

# PA388K/ECO395K Culture and Economic Development\*

Michael Poyker<sup>†</sup>

December, 2024

Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs  
University of Texas at Austin  
Spring 2025

Class time and room: Monday 9:00 am–12:00 pm, SRH 3.216

Instructor: Dr. [Michael Poyker](#), email: [mikhail.poyker@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:mikhail.poyker@austin.utexas.edu)

Office hours: Drop-in (i.e., no appointments needed) in my office SRH 3.224

Office hours time: Wednesday 1:00–2:00 pm and Thursday 11:30 am–1:00 pm

Virtual office hours: available by appointment

Meetings: In-person, with Zoom sessions at instructor’s discretion

Zoom policy: When on Zoom, the webcam should stay on, and campus attire

Recording policy: To encourage free exchanges, recording of class proceedings is prohibited

## Course Description: Cultural Economics and Public Policy

Much of economic activity is influenced and shaped by people’s social attachments, their views of others and themselves, and the institutional setting. The course aims to explore the role of culture on economic outcomes, with a focus on how heterogeneity in culture shapes economic decisions. This course presents economic theories (and their empirical tests) of institutions, networks, cultural norms, and identity with applications to the public policy and economics of development. The lectures will cover both relevant economic theory and related empirical work.

First, we will define culture in terms of social norms, preferences, and beliefs and explore how we can measure them from an empirical perspective. Second, we will discuss where culture comes from, how it is transmitted across generations, why it persists in the long run, and how it changes. Finally, we will study the possible implications of culture and institutions on economic outcomes such as economic growth, public policy and provision of public goods, and human capital accumulation. This is a preliminary schedule, and the content and the order of readings might change.

Requirements include class attendance, reading and discussing papers (15%), participation in online discussions (10%), group presentation (20%, on April 3rd in class), and a final exam in the form of group research project (10% for proposal, due March 20th, and 45% for final project, due May 6th).

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\*First draft: October 2023; Current version: December, 2024.

I thank Patrick Wong for his patience and support in writing this syllabus. I thank Yuan Tian for the excellent paper suggestions. All errors are my own. Correspondence at: LBJ School of Public Affairs SRH 3.224, 2315 Red River St., 78712, Austin, TX, USA.

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For the exam presentation, each student group will choose three papers that are related to the research project. These papers must be relatively recent publications or working papers. Please let me know if you have a question about whether a paper is appropriate. If you are working with another student on research and would like to read the same papers (or some subset) together, that is fine. The list of your selected three papers should be due by Feb 28 at 5 pm. From each student's set of three papers, one of the papers will be chosen at random for that student group to present. The presentations will be approximately 15 minutes each, depending on the final number of students in the class. The grade will be based on the slides and the presentation.

The goal of the research project and presentations is to help students begin the transition from coursework to policy-relevant research. The research project should be empirical and should attempt causal analysis. They should present a research question, describe relevant facts/institutional context, and outline a basic economic framework that can be used to answer the question, data, and identification strategy. The description should be approximately 20 pages, double-spaced. The research note is due by May 6 at 5 pm.

## Prerequisites

This seminar is an elective for the LBJ Masters and senior Econ undergraduate students, although PhD students can also sign in. There is no formal prerequisite to this course, but class members are (i) expected to have background knowledge of microeconomics and econometrics and (ii) preferred to have taken classes in applied micro.

### The main book I will require for this class is

- Akerlof, George A., and Rachel E. Kranton. Identity economics: How our identities shape our work, wages, and well-being. Princeton University Press, 2010.

### The other book that I recommend is

- Joseph Henrich (2017) The Secret of our Success, Princeton.

## Topics, Class Meetings, and Deadlines

Week	Date of class	Activity/deadline	Topic
Week 1	January 17th	Regular classes	Culture, institutions, and policy
Week 2	January 24th	Regular classes	Culture, institutions, and policy
Week 3	January 31st	Regular classes	Non-market exchange
Week 4	February 7th	Regular classes	Relational contracting
Week 5	February 14th	Regular classes	Social networks
Week 6	February 21st	Regular classes	Transmission and persistence of culture
Week 7	February 28th	Regular classes	Social norms and identity
Week 8	March 6th	Regular classes	Religion
Week 9	March 13th	Spring break (no classes!)	
Week 10	March 20th	Regular classes & Project proposals	Religious/ethnic diversity and conflict
Week 11	March 27th	Regular classes	Gender and race
Week 12	April 3rd	Presentations	
Week 13	April 10th	Regular classes	Trust and pro-social values
Week 14	April 17th	Regular classes	Pol.econ, corruption, & fiscal policy
Week 15	April 24th	Regular classes	Political populism
Week 16	May 1st	Study days (no classes!)	
Week 17	May 6th	Final projects deadline (no classes!)	

## Course Schedule and Readings

**Symbol \*** means that it is an obligatory reading that will not be covered in class and should be read at home.

**Symbol +** means that it is suggested reading (you can try to read the paper but skip technical parts that you don't understand).

Other papers are suggested papers for a presentation (although you can choose any other relevant paper from an economics or political science journal).

### 1. Week 1-2: January 17th and 24th: Culture, Institutions, and Policy

- \*Textbook reading: Identity Economics: Part I, Section 1, pp. 3–16
- \*Alesina, A. and Giuliano, P., 2015. Culture and institutions. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 53(4), pp.898-944.
- +Loves, S., Nunn, N., Robinson, J.A. and Weigel, J.L., 2017. The evolution of culture and institutions: Evidence from the Kuba Kingdom. *Econometrica*, 85(4), pp.1065-1091.
- +Becker, S.O., Böckh, K., Hainz, C. and Wößmann, L., 2016. The empire is dead, long live the empire! Long-run persistence of trust and corruption in the bureaucracy. *The Economic Journal*, 126(590), pp.40-74.
- Loves, S. and Montero, E., 2021. Concessions, violence, and indirect rule: evidence from the Congo Free State. *The quarterly journal of economics*, 136(4), pp.2047-2091.
- Talhelm, T., X. Zhang, S. Oishi, C. Shimin, D. Duan, X. Lan, and S. Kiyayama. 2014. Large-Scale Psychological Differences Within China Explained by Rice Versus Wheat Agriculture, *Science*, 344: 603-608.

### 2. Week 3: January 31st: Non-Market Exchange – Farms and Firms

Required readings:

- \*Ulyssea, G., 2020. Informality: Causes and consequences for development. *Annual Review of Economics*, 12, pp.525-546.
- +Ulyssea, G., 2018. Firms, informality, and development: Theory and evidence from Brazil. *American Economic Review*, 108(8), pp.2015-2047.
- Shaban, Radwan (1987) Testing between Competing Models of Sharecropping, *Journal of Political Economy*, 95(5), pp. 893-920.
- Che and Hausch, 1999. Cooperative Investments and the Value of Contracting, *American Economic Review*, pp. 125-47.

### 3. Week 4: February 7th: Reputation, Communities, Informal Enforcement, and Relational Contracting

Required readings:

- \*Textbook reading: Identity Economics: Part II, Section 5, pp. 39–60
- \*Greif, Avner (1993) Contract Enforceability and Economic Institutions in Early Trade: The Maghribi Traders' Coalition, *American Economic Review*, 83(3), pp.525-548.
- +Karlan, Dean, Mobius, Markus, Rosenblatt, Tanya and Adam Szeidl. 2009. Trust and Social Collateral, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(3), p. 1307-1361.
- McMillan, J. and Woodruff, C., 1999. Interfirm relationships and informal credit in Vietnam. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 114(4), pp. 1285-1320.
- Marianne Bertrand and Chang-Tai Hsieh and Nick Tsivanidis (2021) Contract Labor and Firm Growth in India Revised & Resubmitted to *Econometrica*

- Banerjee, Abhijit and Esther Duflo (2000). Reputation Effects and the Limits of Contracting: A study of the Indian Software Industry, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 115(3), pp. 989-1017, 2000.

#### 4. **Week 5: February 14th: Social Networks**

Required readings:

- \*Jackson, M.O., 2014. Networks in the understanding of economic behaviors. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 28(4), pp.3-22.
- +Tian, Y., Caballero, M.E. and Kovak, B.K., 2022. Social learning along international migrant networks. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 195, pp.103-121.
- Caballero, M.E., Cadena, B. and Kovak, B.K., 2021. The international transmission of local economic shocks through migrant networks (No. w28696). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Jackson, Matthew and Tomas Rodriguez-Barraquer, Xu Tan. 2012. "Social Capital and Social Quilts: Network Patterns of Favor Exchange" *American Economic Review* Vol. 102, Iss. 5, 1857–1897, 2012.

#### 5. **Week 6: February 21st: Social Norms and Identity**

Required readings:

- \*Textbook reading: Identity Economics: Part I, Section 3-4, pp. 17–38
- +Akerlof, George and Rachel Kranton (2000), "Economics and Identity," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 115(3), pp. 715-753.
- +Atkin, D., Colson-Sihra, E. and Shayo, M., 2021. How do we choose our identity? a revealed preference approach using food consumption. *Journal of Political Economy*, 129(4), pp.1193-1251.
- +Atkin, D., 2016. The caloric costs of culture: Evidence from Indian migrants. *American Economic Review*, 106(4), pp.1144-1181.
- Bénabou, Roland and Jean Tirole, 2011. "Identity, Morals and Taboos: Beliefs as Assets" *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

#### 6. **Week 7: February 28th: Creation, Transmission, and Persistence of Cultural Norms**

- \*Young, H Peyton. 2015. "The evolution of social norms." *Annual Review of Economics*, 7(1):359–387.
- +Giuliano, Paola, and Nathan Nunn. 2021. "Understanding cultural persistence and change." *The Review of Economic Studies*, 88(4): 1541–1581
- Enke, Benjamin. 2019. "Kinship, cooperation, and the evolution of moral systems." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 134(2): 953–1019.
- Young, Peyton (1996). "The Economics of Convention," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* Vol. 10, pp. 105-122.

#### 7. **Week 8-9: March 6th and 13th: Culture, Religion, Human Capital, and Economic Outcomes**

- \*Textbook reading: Identity Economics: Part II, Section 6, pp. 61–82
- \*Iyer, S., 2016. The new economics of religion. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 54(2), pp.395-441.
- +Chen, M. K. (2013). The Effect of Language on Economic Behavior: Evidence from Savings Rates, Health Behaviors, and Retirement Assets. *American Economic Review* 103(2), 690-731.
- +Montero, E. and Yang, D., 2022. Religious festivals and economic development: Evidence from the timing of Mexican saint day festivals. *American Economic Review*, 112(10), pp.3176-3214.
- Ananyev, Maxim and Poyker, Michael (2021) "Christian Missions and Anti-Gay Attitudes in Africa", *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 184, pp. 359-374

- Bergeron, Augustin. 2020. “Religion and the Scope of Morality: Evidence from Exposure to Missions in the DRC.” Working Paper.
- Bryan, Gharad, James J. Choi, and Dean Karlan. 2021. “Randomizing Religion: The Impact of Protestant Evangelism on Economic Outcomes.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 293–380.
- Campante, Filipe, and David Yanagizawa-Drott. 2015. “Does religion affect economic growth and happiness? Evidence from Ramadan.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 130(2): 615–658
- Michalopoulos, Stelios, Louis Putterman, and David N Weil. 2019. “The influence of ancestral life ways on individual economic outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 17(4):1186–1231.

#### 8. **Week 10: March 20th: Religious and Ethnic Diversity and Conflict**

- \*Drelichman, M., Vidal-Robert, J. and Voth, H.J., 2021. The long-run effects of religious persecution: Evidence from the Spanish Inquisition. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(33), p.e2022881118.
- +Saumitra Jha, Trade, complementaries and religious tolerance: evidence from India, *American Journal of Political Science* 107(4) 2013.
- +Desmet, K. and Wacziarg, R., 2021. The cultural divide. *The Economic Journal*, 131(637), pp.2058-2088.
- Becker, Sascha O, and Luigi Pascali. 2019. “Religion, Division of Labor, and Conflict: Anti-Semitism in Germany over 600 Years.” *American Economic Review*, 109(5): 1764–1804.
- Ananyev M. and Poyker M., (2023) Identity and Conflict: Evidence from Tuareg Rebellion in Mali, *World Development*, 161, 106108
- Desmet, K., Ortuño-Ortín, I. and Wacziarg, R., 2017. Culture, ethnicity, and diversity. *American Economic Review*, 107(9), pp.2479-2513.

#### 9. **Week 11: March 27th: Gender and Race**

- \*Textbook reading: Identity Economics: Part III, pp. 81–109
- \*Alesina, A., P. Giuliano, and N. Nunn (2013). On The Origins of Gender Roles: Women and The Plough. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128(2), 469-530.
- +Bursztyn, L., González, A.L. and Yanagizawa-Drott, D., 2020. Misperceived social norms: Women working outside the home in Saudi Arabia. *American Economic Review*, 110(10), pp.2997-3029.
- Poyker M (2023) Regime Stability and Persistence of Traditional Practices, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 105(5), pp. 1175- 1190

#### 10. **Week 12: April 3rd: Presentations**

#### 11. **Week 13: April 10th: Trust and Pro-Social Values**

- \*Gaechter S. and J. F. Schulz. 2016. “Intrinsic honesty and the prevalence of rule violations across societies” *Nature*, 531, 496-499.
- \*Nunn, N. and L. Wantchekon (2011). The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa. *American Economic Review* 101(7), 3221-3252.
- +Moscona, J., Nunn, N. and Robinson, J.A., 2017. Keeping it in the family: Lineage organization and the scope of trust in sub-Saharan Africa. *American Economic Review*, 107(5), pp.565-571.
- +Miho, A., Jarotschkin, A. and Zhuravskaya, E., 2023. Diffusion of gender norms: Evidence from Stalin’s ethnic deportations. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, p.jvad040.
- Cagé, J., Dagorret, A., Grosjean, P. and Jha, S., 2023. Heroes and villains: The effects of heroism on autocratic values and Nazi collaboration in France. *American Economic Review*, 113(7), pp.1888-1932.

- Dippel, C. and Heblich, S., 2018. Leadership and social movements: The Forty-Eighters in the Civil War (No. w24656). National Bureau of Economic Research.

## 12. Week 8: February 28th: Political Economy, Corruption, and Fiscal Policy

Required readings:

- \*Bardhan, Pranab. 1997. "Corruption and Development: A Review of the Issues," *Journal of Economic Literature*, September, p. 1320-1346.
- +Bau, Natalie. 2021. "Can policy change culture? Government pension plans and traditional kinship practices." *American Economic Review*, 111(6): 1880–1917.
- \*Latika Chaudhary and Jared Rubin, 2016. Religious identity and the provision of public goods: Evidence from the Indian Princely States, *Journal of Comparative Economics* 44(3)
- +García-Jimeno, C., 2016. The political economy of moral conflict: An empirical study of learning and law enforcement under prohibition. *Econometrica*, 84(2), pp.511-570.
- Acemoglu, Daron, and Thierry Verdier. 2000. "The Choice between Market Failures and Corruption." *American Economic Review*, 90(1): 194- 211.
- Banerjee, A. and L. Iyer, 2005. "History, Institutions, and Economic Performance: The Legacy of Colonial Land Tenure Systems in India," *American Economic Review* 95, 1190–1213.

## 13. Week 15: April 24th: Political Populism

Textbook reading: Identity Economics: Part IV, pp. 113–130

Required readings:

- Guriev, Sergei, and Elias Papaioannou. "The political economy of populism." *Journal of Economic Literature* 60, no. 3 (2022): 753-832.
- \*Algan, Y., Guriev, S., Papaioannou, E. and Passari, E., 2017. The European trust crisis and the rise of populism. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 2017(2), pp.309-400.
- +Ananyev, M., Poyker, M. and Tian, Y., 2021. The safest time to fly: Pandemic response in the era of Fox News. *Journal of Population Economics*, 34, pp.775-802.
- +Ali, O., Desmet, K. and Wacziarg, R., 2023. Does Anger Drive Populism? (No. w31383). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Bursztyn, Leonardo, Georgy Egorov, and Stefano Fiorin. 2020. "From extreme to mainstream: The erosion of social norms." *American Economic Review*, 110(11): 3522–48
- Melander, Eric, 2023. Brexit and the Blitz: Conflict, Collective Memory and Euroscepticism

## Assignments and Grading

The composition of the final grade (100 points) is as follows:

1. Final (group) project (45%);
2. Final (group) project proposal (10%);
3. Group presentation (20%);
4. Class participation (15%);
5. Online discussion participation (10%)

**Final project** The largest portion of the final grade (45%) is coming from the final project. The project will attempt to study a policy of students' choice with respect to the materials we cover in class. The project has to contain econometric analysis and attempt to approach the quality and the style of the papers that we discuss in class. It will require a choice of a novel question, collection of data, and an attempt at causal analysis. The project can be completed in groups of up to 4 people (this may change depending on the quantity of signed-in students). If the project is done by a group, everyone receives the same grade, and there is no penalty (or reward) for doing it in groups (alone).

**Final project's proposal** A one-page proposal of the final project that specifies the question, motivation, institutional context, proposed sources of data, proposed empirical methods, and identification strategy (i.e., source of exogenous variation/quasi-natural experiment). This proposal aims to give you some feedback before you attempt to invest time in the final project. I will strive to return all proposals with feedback no later than one week after their submission. Group composition and project topic can still be changed after I give the feedback for the proposal.

**Group presentation** Students need to choose one of the papers from the reading list and make a short 15-20-minute presentation of the paper. The aim of the exercise (in addition to learning working in a team) is to (i) understand the question, motivation, institutional context, data, methods, and identification strategy, (ii) choose only the most important information for the understanding of the paper, and (iii) coherently explain it to the rest of the class in a short presentation. Presentations can be completed in groups of up to 4 people (this may change depending on the quantity of signed-in students).

**Class participation** To encourage engagement and learning, answering questions in class and asking good questions can give students free points. Note that if students choose to participate in class on Zoom (even for a valid reason), they will not receive any participation points that day. If the class is delivered by Zoom because of my schedule change — everyone is still eligible for the class participation points.

**Participation in online discussions** Sometimes, I will post questions related to the class or news related to the current topic. It is even better if students themselves post current news that is policy-relevant and relevant to the topics in cultural economics that we have covered. Participation in online discussions of these policy-relevant topics will be rewarded with points.

**Final grade** Final grades will be assigned based on the following scale: A: >94; A-: 90-93; B+: 87-89; B: 84-86; B-: 80-83; C+: 77-79; C: 74-76; C-: 70-73.<sup>1</sup> Late assignments are penalized by 10% of that assignment's maximum grade value for being late. Papers turned in more than 24 hours after the deadline are marked down by 20% of maximum grade, over 48 hours — by 30%. I do not accept assignments more than three days after they are due—they will be assigned a grade of zero.

A list of assignments, due dates, and relative weighting can be found above. Students should upload written assignments in PDF format.

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<sup>1</sup>Note that for the MPAff students, according to Graduate School rules, a student must earn at least a C—i.e., at least 74/100—to pass the course.

## Class Format, Attendance, Readings, and Electronic Devices

The class meets in person via a once-a-week seminar. Consistent with central UT policy, I do not encourage students to attend the seminar virtually, as that would severely disrupt the educational experience for everyone. If you need to attend the class remotely (e.g., if you have a fever), I will provide a Zoom link by request. However, you will not receive any points for in-class participation even if you actively participate. To safeguard the classroom space as a place where students can try out ideas and speak freely, I also do not allow recordings of the seminar, audio, or video. Anyone violating this policy is subject to serious disciplinary consequences by the LBJ School.

Attendance is mandatory and crucial to student success in the course. In class discussions, students apply the concepts they encounter in their weekly readings to real-world scenarios. As per UT Austin policy, students must notify the instructor of any pending absence at least fourteen days before the date of observance of a religious holy day. If students must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project to observe a religious holy day, they will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. Students are each allowed **one** "freebie" absence. Any further unexcused absences reduce a student's class participation grade by 10%.

The reading load for this course is reasonably heavy, averaging 200 pages per week. Moreover, reading short papers actually consumes more time than the textbook, so students should allocate enough time to get through them. There is only one book that students are required to purchase. It should be available in the UT bookstore, and I have provided a [link](#) to Amazon your convenience. Students should purchase the most updated version (2010 by Princeton University Press), as it has some extra chapters that previous editions do not. All other readings are available on the course's Canvas page. Students need to print these documents themselves or read them from the laptop. You are allowed to use laptops in my class if you need to look at the slides and papers we are discussing or type the notes.

## University Stipulations

The University of Texas has a set of stipulations governing learning protocol and campus life. The most important of these stipulations are summarized here:

### Proofreading, Academic Honesty, Artificial Intelligence, and Rules for Class Discussion

Public policy students at the LBJ School are expected to produce fluent and lucid writing. Students should proofread their papers before submitting them or ask a fellow student to do so. Any assignment with **more than three spelling or grammar mistakes per page may be returned to the student** and incur a one-day late penalty. I am not a native speaker myself, but there are free software (e.g., [Grammarly](#)) that should help you write without mistakes. I encourage you to use this software.

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and the community. I expect students to be familiar with the University's academic honesty policies and abide by them. This includes rules prohibiting plagiarism, including unauthorized use of Artificial Intelligence tools on assignments unless expressly allowed by the assignment prompt.

This course is taught as a seminar. We will spend most of our time discussing the readings, applying them to current events, and debating topics (sometimes controversial) in public policy analysis. Some of these topics may be uncomfortable or even upsetting to students. To maintain an inclusive, welcoming, but rigorous classroom atmosphere, I will enforce the following three cardinal rules of discussion participation:

1. **Commitment to civility** Students should remain civil toward each other. I will not allow students to raise their voices, talk over each other, or engage in personal attacks.
2. **Commitment to evidence-based policy** Students should defend their arguments with evidence. I will challenge all arguments based solely on subjective feelings, conspiracy theories, or disreputable sources.



- 3. Commitment to the fundamental dignity of all persons** Students should respect the worth of all humans equally. A classroom is a safe place for exploring all manner of ideas, and students should feel free to advance arguments they may disagree with or may be unpopular. I will, however, not entertain any argument that questions the fundamental dignity of any person, whether based on their race, nationality, sex/gender/sexual orientation, or any other immutable characteristic.

### **Office Hours, Guns, and Safety & Security on Campus**

My office hours are “drop-in” style — no appointments are needed. Time intervals are Wednesday 1:00–2:00 pm and Thursday 11:30 am–1:00 pm. Students can come at any time during these time intervals. If I need to change the time of the office hours, I will announce the new time in advance. I can meet in person, in my office (SRH 3.224, second floor, next to the computer labs on the I-35 side of the building), or virtually by appointment via Zoom or MsTeams.

My office is a gun-free zone. You may not bring any concealed weapons to my office. According to state law, I cannot legally prohibit students from bringing a concealed weapon to class. The university’s policies on concealed carry are available [here](#). Students, however, should note that this course includes no activities or intellectual exercises for which a firearm would benefit. A classroom should be a safe space for intellectual exploration. Instead of packing heat, pack your brains.

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Students should familiarize themselves with all exit doors of each classroom and building they may occupy. Students should remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one they used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, students are to follow the instructions of faculty or class instructors. No one should re-enter a building unless instructed by the Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office. Information regarding evacuation routes and procedures can be found [here](#).

### **Disabilities, Mental Health Resources, and Other University Resources**

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Students experiencing any barriers to learning should notify me so I can work with them to ensure they have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. Any student with a disability or who thinks they may have a disability and need accommodations should contact Disability and Access via its [website](#). Students already registered with that office should deliver their Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss their accommodations and needs in this course.

Students needing immediate mental health support can call UT’s Counseling & Mental Health Center Monday-Friday 8 am-5 pm at 512-471-3515 or UT’s 24/7 Crisis Line at 512-471-2255. Students should note the contact information for the [Behavior Concerns Advice Line](#) (BCAL): 512-232-5050, and the Campus Safety & Wellness Resources [website](#). The LBJ School also has a dedicated Counselor in Academic Residence: [Bryce Moffett](#). She can be a great resource for any student needing short-term counseling, advice on seeking longer-term services, or a sympathetic ear. She is also well-placed to refer students to other mental health resources on campus and in the broader Austin community. Students can reach her at 512-232-4449, and her drop-in office hours are Mondays 1-2 pm in SRH 3.119.

### **Special Accommodations for Religious Holidays**

Observance of religious holidays by individual students is respected. Class members should inform the instructor of pending absence at least fourteen days before the date of observance, and preferably at the beginning of the semester. While the class will not be canceled because of individual members’ religious observance, the due dates of projects can be modified.

## Harassment Reporting Requirements

Senate Bill 212 (SB 212), which took effect January 1, 2020, is a Texas State Law that requires all employees (both faculty and staff) at a public or private post-secondary institution to promptly report any knowledge of any incidents of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking “committed by or against a person who was a student enrolled at or an employee of the institution at the time of the incident.” Please note that the instructor for this class is a mandatory reporter and must share with the [Title IX office](#) any information about sexual harassment/assault shared with me by a student, whether in-person or as part of a journal or other class assignment. Note that a report to the Title IX office does not obligate a victim to take any action, but this type of information cannot be kept strictly confidential except when shared with designated confidential employees. A confidential employee is someone a student can go to and talk about a Title IX matter without triggering that employee to have to report the situation to have it automatically investigated. A list of confidential employees is available on the [Title IX website](#).