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American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Security and Global Studies Masters of Legal Studies Program

Course Number: LSTD 699

Credit Hours: 3

Length of Course: 16 Weeks

Prerequisite(s): Students may take the research seminar after all other course completions.

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Instructor Information

Instructor: See information provided in the Syllabus link in the classroom

Email: Please use internal classroom messaging system

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Course Description

Preparation for the Legal Studies Masters Creative Project Capstone Seminar begins on day one of a student's graduate program of study. The theories, research

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methods and analytical skills, and substantive knowledge obtained through their masters curriculum provide the basis for the masters creative project. Students will support the creative project effort, including gathering bibliographic and reference materials on the creative project topic including developing individual course research papers that may become sections of the final masters creative project. Students will address the requirements as described in the syllabus and classroom assignments. The masters creative project proposal shall be prepared in accordance with the standards of the academic discipline. The masters creative project proposal must provide a clear and lucid description of a legal issue and a proposed method of analyzing of the problem. Students must have completed all other course work before taking the masters creative project seminar.

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Course Scope

The University has established Capstone options for programs, the goal of which is to assess student success in meeting degree program objectives that are sufficient to merit the status of a scholarly “Master.”

Beginning the Creative Project

Students apply for graduation and the Graduation Department verifies they are eligible to enroll in the 16-week, 3-credit, 500-level Masters Capstone Seminar or course, which replaces the twelfth course in the student’s master’s program. Prior to enrolling in the 500-level course, the student must have completed all other courses prescribed for their degree. Students enroll in the course available in the given session and work with the professor on defining a creative project. There will be no human subjects in any Legal Studies creative project.

Creative Project Proposal

A formal creative project research proposal shall be prepared in accordance with the standards of the academic discipline. The formal proposal must provide a clear and lucid description of a question or problem and a proposed method of answering the question or solving the problem. Proposal drafting is considered a learning process and helps the students avoid oversights and possible mistakes. Guidance on the format of the proposal and a sample proposal are in the classroom. The proposal should explain the question or problem to be investigated and convince the creative project professor and department that the question or problem merits investigation. It should show that the student has read the relevant and recent literature and case law on the subject and it should contain a list of materials consulted during the preliminary stages of research. In general, the creative project proposal should include background information related to the legal research topic, purpose of the research, methodology, and analytic procedures to be used. The

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formal proposal should **not** exceed **five (5) pages** (proposal title page not included).

Preparing the Creative Project

Creative project preparation entails a partnership between the student and professor who is responsible for directing the intellectual content and proper formatting of the creative project. Creative project length and depth of research shall be in accordance with disciplinary standards. Creative project formatting shall be in strict accordance with this manual to ensure uniformity across the University. Students will use Bluebook citation style for the creative project. The student and professor shall coordinate the process for the student to submit and receive feedback on draft creative project sections. The student is also encouraged to ask other APUS faculty and professionals and leaders in their field of study to volunteer as creative project readers and provide feedback on draft creative project sections where these faculty members and professionals may have special expertise. For example, the student's graduate research methods instructor may be asked for feedback on the creative project's research design.

Approval of Creative Project

Once a final creative project manuscript is approved by the creative project professor, the manuscript, and a copy of the professor's creative project rubric evaluation shall be forwarded to a second reader designated by the department. The second reader will provide the creative project professor comments and evaluations and the creative project professor will then issue a final approval message containing a creative project grade. The Department Chair, or Dean of the applicable School, is responsible for resolving any conflicts between the creative project professor and second reader if required. Creative project manuscripts will be graded based on the standards in the APUS grading rubric on a categorical scale of: A-F.

Submission of Final Creative Project

The final step in the creative project is acceptance of the final manuscript by the APUS Richard G. Trefry Library (Library). The approved creative project manuscript will be submitted to the Library by the department. See Chapter VI for detailed submission procedures, which include specific guidance on metadata.

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Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

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1. Devise and execute an efficient research plan using primary and secondary sources;
2. Research and analyze case law, and legal principles using logical reasoning;
3. Construct convincing arguments, synthesizing research results, legal reasoning and analysis, and apply them to the factual / legal issue(s) presented; and
4. Write a professional, technically correct, clear, and concise creative research project.

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Course Delivery Method

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday evening of the week as noted and include Assignments. For this independent course of study, there is only one mandatory forum and there are no Examinations. Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this sixteen-week course.

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Course Materials

Required Course Textbooks:

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation, (Columbia Law Review Ass'n et al. eds., 20th ed. 2015). There is information in the classroom on Bluebook, and you also have access to the Bluebook online through the Library. Here is the link: <http://ezproxy.apus.edu/login?url=https://www.legalbluebook.com>. Please be sure to click "Release Seat" when you are finished with the Bluebook, since only 100 students university-wide may use the online Bluebook at any one time.

Required Readings: This will depend on the details of the creative research project.

Additional Resources: This will depend on the details of the creative research project.

Web Sites:

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In addition to the required course texts, the following public domain web sites are useful. Please abide by the university's academic honesty policy when using Internet sources as well. Note web site addresses are subject to change.

Site Name	Web Site URL/Address
Findlaw	http://www.findlaw.com
Cornell Legal Information Institute	http://www.law.cornell.edu
Basic Outlining (from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice)	Basic Outlining
Library of Congress	https://www.congress.gov/
United Nations	http://www.un.org/en/
American Bar Association (ABA)	http://www.americanbar.org/aba.html
Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)	http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

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Evaluation Procedures

The grading in this course is based on a combination of assignments, and a final research paper.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, and as such must manage competing demands on your time. Should students need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact the professor before the due date to discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from the final course grade.

Deductions

Late forum posts can be penalized up to 5 points per day.

Late assignments can be penalized up to 5 points per day.

There are seven assignments plus the creative project/paper.

1. Statement of the Research Problem

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Develop a two to three paragraph statement of a research problem that the student wishes to pursue in the field of legal studies.

2. Theoretical Framework

Provide a summary of the theory or theories, which will be used in the study (if any). Provide a short narrative, which includes each theory's major assumptions and the major theoretical propositions, which will come to play in the study.

3. Significance of the Research Project

Delineate the significance of the creative research project, e.g., what knowledge will it create, what gaps in knowledge will it help fill, how will it advance the selected theory or theories, and how the results may be applied to improve existing policy or procedures, etc.

4. Research Proposal

This will be a finalization of all of the previous steps. Please see the APUS Masters End of Program Assessment Manual (EOP Manual).

5. Background

6. Draft Outline. The outline should include an introduction including the research statement, short literature review, body of the research, analysis and conclusions. The final may, of course, differ from the draft as the draft is only a guide as to what is expected to follow. The draft outline should not be more than two pages long.

7. Creative Project Draft. The draft should include all of the essential elements of the final paper with the analysis and conclusions subject to change and perhaps some areas subject to revision/review with additional sources cited, in the final itself. This should be submitted to www.turnitin.com . The course ID and password will be provided by the instructor later in the course.

8. Final Creative project. The final work/creative project will be evaluated as per the following rubrics:

Rubric for Masters Creative Project				
Criteria	Exemplary	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable

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Purpose	The writer's central purpose or argument is readily apparent to the reader.	The writing has a clear purpose or argument, but may sometimes digress from it.	The central purpose or argument is not consistently clear throughout the paper.	The purpose or argument is generally unclear.
Content	Balanced presentation of relevant and legitimate information that clearly supports a central purpose or argument and shows a thoughtful, in-depth analysis of a significant topic. Reader gains important insights.	Information provides reasonable support for a central purpose or argument and displays evidence of a basic analysis of a significant topic. Reader gains some insights.	Information supports a central purpose or argument at times. Analysis is basic or general. Reader gains few insights.	Central purpose or argument is not clearly identified. Analysis is vague or not evident. Reader is confused or may be misinformed.
Organization	The ideas are arranged logically to support the purpose or argument. They flow smoothly from one to another and are clearly linked to each other. The reader can follow the line of reasoning.	The ideas are arranged logically to support the central purpose or argument. They are usually clearly linked to each other. For the most part, the reader can follow the line of reasoning.	In general, the writing is arranged logically, although occasionally ideas fail to make sense together. The reader is fairly clear about what writer intends.	The writing is not logically organized. Frequently, ideas fail to make sense together. The reader cannot identify a line of reasoning and loses interest.
Feel	The writing is compelling. It hooks the reader and sustains interest throughout.	The writing is generally engaging, but has some dry spots. In general, it is focused and keeps the reader's attention.	The writing is dull and not engaging. Though the paper has some interesting parts, the reader finds it difficult to maintain interest.	The writing has little personality. The reader quickly loses interest and stops reading.
Tone	The tone is consistently professional and appropriate for an academic paper.	The tone is generally professional. For the most part, it is appropriate for an academic paper.	The tone is not consistently professional or appropriate for an academic paper.	The tone is unprofessional. It is not appropriate for an academic paper.
Grammar, Spelling, Writing Mechanics (punctuation, italics, capitalization, etc.)	The writing is free or almost free of errors.	There are occasional errors, but they don't represent a major distraction or obscure meaning.	The writing has many errors, and the reader is distracted by them.	There are so many errors that meaning is obscured. The reader is confused and stops reading.

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Use of References	Compelling evidence from professionally legitimate sources is given to support claims. Attribution is clear and fairly represented.	Professionally legitimate sources that support claims are generally present and attribution is, for the most part, clear and fairly represented.	Although attributions are occasionally given, many statements seem unsubstantiated. The reader is confused about the source of information and ideas.	References are seldom cited to support statements.
Quality of References	References are primarily peer-reviewed professional journals or other approved sources (e.g., government documents, etc.). The reader is confident that the information and ideas can be trusted.	Although most of the references are professionally legitimate, a few are questionable (e.g., trade books, internet sources, popular magazines, ...). The reader is uncertain of the reliability of some of the sources.	Most of the references are from sources that are not peer-reviewed and have uncertain reliability. The reader doubts the accuracy of much of the material presented.	There are virtually no sources that are professionally reliable. The reader seriously doubts the value of the material and stops reading.
Use of Most Recent Edition of the Bluebook Style Manual	Bluebook format is used accurately and consistently in the paper and on the "References" page.	Bluebook format is used with minor errors.	There are frequent errors in Bluebook format.	Format of the document is not recognizable as Bluebook

This course adheres to the APUS grading policies. Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference the University's grading scale.

Approval of Creative Project

Once a final creative project manuscript is approved and graded by the creative project professor, the manuscript, and a copy of the professor's creative project rubric evaluation shall be forwarded to a second reader designated by the department. The second reader will provide the creative project professor any necessary input and will forward the documents to the Library. The Department Chair, or Dean of the applicable School, is responsible for resolving any conflicts between the creative project professor and second reader if required. Creative project manuscripts will be graded based on the standards in the APUS grading rubric on a categorical scale of: A-F.

<u>Grade Instruments</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Introductory	<u>3</u>	<u>3%</u>

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Forum		
Week 1 Assignment (Statement of the Research Problem)	3.86	3.86%
Week 2 Assignment (Theoretical Framework)	3.86	3.86%
Week 3 Assignment (Significance of Research)	3.86	3.86%
Week 4 Assignment 4 (Research Proposal)	3.86	3.86%
Assignment 5 (Week 8 Background)	3.86	3.86%
Assignment 6 (Week 10 Draft Outline)	3.86	3.86%
Assignment 7 (Week 12 Final Draft of Creative Project)	3.86	3.86%
Masters Creative Research Project (Week 15)	70	70%

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16– Week Course Outline

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference the University’s [grading scale](#).

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Week	Topic	Learning	Readings	Assignment
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		<u>Objectives</u>		
1	Statement of Research Problem Development	LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area. LO-2: Generate Statement of Research Problem LO-3: Prepare to use Bluebook academic citation format (footnotes) for all assignments in this class.	Read on topic of choice required to develop formal research proposal. Bluebook Whitepages and Tables.	Forum Post #1 Assignment #1: Statement of Research Problem
2	Develop Theoretical Framework	LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area. LO-2: Analyze materials in chosen topic area. LO-3: Develop theoretical framework	Read on topic of choice required to develop formal research proposal.	Assignment #2: Theoretical Framework
3	Develop Significance of the Study / Creative Project	LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area. LO-2: Analyze materials in chosen topic area. LO-3: Produce Significance of the study / creative	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	Assignment 3: Significance of the Creative Project

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		project		
4	Develop Formal Research Proposal	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in chosen topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic.</p> <p>LO-6: Develop Formal Research Proposal</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	Assignment 4: Formal Research Proposal.
5	Develop knowledge on approved creative project topic	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in chosen topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	No Formal Assignment.

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		of knowledge on topic		
6	Develop knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in chosen topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	No Formal Assignment.
7	Develop knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	No Formal Assignment.

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		<p>of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p>		
8	<p>Develop knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic & Background</p>	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Develop Background</p>	<p>Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.</p>	<p>Assignment #5: Background</p>
9	<p>Develop knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic</p>	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze</p>	<p>Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.</p>	<p>No Formal Assignment</p>

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		<p>materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p>		
Week 10	Develop Detailed Outline	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	Assignment #6: Detailed Outline

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		<p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p> <p>LO-8: Write Detailed Outline</p>		
Week 11	Develop knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	No Formal Assignment
Week 12	Develop Final Creative Project Draft	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	Assignment #7: Final Creative Research Project Draft

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		<p>area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p>		
Week 13	Develop knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	No Formal Assignment

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		position on topic.		
Week 14	Development of knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	No Formal Assignment
Week 15	Develop knowledge on approved Creative Project Topic	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	Assignment #8: Final Creative Research Project

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		<p>knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p>		
Week 16	Finalize Creative Research Project for filing in Online Library	<p>LO-1: Develop knowledge in chosen topic area.</p> <p>LO-2: Analyze materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-3: Assess materials in approved topic area.</p> <p>LO-4: Synthesize knowledge in approved topic area</p> <p>LO-5: Explain state of knowledge on topic</p> <p>LO-6: Develop position on topic</p> <p>LO-7: Justify position on topic.</p>	Read on topic of choice required to develop knowledge in approved subject area.	Make edits as required by professor / ensure metadata is correct for filing in Online Library

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Policies

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Extension Process and Policy](#)

[Disability Accommodations](#)

Writing Expectations

Students are expected to write clearly and effectively and largely error-free. Every assignment is a formal submission in this class, and should be thoroughly proofread and edited and properly formatted, per the APA formatting guidelines and the APUS Capstone Manual.

Citation and Reference Style

This class utilizes the *Bluebook* (20th edition) edition style for all writing assignments. Students should familiarize themselves with APA formatting guidelines. Students are expected to use consecutively numbered footnotes. No reference list is required.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade

Netiquette

Online universities promote the advance of knowledge through positive and constructive debate--both inside and outside the classroom. Discussions on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and "flaming." Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting--basic academic rules of good behavior and proper "Netiquette" must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the fun and excitement of learning that does not include descent to personal attacks, or student attempts to stifle the discussion of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. Email may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics,

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underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects may not translate in your e-mail messages.

- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and--especially--satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺

Disclaimer Statement

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

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Richard G. Trefry Library

The Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors’ publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Tutor.com** offers online homework help and learning resources by connecting students to certified tutors for one-on-one help. AMU and APU students are eligible for 10 free hours* of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutors are available 24/7 unless otherwise noted. Tutor.com also has a SkillCenter Resource Library offering educational resources, worksheets, videos, websites and career help. Accessing these resources does not count against tutoring hours and is also available 24/7.

Request a Library Guide for your course **(<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)**

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

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- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI1111), or class name.

If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library:
librarian@apus.edu

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