point you feel confused or distressed about your grades, carefully review the syllabus and talk to me.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Performance</b>
A (4.0)	90 to 100%	<i>Outstanding Work-</i> A "4.0" is Outstanding. It literally stands out. It has the characteristics described for 3.0 and 3.5-level elements but in addition, the work by itself impressed with how much & well it was done. The student taught Prof something original.
B+ (3.5)	85 to 89.9%	<i>Most Excellent Work -</i> A "3.5" is Most Excellent. Every detail of the work was done extremely well and they found additional papers and evidence beyond what they were told.
B (3.0)	80 to 84.9%	<i>Excellent Work -</i> A "3.0" score is considered Excellent. It is impressive work, top of the class, and the work was done extremely well but nothing beyond what was expected.
C+ (2.5)	75 to 79.9%	<i>Pretty Good Work-</i> A "2.5" is Pretty Good, the student did the minimum work required and did a pretty good job, this is expected at the university level and near average for the class.
C (2.0)	70 to 74.9%	<i>Average Work -</i> A "2.0" is average, the student did the minimum work required.
D+ (1.5)	65 to 69.9%	<i>Below Average Work -</i> the student did less than minimum work required.
D (1.0)	60 to 64.9%	<i>Poor Work-</i> the student did less than minimum work required and of poor quality.
F (0.0)	0 to 59.9%	<i>Failing Work-</i> the student did far less than minimum work required and very poor quality.

**A note on grades & FERPA:**

To support blind-grading we will often request that you not list your actual name but just provide an ID. Privacy, as required by MSU FERPA, will be maintained by utilizing a code that is NOT your real A-PID, so we'll call it your B-PID. Your B-PID will be listed on D2L in your personal gradebook.

Backstory: In recent years universities have become very afraid of getting in trouble for breaking the law called FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). The law was created back in 1974 to protect the privacy of students and their grades. In response to it all universities created student ID numbers so instead of placing a grade next to a person's name, instructors could place it next to a student number to maintain privacy. Many universities chose to use a student's social security number to also be their student number. When identity theft became a big problem, universities then changed all their student ID numbers from social security to become some number randomly generated in house. In recent years now the student ID number itself has become protected. In fact, while other people are permitted to know your name, and even say it aloud and post it publicly, the student ID number is super protected. Thus, instead of using your MSU-issued A-PID, in this course MSU requires that we issue a new temporary student ID. We call these the B-PID, since they are for "who you be" and it's for blind grading.

Professors can use grades in two ways: they can use grades to "sort" students into "A" students, "B" students, etc.; or they can use grades as learning incentives and rewards. Unfortunately, the sorting system generally sorts according to "talents" students either have or don't have before they ever reach a particular classroom, e.g., the talent of being able to memorize and recall a lot of things. I would rather use grades to encourage students to develop their skills, to expand their minds and interests. While students are often only familiar with positive curving (sometime called a mother's curve) a number of university classes use an actual curve that raises or lowers the grading scale with the goal to only permit a few students (like just 10 in a class of 100) to earn a 4.0 and then only a few (perhaps 20) are permitted to have a 3.5 etc. Even if everyone in the class got above a 90% on an exam the grade scale would shift up until only the prescribed number of students got a 4.0 grade. This is a real "curve" and, I will never grade on a curve like this. Our grading scale will stay exactly as stated in the syllabus and each student will get whatever grade she or he has earned by the end of the semester. Nothing would make me happier than if everyone worked hard and learned a lot and got 4.0's. That would be great.

### **Course Structure**

This course will use a public website and online tools like Turnitin, CATME, and Desire2Learn. The course website may include online lessons, course materials, and additional resources. Activities may consist of readings, discussion forums, email, journaling, wikis, and other online activities. You will need your MSU NetID to login to the course to access the grades on *D2L* (<http://d2l.msu.edu>).

### **Definitions, terms, transparency**

*Attendance:* Student learning is impacted by many things, yet education research has robustly shown it is significantly impacted by these three things: class size, teacher quality and attendance. You are, of course, permitted to skip any class meeting you wish but attendance at the meeting of a class will be defined as being physically present in the room for the full time period of the class meeting. Thus be present at the synchronous class meeting, in your seat with your notebook open and pen in hand, at the very beginning when the clock strikes the hour and class begins, still there during/throughout the entire duration of the class, as well as at the very end of the official time period (feel free to come and go to visit the restroom, just not off vacationing elsewhere). It's only fair to treat students who arrive late exactly the same as those who depart early. Making the choice to schedule another course that has a start or finish time that is proximal or even overlaps with this class is, of course, your choice and entirely acceptable. Yet this will not change the definition of attendance or waive it. University students are adults and literally everything in a course is optional, yet in this case for attendance (and more importantly to learn) you have to be there.

*Belong:* Lyman Briggs College is dedicated to promoting inclusion and fostering diversity. Let's make our classroom comfortable and welcoming for everybody. Let's strive to treat everyone with respect, civility, and empathy and rather than avoid new things to learn from others about different beliefs, practices, and lives. You are all super wonderful smart people, and all belong here.

*Blind grading:* When a computer scores a scantron bubble sheet from a multiple choice exam, it is objective, it doesn't have a pre-conception as to which students are smart, or are nice to it, so it treats everyone the same and just rewards correct answers. Unfortunately, human graders are less objective. LAs, GTAs, and Profs, are all unable to be perfectly objective when they have already had interactions with the person whose work they are grading. While they try hard to be so, education research shows that even knowing the person's name will impact the grader (even if they never met the person). Thus, imagine if they know the person reasonably well. If they have read prior papers, knew the person's prior grades, or had a number of positive (or negative) conversations with them. Wow, that will cause major problems

when trying to be objective while grading, even for the best teacher ever, unless the grader is blind to the identity of the author. Professional journals and grant review panels use single-blind or double-blind systems to avoid subjective evaluation. Whenever possible will use this in our class too.

*Participation:* It turns out participation is different than attendance. It refers to a student who is actively working to learn the materials discussed in the course. Students who are active participants do not merely talk during class but also prepare in advance for class. This means carefully completing the readings, taking notes on them (best for learning, do this by handwritten notes on paper) and preparing for the upcoming class meeting by reviewing notes and highlighting any questions you thought of while preparing for class. If you prepare, class is fun and interesting. If you don't it becomes confusing and frustrating, as it feels like everyone else seems to know all the answers while you don't even understand the questions.

*Random calling in lecture:* How often have you been in a big lecture class that has maybe 8 students who are the only people who ever are called upon to answer the professor's questions in lecture? The other 100+ students throughout the entire semester will generally never speak aloud during lecture. After a while you get used to it. Everyone knows that "those students" answer the questions, so we don't have to. Yet, deep down you also know, while it's comfortable to never have to answer a question, it likely reduces your learning, heck some folks fall asleep. Because our goal in this class is learning we will use random calling in lecture to help \*everyone\* increase their learning and gain skills at communication/public speaking.

---"Tips from Tanya": Some points for students about technology in the classroom ---

**Author:** Dr. Tanya Noel

Almost everyone has a smartphone, laptop, tablet, or combination of these devices with them during their waking hours (and beyond, in some cases). There is huge potential for distraction using these devices – which is fine if you're waiting in a long, boring line or on the bus, but can be problematic in the classroom. Be aware of:

- There have been studies that have shown **"multi-tasking" in class is detrimental to learning.** (Actually, the evidence overwhelmingly suggests humans can't really multi-task ... or, at least, can't multi-task well!) If you're trying to go back and forth between course-related stuff and other websites (or assignments for other courses, etc.), this will affect how well you're learning/working.
- **Notifications (e.g., beeps/vibrations for new emails, text messages, etc.) are highly distracting,** and feed into "reward systems" in the brain that can reinforce behaviors like frequently checking your phone, Facebook, etc. (You know that uncomfortable feeling that makes you check your phone/email? Your brain gets a dopamine hit when you give into that urge ... and makes it more likely to continue the behavior leading to the reward.) **Consider turning off these notifications,** at least during class and other times when you want to be able to focus uninterrupted. (Some people have found turning off notifications altogether has helped them not only focus, but reduced their stress levels!)
- **Note-taking on computers (vs. by hand) is associated with lower-quality learning/test scores.** Results from some recent studies support the idea that writing notes by hand on paper is superior to taking notes on the computer. There are a number of hypotheses about this, but many experts agree that taking notes by hand involves more thinking about what's important and worth writing down (as you can't transcribe every word spoken by the professor). On the computer, it is tempting to try to record everything verbatim, with the brain not processing much of the information.

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## “30 Days” A Socio-Psychological Independent Investigation

### **Introduction**

In the “30 Days” experiment, each research group is expected to design and perform a sociological or psychological experiment where every individual in the research team experiences an aspect of the daily life of someone unlike yourself. This experiment is inspired by Morgan Spurlock, an American documentary filmmaker, best known for the documentary film *Super Size Me*, in which he demonstrated negative health effects of McDonald's food by eating all meals from McDonald's every day, for 30 days.

Spurlock was also the executive producer and star of the FX television show *30 Days*. In each episode, a person (which in some cases, is Spurlock himself) or a group of people spend 30 days immersing themselves in a mode of life markedly different from their own/norm (being in prison, a devout Christian living in a Muslim family, a homophobe staying with a homosexual person, etc). In the premiere episode of the first season, "Minimum Wage," Spurlock and his fiancée lived for 30 days in the Bottoms neighborhood of Columbus, Ohio, earning minimum wage, with no outside funds.

Morgan Spurlock uses a couple approaches:

1. Morgan himself lives for a period of time "in the shoes" of someone else.
2. Morgan films "somebody else" doing the same thing.

You might vary from this and might follow/ride-along/shadow the daily activities of someone in a very unique position, as well as discuss the impact the experience has on you.

### **Developing an Experiment**

First, individually, on your own, spend a few days coming up with some topics you think might be interesting for your group. Then consider how you might approach those topics using Morgan Spurlock's "30 Days" approach. For inspiration, go to Morgan Spurlock's 30 days page on Wikipedia and read a few of the topics they have done, watch clips of some shows on YouTube or stream his film "Supersize Me".

From the course website you can also view online a few experiments previously performed by Lyman Briggs College students as a part of their senior seminar course using a “30 Days” approach. There are documentary films created by LBC students while on Study Abroad in Paris. There is one documentary film created by MSU students in East Lansing in 2005 with the title “30 Days Disabled.”



### 30 Days Disabled (Act 1: The Rules)

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Write your ideas as you think of them in your online notebook. Next meet as a group and share you ideas and then vote for which one's you think are powerful yet practical.

**NOTE:**

1. Avoid repeat topics: Unless you develop a different focus and solid 30 Days experiment proposal should clearly differentiate your project from prior ones, you cannot repeat a topic already completed by other students.
  
2. Avoid "pretend to be" 30 Days projects: Group members must either *\*do\** something personally (and preferably shared participation among group members) or *\*follow\** someone authentically practicing or experiencing your topic. May not need to be full 30 days in length, can be supplemented by talk to/interview people and reading literature.