

HNRS 1120-009 MW 1:00-2:15
UNM Honors College Room 1020

Dr. Obenauf
Fall Term 2026

LEGACY OF SUCCESS

SYLLABUS

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays
12:30-1:00 and 4:00-4:30
and by appointment, Room 1071

Welcome to Legacy of Success! This course is intended to help you get the most out of your time in the Honors College. This semester we will examine how success and other human values are defined within the works we read, and how they manifest through various characters, themes, and forms. We will focus on how these values both reflect and affect the values not only of the cultures that produced them but also of our own culture. Along the way, you will develop a deeper knowledge of literature, of history, and of yourself.

Legacy of Success is different from other classes you have likely taken in that it is centered on primary historical literary sources. I am interested in how you respond to the ideas and themes in our readings without regard for what anyone else has said about them. I am looking for your most honest responses and interpretations based on the evidence you gather from our sources. Without fear of saying the “wrong” thing, or pressure to say the “right” thing, you will gain confidence in summarizing texts in your own words and generating your own ideas about them based on evidence you cite.

To help you slow down and practice reading, thinking, and writing carefully, most weeks you will need to spend between five and ten hours outside of class preparing for our seminar sessions. I hope you can use that time to “unplug” from many of your favorite distractions and, as much as possible, write in a paper journal, read from print editions of books, and revise your papers in longhand. We won’t use Canvas in this class—you’ll use Microsoft Word to produce MLA-style documents, which you’ll print out and turn in as hard copies. I’ll read your papers with a pencil in my hand and return them with notes you will then review and use as you work on your next paper. When we’re in class together, we will rarely use the projector for videos or PowerPoint; rather, we’ll give each other our full attention by putting away our electronics and listening to what each person is really trying to convey through their words.

Even as we work carefully and intentionally, we’ll pack a lot into our time together. Our lively reading list will include a Kurt Vonnegut short story, Roman satires, medieval romances, a medieval morality play translated for this class, Doctor Faustus, an eighteenth-century Oriental tale, a Mozart opera, autobiographies by Benjamin Franklin and Frederick Douglass, and two great American novels from 1925, The Great Gatsby and Gentlemen Prefer Blondes.

This is a discussion-based seminar, so consistent attendance and active participation are expected. Your reflections in a pre-reading journal will help you write a series of short response papers in which you connect your own experience with the course materials. These short response papers will also help you practice argumentation and formatting in preparation for the longer assignments. There will be an analytical paper, a final creative project, and a group presentation.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS COURSE

What you get out of this class depends on what you put into it.

I am inviting you to slow down this fall and to work intentionally. That means reading everything—our course texts, this syllabus, my Guide to Writing, assignment instructions, the drafts of your essays, and my feedback on them—at least twice. If something isn't clear, please ask. Ask in class. Shoot me an email. Come to office hours. I will do my best to explain why each assignment matters and how it connects to the larger skills you're developing. I want to make sure that you get the most out of everything you do, and often that means explaining the rationale behind it all.

You will be staring at a lot of screens this fall, and so it is my sincere hope that you use *Legacy of Success* as an **analog oasis**. I hope you will make a point of writing in your journal in longhand before each reading and that you will savor our readings in their printed versions. Now more than ever, you have an opportunity not only to practice focusing on a single task for extended periods of time—but to use this unplugged time as an escape from some of the other pressures of the present. If you don't already own a decent dictionary, you should consider buying one. A print dictionary will allow you to look up unfamiliar words without getting sucked into your phone.

As you make the transition from high school to college, you may find that some of the habits that helped you succeed in the past work differently in an Honors seminar. This course will ask you to approach reading, writing, deadlines, feedback, and even mistakes in some new ways. You do not need to arrive already knowing how to do all of this; learning how is part of the course.

There are no shortcuts in genuine learning. One of the most valuable skills you can develop here is intellectual patience: the capacity to wrestle with a difficult passage until it makes sense, the discipline to keep refining a draft until it says exactly what you mean, and the confidence to trust your own reasoning before turning to anyone—or anything—else for answers. This is why—even under the best of circumstances—the *Legacy* seminar is a rite of passage for Honors students. You need practice in giving the level of attention to detail needed for success at the college level, and you will get it in this class. Indeed, past students have reported that *Legacy of Success* is one of the most challenging courses they take at UNM—but that the effort is worth it in the long run. For example, compared with English classes you may have taken in high school, this course will ask you to work much more closely with textual evidence to build nuanced, precise arguments without any fluff or filler, and so this class will demand the

same attention you would devote to other classes where the skills, concepts, and materials are entirely new.

I am committed to helping you get up to speed in our brief time together. The assignments in this class are intended to push you to grow and think in new ways, and are graded more carefully than you may have experienced in the past. I will show you how to meet the high standards in Honors through examples in seminar, handouts and guides, and highly individualized feedback. Taking the time to understand and apply this advice will help you succeed in Legacy of Success and develop skills you can use in other classes and beyond graduation. **Since this class does not use Canvas, you are responsible for keeping track of deadlines, the grades you receive on completed work, and the course requirements you still need to complete.** Develop whatever system works for you—a calendar, planner, checklist, spreadsheet, or something else—and keep it up to date throughout the semester.

In our effort to avoid spewing BS, we will practice thinking like historians and anthropologists—in discussion as in your papers in this class, you should avoid writing about how a fictional character made you “feel” or what alternative explanation for an author’s literary choices you might come up with—your primary task is to follow the evidence to see where it leads and to express your interpretation as precisely and coherently as possible. I say a lot more about this in my Guide to Writing. Your arguments don’t have to be unique, but they must be entirely your own.

Although the literature on our syllabus is sublime, some of it is quite difficult to understand at first. Rather than relying on summaries and other people’s interpretations—which may be inaccurate or may cloud your analysis of the course readings—you should read slowly and with a dictionary, taking notes and coming to class with questions you were unable to answer on your own. It is normal to be a little confused at times. That is part of the process.

Before each reading, I will give a brief lecture on the upcoming text. You should take notes on this background information so that you can incorporate it into your response papers. Your readers need context which you do not yet possess. Rather than relying on outside sources that may color your reading of the materials, you should rely on the information I give in class. If you must miss class, you should get notes from a classmate on the content that you missed.

You are expected to be the sole creator of all work you submit and of every idea you raise during class discussion. This includes resisting the temptation to use AI tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, or similar software. They can imitate certain skills, but they cannot give you the experience of doing the work yourself—and they can lead you astray. This course is designed to give you the rare opportunity to build your own voice, with your own reasoning, from the ground up. If you are ever in doubt about whether it is acceptable to use a particular resource for this class, you should ask your instructor. **Before you submit each assignment, ask yourself this question: Did I do this work myself, yes or no?** I look forward to seeing what you’ll discover for yourself this semester.

YOUR GRADE

There are many ways to assess student learning. In this class, the main form of assessment will be the feedback on your work. The comments you get on your papers are for your benefit. You should read my notes and ask questions so that you can follow up on each piece of advice as you work on each subsequent essay.

In addition to the handwritten and typed notes, I will assign letter grades to your formal writing (i.e., the Analytical Paper and your Final Project) and grade the shorter work on a pass/fail basis. These grades are a necessary evil: the grade you earn on each assignment is far less important than the feedback you receive and the progress you make over the course of the semester. You should not fixate on the grades. Take each assignment as an opportunity to try doing something differently.

30% Participation, including group presentation
 70% Written work
 20% Ungraded work (response papers, lecture summaries, etc.)
 20% Shorter Analytical Paper
 30% Final Project

Your semester grade will follow the Honors College's unique grading system according to these criteria:

A semester grade of A+, A, or A– will be recorded on your university transcript as an A. An “A” signifies exemplary work that fully meets Honors expectations and will compute into your academic GPA.

A semester grade of B+ through C– will be recorded on your university transcript as “CR.” A grade of Credit in this course signals that you participated meaningfully in class discussion and that you made an earnest attempt to meet the basic norms of scholarly writing even if your work did not consistently meet Honors-level expectations for writing and rigor. You will receive credit towards graduation for your satisfactory work in this class, but your grade will not factor into your academic GPA.

A semester grade below a C– will be recorded on your university transcript as “NC.” A grade of No Credit signals a failure to meet basic conventions of scholarly work, such as deadlines, formatting, grammar, accurate citations and bibliographies, and/or meaningful attendance and participation. **It is not possible to pass this course if your final project is incoherent or lacks appropriate citations or an accurate bibliography, regardless of your grades on earlier assignments.** Thus, a grade of NC indicates unacceptable work and is not computed into your GPA or counted towards graduation.

I believe that every student enrolled in this seminar is capable of earning an A for the semester in Legacy of Success. Since I do not grade on a curve, nothing would delight me more than to turn in all As in December.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Attendance: We all benefit from hearing your perspectives in class discussion. **I will lower your participation grade for each unexcused absence. After four unexcused absences, therefore, you will no longer be able to earn a passing grade in the class.** Your consistent attendance and contribution to class discussion are crucial to the success of this small seminar. And although I expect you to be ready to begin on time, it's better to be late than not to come at all. Consistent tardiness will affect your participation grade in proportion to the consistency of your disruption. Please keep in touch with me if you must miss class or encounter an unexpected circumstance that interferes with your coursework. I want to help you succeed in this class and will work with you when ordinary problems arise; students who need ongoing accommodations should follow the process described later in this syllabus.

Book policy: Bring the book we're reading to every class session. We will need to cite evidence for every claim we make. To practice quoting the text extensively during class discussion in preparation for your papers, we will all (literally) need to be on the same page. I have prepared a photocopied coursepack of shorter readings and ordered the most inexpensive editions I could find of longer books to make sure that you can afford the materials for this class, and you are expected to use these physical printed materials, in the exact editions I have requested. Our classroom is both a NO-B.S. ZONE and a safe space to try out new ideas; the best ideas are anchored in concrete evidence; without your book, you cannot cite evidence for your claims, and therefore you cannot participate meaningfully in discussion. **If you realize you've forgotten your book, please tell me immediately; with permission, you may share with a classmate or use an electronic version for that day only. Otherwise, you may be dismissed from class and marked absent for the day.**

Participation and preparation: Honors seminars are neither lectures nor bull sessions; active attendance is a part of participation, and so your presence alone does not guarantee participation points. You are encouraged to contribute when you have something thoughtful to say...which means coming to class thoroughly prepared to discuss the day's readings with an open mind. The best way to prepare is to read the course materials attentively, looking up unfamiliar words and concepts, and generally considering the major issues of the works before we begin our discussions.

Electronics use: The emphasis in a seminar is on conversation. Even before class begins, Honors wishes to cultivate a sense of community through chitchat amongst your peers. In order to be fully engaged in our discussions, you should put away your electronic devices when you are in class so that you can devote your total attention to what your classmates are saying and to what you can contribute. I again ask that you use PRINT editions of the texts we will be discussing so that you can leave your phones, computers, tablets, e-readers, and other distractions in your bags. If you must use electronics during class, you will need to resist the temptation to check social media or work on other projects.

Reading journal: In addition to your normal class notes, you will need a separate notebook—a **reading journal**—to use for reflection throughout the semester. For each reading, I will announce some reflection questions for you to consider in your private reading journal. I recommend tackling the questions before attacking the reading so that you can see how your ideas compare with those of the text. This will take approximately **one to two hours per text** and it is a significant part of this course. You will draw on your personal responses in your short response papers, and your observations about the readings will help you prepare for class discussion. **This reading journal is strictly confidential—you will never, ever be required to share its contents with me or with any of your classmates. You are expected to keep up with it.**

Following up by email: Although Honors expects all students to contribute to our daily seminar discussion, you may not be able to express every idea that you would like to explore in our limited time. I encourage you to email me with your observations, questions, or even links to relevant articles. Past students have found it helpful to articulate an idea by explaining it in an email to me, and this is one way for introverted students to show that they are truly engaged in the course.

Group presentation: At the beginning of the semester you will be divided into five groups of three or four students each. Each group will be responsible for preparing a presentation of **approximately 15 minutes and no more than 20 minutes** in length on life in Ancient Rome, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, or the Roaring Twenties. **You are also responsible as a group for creating two handouts for your classmates' reference: 1) a timeline of the major events of your period, and 2) an annotated bibliography of the five best resources on your period (print and electronic).** You should highlight the major historical, literary, artistic, philosophical, social, and political developments, chosen with an eye towards our theme of success in that society. Feel free to include examples of music, art, and architecture to help bring your period to life. The best presentations will have been rehearsed together at least three times as a group before class. **Please refrain from using PowerPoint EXCEPT as a vehicle for a slideshow of pictures of art, architecture, maps, etc. Your slideshow must contain no text other than captions for your images. Thank you.**

WRITTEN WORK

You can develop the skills to meet the expectations for writing in this class, and my goal is to help you get there. If that feels daunting now, remember that you're here to learn how to meet them—just like learning a sport, a language, or an instrument, we start from where we are and build up through steady practice. I hope that the habits and skills you develop in Legacy of Success become automatic so that you can apply them in all your classes and in your life beyond graduation.

Legacy of Success has a heavy writing component because it is meant to prepare you for the demands of reasoning and communicating at a very high level. I will offer you plenty of advice as you prepare to write and revise your papers, and, after you turn them in, I will provide ample feedback on your papers, including marginal annotations

and typed comments so that you can continue to improve your writing, no matter how well you write at the start of the term. You should review these notes carefully. If you're willing to work with me on the process, you'll find that this feedback loop is one of the most valuable parts of the course.

The easiest way to meet the formatting requirements for this class is to use the MLA template I have provided on my website. It will allow you to focus your energy on your writing and argumentation and me to focus my energy on responding to your writing and argumentation. I have also provided a Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar in the coursepack for this class to help you produce the sort of writing we are looking for in Honors, regardless of what writing classes you may (or may not) have had in high school or college.

For this class you will need to use the **desktop version of Microsoft Word** to prepare your papers. The browser-based version of Word, Google Docs, Pages, and other word processors do not handle formatting in exactly the same way, and in my experience documents created in them frequently do not meet the formatting requirements for this course. **Microsoft Word is available to UNM students at no additional cost through the university's Microsoft 365 subscription.** You should contact UNM IT if you need help installing the desktop version. I have provided an optional MLA template on my course website that will do most of the formatting for you when used with the desktop version of Word.

There will be numerous other handouts and tools provided to you this semester to help you succeed in this class. These resources are designed to help you understand what I am asking you to do and to give you different approaches to try as you develop your writing and critical-thinking skills. Take advantage of them.

Each assignment is a new opportunity to apply what you learned from the last one; rather than rewriting work that has already been graded, you will use my feedback as you approach the next assignment. **Since you will not be permitted to resubmit papers after they have been graded, use the revision process before you submit them, and ask for guidance or an extension if you need more time.** I would much rather spend my time responding to your ideas and argumentation than identifying formatting and proofreading problems that you can catch yourself with the tools provided for this course. Before submitting a paper, take the time to read it again, consult the relevant sections of the Guide to Writing, and make whatever changes your observations suggest. To help nudge you towards using these course materials sooner rather than later, **there will be a penalty of one letter grade for each significant formatting or proofreading issue.**

Assignments are due at the start of class in hard copy. If you must miss class on the day an assignment is due, email your essay to me before the scheduled class time. Please include a brief professional message identifying the assignment and explaining why you are submitting it electronically.

You are expected to follow the latest MLA style guide and to document your sources meticulously. For example, all work should be exactly double-spaced in a 12-pt. Times New Roman typeface, rendered with 1" margins, and therefore 24 lines of text per page; the page number and your name must appear in the upper right corner of each and every page. **Please print all documents single sided.** You must neatly staple or paperclip your pages together: loose or crimped pages will not be accepted. **I will not grade any paper that fails to meet the minimum expectations for length, formatting, proofreading, or accuracy in citations and bibliographies.** As you write, you should consult references like The Elements of Style, a good dictionary, your MLA Handbook, and Dr. Obenauf's Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar. As a rule of thumb,

A papers open with an introduction that gives sufficient context without overwhelming the reader with irrelevant information and offer a concrete thesis statement at the end of the introduction. The body of an A paper is meticulously organized and well polished, using carefully selected and rigorously cited evidence to develop precise, persuasive analysis. Its conclusion takes the analysis a step further and considers the broader implications of the project's analysis, avoiding recapping or simply summarizing what has already been said. The bibliography is accurate. In short, an A paper follows the conventions of scholarly writing described in the MLA Handbook and in Dr. Obenauf's Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar.

B papers demonstrate most of the traits of an A paper, but weaknesses in their analysis, use of evidence, organization, or execution keep the paper as a whole from fully meeting these expectations.

C papers demonstrate the basic practices of scholarly writing, but significant weaknesses in their analysis, use of evidence, organization, or execution keep the paper as a whole from approaching the standard of an A paper.

D papers make reasonable use of evidence but are too incoherent to build a persuasive argument. Their chief virtue may be that they are recognizably the student's own work.

F papers fail to demonstrate the basic practices of scholarly writing described in Dr. Obenauf's Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar. Coherent papers may nevertheless receive an F if they fail to meet basic requirements for formatting and proofreading, do not present sufficient evidence to support their analysis, do not document their sources accurately, or do not respond to the assignment as given. Papers below the minimum length requirement cannot answer the assignment as described and will receive an F.

All work must be submitted by the beginning of class on the day it is due. I am reasonable about extensions, but we must agree on one in writing by email before the assignment is due. Otherwise, late work will be penalized one letter grade for each day it is late.

There are five kinds of papers you will submit in Legacy of Success:

- Your **ten short response papers** are exercises in being both deep and brief.

Each one asks you to explore a small puzzle: **What happens when you compare something you have experienced yourself with the way someone living in another time and place understood a similar issue?** Your job is not to discover the “right” interpretation of the reading or to report what other people have said about it. Instead, you will look closely at the evidence and develop your own measured argument, making no claims beyond what that evidence can support.

For each response, begin by considering the reflection questions in your private reading journal, then read the assigned work carefully and see what you notice. Your own experience can provide useful evidence about the present: a true **personal anecdote makes an ideal opening and closing frame** for your discussion because it can show your reader how one person—you—experienced something without pretending to establish what “people today” or “our society” generally think or do. The assigned text provides your evidence about the past. Your task is to put these two bodies of evidence into conversation, paying particular attention to the differences that emerge even when two experiences initially seem similar.

After the opening anecdote, your essay should briefly give your reader the context needed to understand the comparison you are making: assume your reader is unfamiliar with the work, and identify who wrote it, when and where it was written, and summarize in your own words what it is about.

Then turn to **carefully chosen and rigorously cited quotations from the text** and explain what they show. A brief conclusion can return to your opening observation and consider what you understand differently after reading. **We need evidence for everything we say:** if the evidence supports only a narrow conclusion, make a narrow conclusion. This is practice in building the kind of evidence-driven argument described in Step 3 of my Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar.

These papers should be **at least one full page but no more than two full pages of text, double spaced, plus an accurate Work (or Works) Cited page**. Do not consult outside sources, summaries, commentaries, or AI tools such as ChatGPT. Those resources would defeat the purpose of the exercise: the puzzle is to see what **you** can discover by comparing your own observations with the evidence you find in the assigned reading.

Response papers are due on the **first day we discuss a text**. You may choose which **10 of the 14 works** on our syllabus you write about, and I recommend completing plenty of them early rather than leaving yourself a scramble at the end. I will comment on them lightly and grade them pass/fail. Papers that are incoherent, lack sufficient textual evidence, or have clearly not been proofread

will not receive credit. You must submit ten to receive credit for this requirement; response papers cannot ordinarily be submitted late or made up later in the semester. If you know you will miss class when one is due, arrange with me ahead of time by email to submit it electronically.

- Honors considers it important that students enrich their knowledge overall as well as gain experience attending academic lectures and exhibits. You will need to attend at least two scholarly lectures hosted by Honors or held elsewhere on campus this fall and write up your reaction to what you learned for someone who was not present for the event and who is unfamiliar with its topic. These **two lecture summaries** will be similar in length to the short response papers (no less than one full page and no more than two full pages) and will likewise be graded on a pass/fail basis. Your lecture summary should 1) identify who gave the lecture, as well as when and where it took place; 2) explain the information provided in the lecture; and 3) evaluate the lecture in terms of its impact on you. These should be well-polished little reviews. No bibliography is required.

As an educated member of our society, now is the perfect time to start attending events on campus and in the community. Announcements will be posted on the Honors College listserv, on flyers around the Honors Center, and by email from your instructor. You are especially encouraged to attend the Honors College Discovery Series throughout the fall, **but, with my approval, you may attend any scholarly lecture on campus or in the community.** There will likely be remote options as well. **Submit your summary in hard copy within one week of attending the lecture.**

- This year we will not hold class the week of October 26–30 to make room for **Honors Week**, when students will have the opportunity to interact with peers and faculty from across the Honors College. You must attend **at least two events hosted by other Honors faculty** and submit a **two-page paper** addressing these questions: 1) **How did you participate in Community, Curiosity, and Creativity during Honors Week?** and 2) **What connections can you draw between your Honors Week activities?** Your paper will count toward your “ungraded writing” requirement and is due the following week.
- Your **Shorter Analytical Paper** will be 4–6 full pages of double-spaced text. This is not a research paper and involves no outside research: you are expected to read the assigned texts closely and develop your argument from the evidence you find in them. It is a substantial part of your grade, and so you should expect to spend considerable time reading, drafting, and thoroughly revising your essay. In turn, I will respond to it in detail. Topics will be announced in class ahead of time, and the assignment will be very specific. Be sure to answer the question precisely. The Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar in your coursepack explains the approach to evidence and analysis I am asking you to practice in this paper; consult it throughout the writing and revision process.

- For your 8–12-page **Final Project**, you will choose between a creative research project accompanied by rigorous scholarly analysis or a longer personal essay that brings your experiences and reflections into conversation with the literature we have read throughout the semester. **Whichever option you choose, your project should demonstrate what you have learned about developing a sustained argument from carefully selected and rigorously cited evidence.** You may draw on observations from your reading journal and earlier work as you develop your project. Topics and more detailed instructions will be announced ahead of time.

A NOTE ON CITING SOURCES ACCURATELY

Through these assignments, you will get lots of practice citing your sources. Your Works Cited page is perhaps the most important element of college writing because it shows your reader how to check the citations in your paper. You should plan ahead to create the bibliographic entries based on the sources you cite, and then painstakingly double- and triple-check them for accuracy. For reasons I explain in greater detail in my Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar in your coursepack, it is very important that your Works Cited pages be accurate.

Bibliographies allow your reader to confirm that what you have said is true; inaccurate entries cast doubt on the entirety of your argument, and so they are anything but busy-work. You must devote as much attention to detail at the end of your project as at the beginning. A meticulous bibliography is part of a gestalt of rigor and intellectual honesty expected in Honors that signals your devotion to truthfulness and openness in your work.

There is an important difference between making an honest mistake while learning MLA style and submitting references that do not accurately represent the source you actually used. You will make mistakes as you learn, and that is part of the process. A misplaced comma, an incorrect italic, or another error in MLA style is something we can identify and learn from. But the information in a citation must be true: your quotations must faithfully reproduce the source you consulted, your in-text citations must point your reader to the correct location within that source, and your Works Cited entries must accurately identify the actual versions you used.

I have a zero-tolerance policy for inaccurate citations that do not correspond to the sources they purport to document. Working directly with primary sources is at the core of what this class is all about. You are expected to choose appropriate evidence to drive each point you make, and you are equally expected to produce your own in-text citations and your own Works Cited entries based on the materials you have actually used. Your sources should, as a rule, be the versions I have assigned.

A quotation, citation, or Works Cited entry that does not correspond to the source actually used is not simply a formatting mistake: it misrepresents the evidence on which your argument depends.

If I find source documentation that does not correspond to the source it purports to document, I will treat the discrepancy as a potential academic-integrity violation and initiate the university's academic-dishonesty process.

At a minimum, any student who lists an edition other than the version actually cited in the paper at hand will not receive credit for the assignment, whether it is a short response paper, a Shorter Analytical Paper, or a Final Project. You will not be permitted to revise or resubmit the essay. Inaccurate source documentation can therefore prevent you from earning an A for the semester, and it may prevent you from passing the course. I may also initiate an involuntary withdrawal from the class. Academic dishonesty can have consequences beyond this course, potentially affecting scholarships or, in serious cases, a student's continued enrollment at the university.

Fortunately, accurate bibliographies are not difficult to produce. I provide extensive examples in my sample MLA template, including for some of the editions assigned in this class. **Do not use an online citation generator, ChatGPT, or another tool to produce citations for you.** Instead, consult your MLA Handbook and other reputable guides and build each entry yourself from the source in front of you. If you have doubts about how to document something, ask me for guidance. I would much rather help you work through an unfamiliar citation than have you submit one whose accuracy you cannot verify yourself.

The MLA Handbook is a required text for this class because it shows you how to make your own citations based on the materials in front of you. (Tip: what MLA calls "location" means the location within the source, such as a range of page numbers within an anthology; "place of publication" refers to the city or country where the work was published and is not generally needed for editions produced in the last hundred years.)

Before you submit each assignment, ask yourself this question: Did I do this work myself, yes or no?

WHAT SORT OF HELP IS OK?

You may seek help with all stages of the writing process, but you must be the sole author of all work you submit in this course. Submitting material as your own work that has been generated on a website, in a publication, by an artificial intelligence algorithm, by another person, or by breaking the rules of an assignment constitutes academic dishonesty. It is a student code of conduct violation that can lead to a disciplinary procedure.

There is an important difference between getting help with your work and having someone or something else do the work for you. You are welcome to discuss your ideas with other people and to ask friends and family to proofread your papers, but the observations, analysis, argument, prose, and source documentation you submit must

be your own. **Do not use AI tools such as ChatGPT, paper-writing services, citation generators, or other outside tools to produce any part of an assignment for you.**

I urge you to enlist your friends and family to help you proofread your papers—and to read your own prose out loud.

You may wish to reach out to our Honors librarian over at Zimmerman Library, Adrienne Warner by email at adriennew@unm.edu or by scheduling an appointment through her faculty page, <https://ullis.unm.edu/people/directory/w/warner-adrienne.php>

Also, the Center for Teaching & Learning (formerly CAPS), offers resources at <https://ctl.unm.edu/> that you may find helpful at all stages of the writing process.

Above all, if you are ever in doubt about whether it is acceptable to use a particular resource for this class, ask me before you use it.

HOW WE WILL HANDLE PROVOCATIVE AND OFFENSIVE MATERIAL

This semester we will be examining cultural and historical legacies that span hundreds of years—some of them quite wonderful and others utterly horrifying—to better understand our own society and our place within it. For example, we will trace the roots of modern racism, sexism, xenophobia, and other forms of coercion from their ancient and medieval roots as they manifest in forces and ideas such as the Great Chain of Being. I sincerely hope you use this information to build a more just world.

The syllabus for this course is packed with works chosen for their literary, philosophical, political, historical, and aesthetic significance. No historical artifact or document can capture the entire essence of the lived experience of a particular time or place; we will read these works for what they reveal about the broad expectations of their first audiences. But rather than judging the past by our standards, our time is best spent uncovering what old books suggest by thinking as historians, literary scholars, and anthropologists. For example, we will trace the roots of various kinds of bigotry—as well as pushback against injustice—from the classical world through the present. While I hope you find something of personal interest in our reading list, when you disagree with a perspective I encourage you to grapple with the seeming contradictions and internal inconsistencies within works and among various texts as a way to discover the forces that motivated people who held views different from your own. Indeed, we will be reading, discussing, and writing about ideas that will make you uncomfortable.

Considering concepts in their historical contexts should not be construed as endorsement of those ideas. Our aim is not to litigate the truth or morality of the texts on our syllabus; our goal is to understand these works on their own terms for what they suggest about how other people lived and what they thought. To that end, as a general rule we will not be censoring our works. We acknowledge that when we analyze primary literary works within their historical contexts, the words and concepts

belong to the author rather than to the scholar who is quoting part of a text that is germane to the topic at hand. In your papers, you should reproduce quotations precisely, though you may paraphrase words and passages in your subsequent discussion to avoid using epithets in your own prose. In our seminar sessions, at times your instructor may take the reins and read certain passages out loud so that no student is forced to read them in class, though, again, we recognize that the words and ideas belong to the author and not to the person reciting them.

Per Section 2220 of UNM's Student Handbook, The Pathfinder,

As an institution that exists for the express purposes of education, research, and public service, the University is dependent upon the unfettered flow of ideas, not only in the classroom and the laboratory, but also in all University activities. As such, protecting freedom of expression is of central importance to the University. The exchange of diverse viewpoints may expose people to ideas some find offensive, even abhorrent. The way that ideas are expressed may cause discomfort to those who disagree with them. The appropriate response to such speech is speech expressing opposing ideas and continued dialogue, not curtailment of speech.

The University also recognizes that the exercise of free expression must be balanced with the rights of others to learn, work, and conduct business. Speech activity that unduly interferes with the rights of others or the ability of the University to carry out its mission is not protected by the First Amendment and violates this policy.

While I would never pressure any student to say something simply because it's what you think I would want to hear, I encourage you to speak up when you have something relevant to say. Respectful debate and free inquiry are cornerstones of Honors seminars, so long as our discourse is germane to the seminar and the topic at hand. You do not have the right to derail class discussion.

Finally, at times this semester we may be discussing passages that could be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. If you ever feel the need to step out during one of these discussions, either for a short time or for the rest of the class session, you may always do so without penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss and should make arrangements to review notes with one of your classmates or to see me during office hours.

LEGACY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

I expect we'll have so much fun this semester that you won't even realize how much you're learning and how much you're sharpening your skills. Nevertheless, I am required to tell you that once students successfully complete this course, they will be able to analyze, critically interpret, and evaluate primary works within the humanities; evaluate how some key works in the humanities reflect either a historical period or

national, cultural, ethnic, or gender issues; compare how these key works invoke shared human experiences that may relate to readers and the world today; and construct persuasive arguments and increase writing proficiency through analytical essays characterized by original and insightful theses, supported by logically integrated and sound subordinate ideas, appropriate and pertinent evidence, and good sentence structure, diction, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

For the 2026–27 academic year, the University will be assessing **Critical Thinking** within the state’s Humanities General Education requirement. As part of this assessment, I will submit four randomly selected samples of student work from this course, along with the assignment instructions, to UNM’s Office of Assessment. Student names will be removed from the work whenever possible, although I am required to provide Banner ID numbers separately so that the Office of Assessment can verify students’ academic years. The evaluators will not have access to those identifying numbers. This assessment is not related to your grade except that I may penalize you for not submitting an electronic copy of your essay in a timely manner. Thank you.

RESPONSIBLE LEARNING AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic honesty is essential to the work we will do together in this course. Cheating and plagiarism are sometimes driven by lack of time, uncertainty, or desperation; if you find yourself in that position, **communicate with me and ask for help—even at the last minute—rather than submitting work that is not your own.** Academic dishonesty includes claiming credit for work not done by you or failing to distinguish your own work clearly from material produced by another source.

These rules exist to protect your learning. If you do the work yourself, you will discover things you never would have noticed otherwise—connections, questions, and even disagreements with the text that no summary or algorithm could hand you. That is where much of the satisfaction of this course comes from. **You are therefore responsible for personally creating every part of every assignment you submit.**

This course is designed to help you develop and demonstrate your own reading, reasoning, and writing without generative AI assistance. **Do not use ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, Grammarly’s generative AI features, AI paraphrasing tools, citation generators, or similar technologies at any stage of work submitted for this course.**

Likewise, unless an assignment specifically calls for research, do not consult summaries, commentaries, or other outside interpretations of the assigned readings. **The emphasis in our class on primary sources means that, with a few clearly defined exceptions, you should consult no resources outside of the books we are discussing in the editions I’ve specified in this syllabus.** If you are ever unsure whether a particular resource or kind of assistance is permitted, ask me before using it.

Submitting material created by another person, source, or unauthorized tool as your own constitutes academic dishonesty. A paper containing material written by someone or something else may receive an F on the assignment and may result in an NC for the semester, an involuntary withdrawal from the course, and referral through the university's academic-integrity process.

Source documentation is subject to the more specific standards described earlier in this syllabus. **If I find source documentation that does not correspond to the source it purports to document, I will treat the discrepancy as a potential academic-integrity violation and initiate the university's academic-dishonesty process.**

The point of these policies is not merely to prevent cheating. This class is designed to give you the experience of wrestling with ideas, evidence, and language for yourself. By doing your own work, you contribute to a community in which grades represent actual learning, ideas are genuinely exchanged, and academic credit reflects work the student has actually done. **So, before you submit each assignment, ask yourself this question: Did I do this work myself, in its entirety, yes or no?**

For additional information on plagiarism and other university policies, please consult UNM's Student Handbook, The Pathfinder, at <http://pathfinder.unm.edu/>.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations: UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact Accessibility Resource Center (<https://arc.unm.edu/>) at arcsrvs@unm.edu or 505-277-3506.

CITIZENSHIP AND/OR IMMIGRATION STATUS

All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. I will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. I support your right to an education free from fear of deportation. I pledge that I will not disclose the immigration status of any student who shares this information with me unless required by a judicial warrant, and I will work with students who require immigration-related accommodations. As for all students in the class, family emergency-related absences are normally excused with reasonable notice to the professor, as noted in the attendance guidelines above. UNM as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration's welcome is found on the website: <http://undocumented.unm.edu/>.

CONNECTING TO CAMPUS AND FINDING SUPPORT

Students who ask for help are successful students. UNM has many resources and centers to help you thrive, including [opportunities to get involved](#), [mental health resources](#), [academic support including tutoring](#), [resource centers](#) for people like you, free food at [Lobo Food Pantry](#), and [jobs on campus](#). Your advisor, staff at the [resource centers](#) and [Dean of Students](#), and I can help you find the right opportunities for you.

CREDIT HOUR STATEMENT

This is a three credit-hour course. Class meets for two 75-minute sessions of direct instruction for fifteen weeks during the Fall 2026 semester. According to federal guidelines, students are expected to complete a minimum of six hours of out-of-class work (including homework, study, assignment completion, and class preparation) each week. Honors courses generally demand more than six hours per week outside of class. You should budget at least ten hours a week for your reading and writing in this course.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Founded in 1889, the University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.

RECORDKEEPING AND ELECTRONIC BACKUPS

Because this course does not use an online gradebook, you should maintain your own record of the grades you receive and the requirements you have completed so that we both have a record of your progress. You are also required to keep electronic backups of all work you produce for this class that you can provide immediately upon my request. Additionally, I may retain scanned copies of the work you submit in this class to maintain my own records, tailor my feedback to you, and for other educational purposes.

RESPECTFUL CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

I am committed to building with you a positive classroom environment in which everyone can learn. I reserve the right to intervene and enforce standards of respectful behavior when classroom conduct is inconsistent with University expectations. Interventions and enforcement may include but are not limited to required meetings to

discuss classroom expectations, written notification of expectations, and/or removal from a class meeting. Removal from a class meeting for disruptive behavior will result in an unexcused absence. Four or more unexcused absences may result in permanent removal and a drop from the course (see attendance policy). The University of New Mexico ensures freedom of academic inquiry, free expression and open debate, and a respectful campus through adherence to the following policies: D75: Classroom Conduct, Student Code of Conduct, University Policy 2240 – Respectful Campus, University Policy 2210 – Campus Violence.

UAP 2720 and 2740

UAP 2720 and 2740. Our classroom and university should foster mutual respect, kindness, and support. If you have concerns about discrimination, harassment, or violence, please seek support and report incidents. Find confidential services at LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center, the Women’s Resource Center, and the Arcoiris Center. UNM prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including gender, sex stereotyping, gender expression, and gender identity). All instructors are “responsible employees” who must communicate reports of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence to Compliance, Ethics and Equal Opportunity. For more information, please see UAP 2720 and UAP 2740.

UNM EMAIL CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

Students often use email to inquire about protected and sensitive matters, including grades and class progress, and faculty often use email to individually report such protected and sensitive matters. Unless students opt out, in writing, to the Honors College, the Honors College and Honors Faculty will assume that all email sent individually to students via their official UNM email addresses (generally their @unm.edu address) is private and confidential and that the student assumes all risk of inappropriate interception of email transmissions. If students opt out of this policy, they are agreeing to receive such information only in person (and they may be required to show identification before information is shared with them) or through regular mail to the student’s official address on file with UNM.

COVID-19 HEALTH AND AWARENESS

I will be wearing an N95 mask in class and encourage you to do the same. UNM is a mask friendly, but not a mask required, community. Masking is a simple way to reduce the spread of illness and protect our community. If you are experiencing respiratory symptoms or think you may be contagious, please do not come to class. Instead, email me so we can arrange alternatives. I trust you to use this policy responsibly and maintain good attendance the rest of the semester, so that if illness does strike, you can take the time you need without falling behind.

READING LIST

Reading list: This course does not use Canvas for course materials. All required materials for Legacy of Success are **print books available through the UNM Bookstore** and a printed **coursepack available through the UNM Copy Center** in Dane Smith Hall for a nominal fee.

You will need to purchase the following books **in the specific editions on file at the UNM Bookstore:**

- Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (Dover)
- F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby (Scribner)
- Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (Dover)
- Samuel Johnson, Rasselas (Dover)
- Anita Loos, Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (Penguin)
- Christopher Marlowe, Doctor Faustus (Dover)
- The MLA Handbook (9th edition, 2021)
- Mozart and da Ponte, Don Giovanni (Dover)
- Petronius, The Satyricon, trans. J.P. Sullivan (Penguin)

Other course materials may be distributed throughout the semester, either by email or on the class website, <http://success.obenauf.net>. Students are responsible for obtaining these texts and bringing them to class: again, you should come to class prepared to discuss the readings **in their entirety** on the day they appear on the electronic timeline on the course website.

You are required to submit a short response paper (described above) for ten of the fourteen selections of your choosing, due at the beginning of class on the **first day** of scheduled discussion for each work.

This syllabus is subject to change, as I may announce changes in readings and adjust deadlines, ahead of time, in class, by email, and on my website.

Out of respect to you and your other responsibilities, I have tried to limit the number of long or difficult readings. In turn, I expect you to approach the entire reading list in earnest. To help you budget your time and get the most from this class, I have indicated the approximate time required for you to prepare adequately for class discussion.

TENTATIVE TIMELINE

Monday, August 17	Introduction
Wednesday, August 19	Discussion of the Syllabus and Dr. Obenauf's Guide to Writing and Reasoning Like a Scholar (in coursepack) AND install Microsoft Word on your computer AND download the MLA template from the course website, http://success.obenauf.net
Monday, August 24	Vonnegut, "The Foster Portfolio" (short story in coursepack) [1 hour to read carefully]
Wednesday, August 26	Horace, <u>Satires</u> (selections in coursepack) [2 hours to read carefully]
Monday, August 31	Horace, <u>Satires</u> (selections in coursepack)
Wednesday, September 2	Juvenal, <u>Satires</u> (selections in coursepack) [2 hours to read carefully]
Monday, September 7	NO CLASS: LABOR DAY
Wednesday, September 9	Juvenal, <u>Satires</u> (continued)
Monday, September 14	Petronius, "Dinner with Trimalchio" from <u>The Satyricon</u> [2 hours to read carefully]
Wednesday, September 16	Petronius, "Dinner with Trimalchio" (continued); Group presentation on Ancient Rome
Monday, September 21	Marie de France, "Lanval" (in coursepack) [2 hours to read carefully]
Wednesday, September 23	Trans. Tolkien, "Sir Orfeo" (in coursepack) [1 hour to read carefully]
Monday, September 28	"Lanval" and "Sir Orfeo" (continued) + reread my Guide to Writing for today; Group presentation on the Middle Ages

Wednesday, September 30	<u>Mankind</u> (in coursepack) [2 hours to read carefully]
Monday, October 5	<u>Mankind</u> (continued); SHORTER ANALYTICAL PAPER IS DUE TODAY
Wednesday, October 7	<u>Mankind</u> (continued)
Monday, October 12	Marlowe, <u>Doctor Faustus</u> [3 hours to read carefully]; Group presentation on the Renaissance
Wednesday, October 14	Marlowe, <u>Doctor Faustus</u> (continued)
Monday, October 19	Johnson, <u>Rasselas</u> [4 hours to read carefully]
Wednesday, October 21	Johnson, <u>Rasselas</u> (continued)
Monday, October 26	NO CLASS: HONORS WEEK
Wednesday, October 28	NO CLASS: HONORS WEEK
Monday, November 2	Franklin, <u>Autobiography</u> [3 hours to read carefully] Group presentation on the Enlightenment
Wednesday, November 4	Franklin, <u>Autobiography</u> (continued); writeup of your Honors Week experience is due today
Monday, November 9	Mozart and da Ponte, <u>Don Giovanni</u> [Watch online through UNM Libraries or find a DVD]
Wednesday, November 11	Douglass, <u>Narrative of the Life</u> [3 hours to read carefully]
Monday, November 16	Douglass, <u>Narrative of the Life</u> (continued)
Wednesday, November 18	Fitzgerald, <u>The Great Gatsby</u> [4 hours to read carefully]
Monday, November 23	Fitzgerald, <u>The Great Gatsby</u> (continued) Group presentation on the Roaring Twenties

Wednesday,
November 25

Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby (continued)

Monday,
November 30

Loos, Gentlemen Prefer Blondes [4 hours to read carefully]

FINAL PROJECT SHOULD BE BASICALLY DONE

Wednesday,
December 2

**FINAL PROJECT IS TRULY DUE TODAY—BE PREPARED TO
SPEND ABOUT TWO MINUTES DESCRIBING YOURS TO THE
CLASS**