Catalog Description: Assists students with formulating academic and career goals that bridge their area of specialization and professional development area. Students will learn about professional writing, academic and career planning, interdisciplinary studies, and the process of interdisciplinary research. Writing enhanced course.

Course Description: AAS 300 serves as an introductory course for those students majoring in either the BAAS program or the BSMS program. In either case, as both degrees are interdisciplinary in nature, the goal of this class is to embrace the broad nature of your degree and come to a greater understanding of what it means to be an interdisciplinarian. Specifically, we will spend the first 1/3 of the class exploring what it means to study within an academic silo, the potential detractions of such study, what it means to pursue an interdisciplinary education, and how all of this new understanding helps us to understand our own degree and professional aspirations. Then, we will spend the next 2/3’s of the semester building the foundational documents for your academic portfolio. This is a portfolio that you will make use of throughout your educational ventures, will be integral to your participation in and completion of AAS 498, and, potentially, become a valuable artifact when performing your future job searches.

Course Objectives:
1) Develop an understanding of interdisciplinary study and research.
2) Identify and articulate academic and career goals that either connect the area of specialization and professional development area (BAAS) or the three areas of study (BSMS).
3) Articulate the role of interdisciplinary research in connecting the area of specialization and professional development area (BAAS) or the three areas of study (BSMS).
4) Demonstrate the ability to identify, appraise, and summarize multiple sources of knowledge.
5) Demonstrate an ability to professionally communicate in both a written and verbal format.
Required Texts:


Recommended Text:

Curriculum Description(s)

**BAAS Program:** There are essentially three parts to the BAAS degree: Core Curriculum, Area of Specialization, and Professional Development Area. The **Core Curriculum** provides the academic foundation for all university students. The **Area of Specialization** is the equivalent of coursework in the major in a traditional degree program and is where the non-collegiate or non-transferrable credit is applied. It consists of 36-48 hours from a specific occupational area and is designated as one of the following: a) Allied Health Occupations, b) Business Occupations, c) Public Safety and Administration, d) Graphic Arts, or e) Applied Technology. The **Professional Development Area** takes the place of the minor in a traditional degree plan and is intended to broaden the student’s academic foundation. It consists of 24 to 36 hours selected from an academic discipline in consultation with the BAAS advisor. The professional development area should provide an academic foundation for the area of specialization.

**BSMS Program:** Students pursuing the BSMS degree will work with faculty to design a degree plan consisting of three areas of study. Each area of study requires a total of 18 academic hours (12 of which must be upper level). The areas of study must be complimentary of one another and students must be able to demonstrate how the areas can be logically, academically, and professionally integrated. In most cases, students choose the areas of study from any of the academic programs that currently offer minors.

Program Learning Outcomes (BAAS and BSMS)

1) Students will be able to apply approved technical and career learning to the BAAS degree (BAAS only).
2) Students will demonstrate the ability to translate interdisciplinary learning goals into cohesive degree plans (BSMS only).
3) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the importance of career and educational planning.
4) Students will demonstrate an understanding of interdisciplinary research and possession of basic research skills.
5) Students will develop the knowledge and skills necessary for ongoing educational and career success.

Course Requirements:

Critical Response Essays: Typically, these essays will be assigned at the end of a period and be due the next week. The essays will require you to take a critical look at either a set of readings that you will be completing or at a conversation that has emerged in class.

Note that these are critical response essays. To be critical means that you are not simply responding (agreeing or disagreeing with readings and conversations), but that you are analytically engaging the ideas before you. The step from response to critical engagement is that when you critically engage an idea, you analyze it for strengths and weaknesses, express each of these, and then further develop a chosen point in that conversation.

Class Presentation: On October 1st and 8th, students will give a 6-8 minute presentation. The presentation will center on one’s ability to interconnect how his/her interdisciplinary degree makes him/her the best candidate for a specific professional position or candidate for some sort of continuing education. A more specific handout discussing the requirements of the presentation will be provided at a later date.

Portfolio Sections: During the semester, you will be introduced to the portfolio that you will build and use throughout your academic career. In this course, we will complete several assignments that will become part of the portfolio. Specifically, you will complete:
Section 1: Introductory Materials,
Section 2: Statement of Career Goals, and
Section 3: Project Proposal and Literature Review.
We will spread these assignments out throughout the semester, and you will be provided with specific descriptions and requirements for each section at the appropriate time. You will turn the portfolio in at two different points in the semester.

Grades:
3 Critical Response Essays: 100 points each
Class Presentation: 100 Points
Portfolio (October): 50 Points
Portfolio (December): 100 points (counted twice) so totaling 200 points
Final Exam: 50 Points
Total: 700 Points
Course Policies:
Attendance and Late Work:
While attendance may not be mandatory in all of your classes, I do hold to an attendance policy. As much of your success will depend on deepening your understanding of interdisciplinarity and improving your critical thinking and writing skills, and we will work on these skills IN class, attendance is imperative. This being said, you will be allowed two absences without receiving any penalty. However, if you miss three class periods (3 weeks of class), your final grade for the class will be no higher than an F. While you will receive no direct penalty for missing those two class periods, your grade may be negatively impacted by the fact that you will not be allowed to make up any work that is done during each class period. Also, if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to ensure that any assignment due for that period is still turned in on time, that you get the notes for that period from a peer, and that you are prepared for the next class meeting.

As for late work, I do my best to return all work in a prompt manner. In order to do so, I must have all assignments turned in on time. Therefore, any assignment turned in late will be dropped one full letter grade for each day that it is late. Assignments will be turned in at the start of class. As you will know of due dates well in advance, I will not accept such excuses as my printer broke, the library printer did not work, something happened to my computer, etc.

The only absences that will count as excused absences will be documented family emergencies, university sanctioned events (this only includes sport/team events and will only count if I have documentation from the “coach”), and extreme medical issues. An excused absence does not include absences due to doctor appointments, personal illness, work, etc. In the case of any excused absence, you must remember that any work that is due that day is still due that day unless you have contacted me in advance, and I have agreed to other arrangements.

Academic Integrity (A-9.1):
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Stephen F. Austin State University defines academic dishonesty as:
Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf
In terms of this class, any student caught blatantly and purposely plagiarizing or cheating will automatically receive 0 points for the assignment. Furthermore, the incident may be reported.

**Free Speech and Class Conduct:**
In order to help improve our critical thinking and writing skills, we will regularly engage in class discussions. The purpose of these discussions will be to recognize that while many of the students in the class may be on the same level in terms of age or year, there are different abilities in the classroom and different ways to look at issues of academic learning. In other words, one can always learn from his/her peers. In order for this to happen, we must respect one another. Therefore, while I will encourage students to share different opinions and will not stop individuals from disagreeing with one another, I will not allow any student to engage in the use of sexist, racist, or homophobic speech. Also, I will not allow any student to simply try to roll over or silence his/her peers.

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct-10.4.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct-10.4.pdf)). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom.

In the case of this course, disruptive behavior will include the following: consistent use of cell phones/texting during class, consistent participation in side discussions that are not part of classroom dialogue, referring to your teacher or peers in an inappropriate way, physically threatening your teacher or peers, and completing homework assignments for another class. Students participating in such activities can be asked to leave the class and will be counted as absent.

**Withheld Grades:**
Ordinarly, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.” For the complete policy, [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/5.5_course-grades.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/5.5_course-grades.pdf)

**Students with Disabilities:**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS
will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices.