HNRS 330 002 Multidisciplinary Challenges

Center for Academic Advising, Retention, and Transitions: Student Major Selection (0-3 Credits; pass/fail; may be repeated for credit)

Mr. Richard Todd Stafford

Class
Section 002 As Scheduled

Office Hours
Mr. Stafford – Buchanan Hall D203K (inside D205)
By appointment using Calendly:
https://calendly.com/richardtoddstafford

Honors College

Course Description
Student participants in HNRS 330 identify and address a challenge or question that emerges from the needs of a community stakeholder, in this case the Early Identification Program. Students contribute to and participate from rigorous discussion and collaboration among a cohort of students representing multiple disciplines. By conducting multidisciplinary research or design projects in structured collaboration with community stakeholders and/or mentors, students will learn to better account for their own and for other points of view and to integrate alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas. Through this process, they will deepen their understanding of the design, writing, and/or research processes, learn to appreciate the institutional and social dimensions of undertaking and/or teaching research, and learn to more effectively collaborate.

In Spring 2018, HNRS 330 002 students will continue the multidisciplinary research project concerning college student major selection they crafted in Fall 2017. In Spring, they will analyze their survey results, conduct and transcribe their interviews, and write a finished report for the CAART office.

Learning Objectives
Students will

- Effectively communicate and collaborate with those who do not share their disciplinary and/or professional perspectives

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.
• Identify and refine a significant creative project, research question, or challenge responsive to the needs of a community stakeholder.
• Bring multiple perspectives to bear when addressing the questions or problems identified by a community stakeholder
• Discover and analyze appropriate evidence from a range of differing perspectives in order to address the question.
• Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively to achieve goals.
• Undertake individualized skill-development plan necessary to undertake the project that informs future professionalization or civic goals

Honors College Requirements
HNRS 330 counts towards Honors College Requirement 3; the only pre-requisite for the class is that you received a C or higher in HNRS 110, 108-109, 210, or 302.

Grading
So as to provide optimal circumstances for students to engage in the discovery process with relatively low stakes, this course is graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). In order to receive a passing grade, students must satisfactorily complete all required assignments including class participation, reflections, and peer response.

Because this is a pass-fail class, I don't give normal grades on assignments, instead I use a 4-point scale that does not correspond to letter grades.

• **4 - Exemplary.** Students achieving at this level are doing work that I’d like to be able to show to other students as a model.
• **3 - On track.** This is the “normal” grade that a student who is doing very well in the class will receive: students who receive a 3 have done everything we expected. I might have some ideas about you you can continue to deepen and refine your engagement that we hope you'll incorporate into future assignments.
• **2 - Revise and resubmit.** If you receive a "2," then this means I would like you to resubmit the relevant assignment with the revisions I have suggested.
• **1 - Meet with us, then revise and resubmit.** If you receive a "1," then this means I will ask you to revise the assignment, but would like to meet with you first.

Policy
If learning will be supported by the addition or revision of policies, assignment descriptions, or the schedule during the semester, I may choose to do so. In these cases, revisions will be reflected in the
up-to-date version of the syllabus on Blackboard. Significant updates to policies, assignments, or due dates will additionally be announced in class.

**Preparedness**
To succeed in this class, you should expect to complete assignments as assigned to you. Work this semester will be very uneven. There may be some weeks which demand a great deal of time and others that will demand little or none. It will be your responsibility to maintain awareness of upcoming assignments and timelines so that you can be prepared for each class period and contribute meaningfully to your group.

**Skill development**
Students will continue work on developing the research skills identified in Fall 2017 during this course to support the project that their group works upon.

**Computers and Mobile Devices in the Classroom**
We will being using computers frequently. If students have a laptop they are able to bring to class, they will be asked to bring them. For students without access to laptops, the Honors College will attempt to provide adequate computing tools during class periods. Please reach out to the instructor if you need access to a laptop during our class meetings. It is, of course, quite rude to surf the internet on unrelated topics, work on other assignments, look at Blackboard sites for other classes, answer emails, check social media, write text messages, or receive phone calls during class. The instructor may ask students who are misusing technologies to stop and/or leave the class for the remainder of a class period.

**Academic Integrity**
Correctly acknowledging sources of information and concepts is a core value of civil intellectual discourse. The University Honor Code ([http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/](http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/)) prohibits

1. plagiarism, which includes quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing without appropriate acknowledgement of sources.
2. “patch writing,” a special case of plagiarism which involves the selective appropriation of short snippets or paraphrases of the work of others where this is not explicitly called for by the assignment
3. representing work done by others as your own
4. submitting work you have completed for another class without permission of both instructors
5. giving false excuses regarding assignments or otherwise misrepresenting yourself in academically significant ways
6. making up data, evidence, or sources
7. negligent or intentional misattribution of data, evidence, or sources

Perhaps more importantly, providing acknowledgement of your sources helps our external stakeholders follow up on any ideas or facts you make use of and is, consequently, important to meaningfully communicating with your audience.
Depending on how your final project is designed, you may find that academic conventions for citations restrict your creativity. In such cases, you need to consult with me about how you plan to provide appropriate acknowledgement of sources in advance.

Class Conduct
It is important that in-class discussions and any work generated for the course be conducted in a civil and respectful manner. If you are concerned about the conduct of another student, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Disability Accommodations
If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; http://ods.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

Mason Diversity Statement
Diversity is broadly defined at Mason to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, class background, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Additionally, we recognize the diversity of viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives found in our learning community.

Attention to these aspects of diversity will help us promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where a diversity of opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard, and respected.

Each course offers an opportunity for us to develop this commitment together, not just as an attitude but a mode of critical practice that can involve, among other things:
- listening to other perspectives and hearing criticism of one’s own views;
- expressing criticisms and differences of opinion in ways that are not personal or hurtful and that leave space for other voices;
- evaluating different positions and avoiding premature certainty;
- grounding one’s own views in evidence, but being willing to consider countervailing evidence or arguments;
- basing critical comments or questions on as good an understanding of another perspective as one can manage;
- and being willing to accept that at any particular time, there will always be things one cannot see or understand.

An important aspect of the commitment to diversity is that it does not mean we should avoid being critical: respecting others means taking their views seriously, i.e., treating them as worthy of close attention, critical interrogation, and evaluation. It also means being open to the ways in which the views of others can challenge and change our own existing views and commitments.
Campus Resources
George Mason University offers a variety of resources to help you succeed.

Counseling and Psychological Services
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides a wide range of services to students, faculty and staff. Services are provided by a staff of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers and counselors. CAPS provides individual counseling, workshops and outreach programs. Find out more at http://caps.gmu.edu/

Counseling and Psychological Services provides crisis intervention services to students, faculty and staff who find themselves or other members of the George Mason community in a crisis. If you are in a crisis and need assistance to deal with the psychological impact of this crisis, please contact CAPS at 703-993-2380. A counselor will consult with you to assess your situation and to identify options for dealing with the crisis. If you are having an emergency, call 911.

Mason Student Technology Assistance and Resources (STAR) Lab
The STAR lab in Johnson Center 229 provides access to video production and editing software, including Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe After Effects, and Final Cut Pro. It additionally allows you to check out video equipment, including cameras, lights, microphones, and tripods. Student mentors are available at the STAR lab to help students with problems they encounter at any stage in the production and editing process, from getting started to polishing projects. Mentors do not provide structured instruction, however; for this, you will want to use the University’s subscription to lynda.com to learn the basics. http://goo.gl/xwMJ2j

Mason Collaborative Learning Hub (CLUB) Lab
The CLUB lab in Johnson Center 311 is intended to support teaching and learning with technology. The lab provides access to web development software. Lab staff are able to help with some technical issues, but you will need to use Lynda.com and freely available sources on the web to learn the skills you need. http://goo.gl/U5SzIE

Mason Writing Center
The quality and clarity of your writing is something that can be dramatically improved through tutoring and coaching. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides tutorial services intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. Appointments are limited, so it is a good idea to plan your appointments early in the semester. http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/

Lynda.com
As a Mason student, you have free access to the high quality media software, web development, and programming tutorials provided by subscription service Lynda.com. Many students will find these tools useful when building skills in this class. http://lynda.gmu.edu/