



University of
New Haven

Kafka in Prague: Connections and Insights

SECTION I: Course Overview

Course Code: CUL320PRG
Subject Area(s): Cultural Studies
Prerequisites: None
Language of Instruction: English
Total Contact Hours: 45
Recommended Credits: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Franz Kafka (1883–1924) has become recognized as one of the leading figures in world literature. Perhaps more than any other major author, Kafka is associated with one geographical location: the city of Prague, where he lived almost his whole life, on and around Old Town Square.

However, Kafka's works themselves are not explicitly about Prague, nor are they set in Prague. This gives students and scholars of Kafka's works a unique opportunity to interpret the city's history and culture through fiction in a way that is not straightforward, but rather creative, critical, and informed.

In this course, students will discover this special city through the lens of selected stories by Kafka. At the same time, students will discover Kafka by learning about Prague and engaging in guided, direct experiences of the city. Kafka's lifetime was a particularly complicated time in Prague's history, when it was at the crossroads of different cultural and social influences: German and Czech, industrialization and the arts, war and peace, Judaism and Christianity, monarchy and democracy, urban and rural, poverty and wealth. In addition to readings, lectures, in-class activities, and discussions, the course will provide active learning experiences to students, using the city, historical sites, and museums as an extension of the classroom.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Critically analyze Franz Kafka's selected works.
- Discuss Prague's history and culture during Kafka's lifetime.
- Create meaningful connections between the studied literary texts and the observed historical and cultural realities.
- Formulate effective academic arguments about Kafka's writing within context of Prague's history.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes or modifications to this syllabus as needed

SECTION II: Instructor & Course Details

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

Name:	TBA
Contact Information:	TBA
Term:	SEMESTER

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class will meet once weekly for 150 minutes each session. All students are expected to arrive on time and prepared for the day's class session.

CEA enforces a mandatory attendance policy. You are therefore expected to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions, including any field trips, site visits, guest lectures, etc. that are assigned by the instructor. The table below shows the number of class sessions you may miss before receiving a grade penalty.

ALLOWED ABSENCES – SEMESTER OR SUMMER		
Courses Meeting X day(s) Per Week	Allowed Absence(s)	Automatic Failing Grade at X th absence
Courses meeting 1 day(s) per week	1 Absence	4 th Absence

For every additional absence beyond the allowed number, your final course grade will drop down to the subsequent letter grade (ex: A+ to A). As a student, you should understand that the grade penalties will apply if you are marked absent due to tardiness or leaving class early. In the table below, you will find the grade penalty associated with each excessive absence up to and including automatic course failure.

ATTENDANCE DOCKING PENALTIES				
Absence	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Penalty	No Penalty	0.5 Docked Grade	1 Docked Grade	Automatic Failure
HIGHEST POSSIBLE GRADE AFTER ATTENDANCE PENALTIES				
Grade	A+	A	A-	F

CEA does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. As such, no documentation is required for missing class. Similarly, excessive absences, and the grade penalty associated with each, will not be excused even if you are able to provide documentation that shows the absence was beyond your control. You should therefore only miss class when truly needed as illness or other unavoidable factors may force you to miss a class session later on in the term.

GRADING & ASSESSMENT

The instructor will assess your progress towards the above-listed learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted and will count towards your final grade. The following section (Assessment Overview) will provide further details for each.

Class Participation	10%
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Essay	20%
Insights	20%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

The instructor will calculate your course grades using the CEA Grading Scale shown below. As a CEA student, you should understand that credit transfer decisions—including earned grades for courses taken abroad—are ultimately made by your home institution.

CEA GRADING SCALE			
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70 – 10.0	97.0 – 100%	4.00
A	9.40 – 9.69	94.0 – 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00 – 9.39	90.0 – 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70 – 8.99	87.0 – 89.9%	3.30
B	8.40 – 8.69	84.0 – 86.9%	3.00
B-	8.00 – 8.39	80.0 – 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70 – 7.99	77.0 – 79.9%	2.30
C	7.40 – 7.69	74.0 – 76.9%	2.00
C-	7.00 – 7.39	70.0 – 73.9%	1.70
D	6.00 – 6.99	60.0 – 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00 – 5.99	0.00 – 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal	N/A	0.00
INC	Incomplete	N/A	0.00

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Your course instructor will provide further details and instructions during class time.

Class Participation (10%): Student participation is mandatory for all courses taken at a CEA Study Center. The instructor will use the rubric below when determining your participation grade. All students should understand that attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively toward the participation grade.

CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADING RUBRIC	
Student Participation Level	Grade
You make major & original contributions that spark discussion, offering critical comments clearly based on readings, research, & theoretical course topics.	A+ (10.0 – 9.70)
You make significant contributions that demonstrate insight as well as knowledge of required readings & independent research.	A/A- (9.69 – 9.00)
You participate voluntarily and make useful contributions that are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	B+/B (8.99 – 8.40)
	B-/C+

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You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	(8.39 – 7.70)
You make limited comments only when prompted and do not initiate debate or show a clear awareness of the importance of the readings.	C/C- (7.69 – 7.00)
You very rarely make comments and resist engagement with the subject. You are not prepared for class and/or discussion of course readings.	D (6.99 – 6.00)
You make irrelevant and tangential comments disruptive to class discussion. You are consistently unprepared for class and/or discussion of the course readings.	F (5.99 – 0.00)

Essay (20%): The Essay should focus on *The Trial*, presenting a supported academic argument on how to better understand *The Trial* through a cultural/historical analysis or how to understand Prague’s culture and history better through *The Trial*. The argument should be original and insightful. The main argument or thesis of the essay should be clearly stated at the beginning. Primary and secondary sources should be used to support the argument. The word limit is 1500–2500 words, exclusive of footnotes, bibliography and cover page. An Essay Proposal will be due one week before the Essay deadline.

Midterm Exam (25%): The Midterm Exam will test your knowledge of material covered in the first two units of the course, ‘History of Prague’ and ‘Kafka in Prague’. You will be required to write two essays of 800-1200 words in response to a choice of prompts. Each prompt will ask you to make connections among the historical/cultural readings, Kafka’s stories, in-class lectures and discussions, the field visit to the Museum of the City of Prague, and a ‘Kafka’s Prague’ activity. For each essay, appropriate reference to sources is required as well as an effective literary analysis and academic argument. Writing needs to be precise, polished, error-free, and stylistically appropriate.

Final Exam (25%): The Final Exam covers material from the last two units of the course, ‘Kafka’s and Prague’s Jewish Experience’ and ‘Kafka Biography’. You will be required to write two essays of 800-1200 words in response to a choice of prompts. Each prompt will ask you to make connections among the historical/cultural readings, Kafka’s stories, in-class lectures and discussions, the field visit to the Jewish Quarter of Prague, and the field visit to the World of Kafka. For each essay, appropriate reference to sources is required as well as an effective literary analysis and academic argument. Writing needs to be precise, polished, error-free, and stylistically appropriate.

Insights (20%): For most class meetings, you should post your “insights” on the online discussion within the virtual classroom for that week by 9 am the day of class. These Insights should be between 100 and 1000 words long. Each Insight should record your first, informal reaction to the reading for that week. You are encouraged to focus on particular parts of texts read rather than making broad statements about all the reading for the week.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES (AICAP)

CEA courses are designed to include a variety of experiential learning activities that will take you out of the classroom and allow you to explore your local, host city. These activities may include field studies, guest lectures and/or activities offered through our Academically Integrated Cultural Activities Program (AICAP). Please check the Forms of Assessment section to find out if AICAP activities are related to any specific form of assessment. The following experiential learning activities are recommended for this course:

- *Walk with Kafka:* A field study in Prague highlighting Kafka-relevant sites in the historical center of Prague. The professor provides continuous commentary and challenges students to make connections between sites and the stories read so far.
- *Field visit to “The City of K.”*, Prague’s best Kafka museum. Students work in groups to complete assignments designed to ensure each student engages in the museum’s exhibits. A meeting in a café afterwards addresses how the experience impacted students’ understanding of Kafka’s life and work.

- *Kafka's Prague*: A field study in Prague attempting to re-create the experience of walking in Prague in the early part of the 20th century, just as Kafka did. This tour will be linked to material in the course focused on Prague's history and culture.
- *Field visit to "The World of Franz Kafka"*, a different kind of museum experience that seeks to replicate and comment on the experience of reading Kafka's stories. This is the newest Kafka institution in Prague and will also be used to investigate how the city of Prague is representing Kafka to tourists and locals.
- *Field visit to the Prague City Museum*, the authoritative museum in the Czech Republic that focuses on its capital city.
- *Field visit to the Jewish Quarter of Prague*, including guided tours of the most important synagogues and the famous Old Jewish Cemetery.

REQUIRED READINGS

Reading assignments for this course will come from the required text(s) and/or the selected reading(s) listed below. All required readings—whether assigned from the text or assigned as a selected reading—must be completed according to the due date assigned by the course instructor.

- I. REQUIRED TEXT(S):** You may purchase or acquire the required text(s) prior to departure or upon program arrival. The required text(s) are listed below:

Kafka, Franz. *The Complete Stories*. Schocken, 1995.

Kafka, Franz. *The Trial*. Schocken, 2012.

- II. SELECTED READING(S):** The selected readings for this course are listed below. You will not need to purchase these readings; the instructor will provide these selected readings to you in class (either in paper or electronic format).

Burton, Richard. *Prague: A Cultural and Literary History*. Signal, 2003. Chapter 5, "Prague Modern, 1900-1948", Chapter 3, "Josef K. and Josef Švejk: Trials and Triumphs".

Cohn, Dorrit. "Kafka's Eternal Present: Narrative Tense in 'Ein Landarzt' and Other First-Person Stories." *PMLA*, vol. 83, no. 1, March 1968, pp. 144-150.

Demetz, Peter. *Prague in Black and Gold: The History of a City*. Penguin, 1997. Chapter 7, "1848 and the Counterrevolution", Chapter 8, "T. G. Masaryk's Prague".

Duttlinger, Carolin, Ed. *Franz Kafka in Context*. Chapter 16, Marek Nekula "Prague: History and Culture" Chapter 8, Judith Ryan, "Literary Modernism", Chapter 18, Mark Cornwall "The First World War", Chapter 22, Daniel Weidner "Religion", Chapter 23, Katja Garloff "Judaism and Zionism".

Karl, Frederick R. *Franz Kafka: Representative Man*. Ticknor & Fields, 1991. Chapter 2, "Prague and Kafka, Kafka and Prague", Chapter 6, "The Advent of High Modernism: Prague, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Munich", Chapter 7, "Young Kafka and Modernism", Chapter 9, "Franz, Felice, and the Great War".

McCagg, William O. *A History of Hapsburg Jews, 1670-1918*. Indiana UP, 1992.

Murray, Nicholas. *Kafka*. Little, Brown, 2004.

Nekula, Marek. *Franz Kafka and His Prague Contexts*. Karolinum, 2016., Chapter 16, "Prague: History and Culture", Chapter 7 "Divided city: Franz Kafka's readings of Prague, Chapter 1 "Suppression

and distortion: Franz Kafka ‘from the Prague perspective’”, Chapter 2 “The ‘being’ of Odradek: Franz Kafka in his Jewish context”.

Preece, Julian, Ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Kafka*. Cambridge UP, 2002, Chapter 3, Rolf J. Goebel “The exploration of the modern city in *The Trial*”, Chapter 9, Iris Bruce “Kafka and Jewish Folklore”, Chapter 11, Anthony Northey “Myths and realities in Kafka biography”.

Spector, Scott. *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka’s Fin de Siecle*. U of California P, 2000, Chapter 1 “Prague Circles”, Chapter 2 “Where’s the Difference?”

Swales, Martin. “Why Read Kafka.” *The Modern Language Review*, vol. 76, no. 2, April 1981, pp. 357-356.

Trahan, Elizabeth. “A Common Confusion: A Basic Approach to Franz Kafka’s World.” *The German Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 3, May 1963, pp. 269-278.

Wallace, David Foster. “Laughing with Kafka.” *Harpers*, July 1998, pp. 23-27.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

The recommended reading(s) and/or text(s) for this course are below. These recommended readings are not mandatory, but they will assist you with research and understanding course content.

Brod, Max. *Franz Kafka: A Biography*. Trans. G. Humphreys Roberts and Richard Winston. Da Capo, 1995.

Church, Margaret. “Time and Reality in Kafka’s *The Trial* and *The Castle*.” *Twentieth Century Literature*, vol. 2, no. 2, July 1956, pp. 62-69.

Feuerlicht, Ignace. “Omissions and Contradictions in Kafka’s *Trial*.” *The Germany Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 3, May 1967, pp. 339-350.

Janouch, Gustav. *Conversations with Kafka*. 2nd ed. Trans. Goronwy Rees. New Directions, 2012.

Koelb, Clayton. “‘In der Strafkolonie’: Kafka and the Scene of Reading.” *The German Quarterly*. Vol. 55, no. 4, November 1982, pp. 511-525.

Leopold, Keith. “Breaks in Perspective in Franz Kafka’s *Der Prozess*.” *The German Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 31-38.

Salfellner, Harald. *Franz Kafka and Prague*. Vitalis, 2007.

Smith, Zadie. “The Limited Circle Is Pure.” *The New Republic*, 3 November 2003.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In order to ensure you success abroad, CEA has provided the academic resources listed below. In addition to these resources, each CEA Study Center provides students with a physical library and study areas for group work. The Academic Affairs Office at each CEA Study Center also compiles a bank of detailed information regarding libraries, documentation centers, research institutes, and archival materials located in the host city.

- **UNH Online Library:** As a CEA student, you will be given access to the online library of CEA’s School of Record, the University of New Haven (UNH). You can use this online library to access databases and additional resources while performing research abroad. You may access the UNH online library [here](#) or through your MyCEA Account. You must comply with UNH Policies regarding library usage.

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- **CEA Classroom – Moodle:** CEA instructors use Moodle, an interactive virtual learning environment. This web-based platform provides you with constant and direct access to the course syllabus, daily schedule of class lectures and assignments, non-textbook required readings, and additional resources. Moodle includes the normal array of forums, up-loadable and downloadable databases, wikis, and related academic support designed for helping you achieve the learning objectives listed in this syllabus.

During the first week of class, CEA academic staff and/or faculty will help you navigate through the many functions and resources Moodle provides. While you may print a hard copy version of the syllabus, you should always check Moodle for the most up-to-date information regarding this course. The instructor will use Moodle to make announcements and updates to the course and/or syllabus. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to all Moodle materials and that you monitor Moodle on a daily basis in case there are any changes made to course assignments or scheduling.

To access Moodle: Please log-in to your MyCEA account using your normal username and password. Click on the “While You’re Abroad Tab” and make sure you are under the “Academics” sub-menu. There you will see a link above your schedule that says “View Online Courses” select this link to be taken to your Moodle environment.

COURSE CALENDAR
Kafka in Prague: Connections and Insights

SESSION	TOPICS	ACTIVITY	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS
1	Introduction to the course	Introduction to the course, short readings in class leading to early discussion.	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Before the Law” (1914) • Trahan, “A Common Confusion” (1916) <p>Assignments/deadlines: None.</p>
2	History of Prague “The Metamorphosis” (written 1912, published 1915)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Metamorphosis” (written 1912, published 1915) • Spector. <i>Prague Territories</i>, Chapter 1 “Prague Circles” • Nekula. <i>Franz Kafka and His Prague Contexts</i> Chapter 16, “Prague: History and Culture” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>
3	History of Prague “The Judgment” (written and published 1912)	<p>Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations</p> <p>Field Visit to the City of Prague Museum</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Judgment” (written and published 1912) • Swales, “Why Read Kafka” • Demetz, <i>Prague in Black and Gold</i>, Chapter 7, “1848 and the Counterrevolution”, Chapter 8, “T. G. Masaryk’s Prague” • Burton, <i>Prague: A Cultural and Literary History</i>, Chapter 5, “Prague Modern, 1900-1948” • Duttlinger, <i>Franz Kafka in Context</i>. Chapter 16, Nekula “Prague: History and Culture” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>

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4	Kafka in Prague “A Report to an Academy” (written and published 1917)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations Kafka’s Prague field study	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A Report to an Academy” (written and published 1917) • Preece, <i>The Cambridge Companion to Kafka</i>. Chapter 3, Rolf J. Goebel “The exploration of the modern city in <i>The Trial</i>” • Nekula, <i>Franz Kafka and His Prague Contexts</i>. Chapter 7 “Divided city: Franz Kafka’s readings of Prague, Chapter 1 “Suppression and distortion: Franz Kafka ‘from the Prague perspective”” • Burton, <i>Prague: A Cultural and Literary History</i>. Chapter 3, “Josef K. and Josef Švejk: Trials and Triumphs” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>
5	Kafka in Prague “The Burrow” (written 1923, published posthumously)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Burrow” (written 1923, published posthumously) • Karl, <i>Franz Kafka: Representative Man</i>. Chapter 2, “Prague and Kafka, Kafka and Prague” • Murray, <i>Kafka</i>. Part 1, “Prague” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>
6	Realities of Turn-of-the Century Prague: Government, War, Identity, Modernism <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations Walk with Kafka field study Field Visit to “The City of K.” museum	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously) <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>

7	Realities of Turn-of-the Century Prague: Government, War, Identity, Modernism <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously) Karl, <i>Franz Kafka: Representative Man</i>. Chapter 6, “The Advent of High Modernism: Prague, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Munich”, Chapter 7, “Young Kafka and Modernism”, Chapter 9, “Franz, Felice, and the Great War” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>
8	Realities of Turn-of-the Century Prague: Government, War, Identity, Modernism <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously) Duttlinger, <i>Franz Kafka in Context</i>. Chapter 8, Judith Ryan, “Literary Modernism”, Chapter 18, Mark Cornwall “The First World War” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>
9	MIDTERM EXAM		
10	Realities of Turn-of-the Century Prague: Government, War, Identity, Modernism <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Trial</i> (written 1914–1915, published posthumously) Spector, <i>Prague Territories</i>: Chapter 2 “Where’s the Difference?” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week. Essay Proposal Due; see separate assignment sheet</p>
11	Kafka’s and Prague’s Jewish Experience “A Country Doctor” (written 1917, published 1919)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations Field Visit to the Jewish	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “A Country Doctor” (written 1917, published 1919) Cohn, “Kafka’s Eternal Present”

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		Quarter of Prague	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preece, <i>The Cambridge Companion to Kafka</i>. Chapter 9, Iris Bruce “Kafka and Jewish Folklore” • McCagg, <i>A History of Hapsburg Jews, 1670-1918</i>. <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week. Essay due</p>
12	Kafka’s and Prague’s Jewish Experience “In the Penal Colony” (written 1914, published 1919)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In the Penal Colony” (written 1914, published 1919) • Koelb, "Kafka and the Scene of Reading" • Duttlinger, <i>Franz Kafka in Context</i>. Chapter 22, Daniel Weidner “Religion”, Chapter 23, Katja Garloff “Judaism and Zionism” • Nekula, <i>Franz Kafka and His Prague Contexts</i>. Chapter 2 “The ‘being’ of Odradek: Franz Kafka in His Jewish context” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>
13	Kafka Biography “A Hunger Artist” (written ?, published 1922)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations Field Visit to the “World of Franz Kafka” museum	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A Hunger Artist” (written ?, published 1922) • Wallace, “Laughing with Kafka” • Preece, <i>The Cambridge Companion to Kafka</i>. Chapter 11, Anthony Northey “Myths and realities in Kafka biography” <p>Assignments/deadlines: Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.</p>
14	Kafka Biography “Josephine the Singer” (written 1924, published 1924)	Lecture, directed class discussion, group activities, student presentations	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Josephine the Singer” (written 1924, published 1924) • Murray, <i>Kafka</i>. Little, Brown, 2004, Parts 2, 3, and 4. <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>

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			Completing the reading for this week. Post insights on the reading for this week.
15	FINAL EXAM		

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SECTION III: CEA Academic Policies

The policies listed in this section outline general expectations for CEA students. You should carefully review these policies to ensure success in your courses and during your time abroad. Furthermore, as a participant in the CEA program, you are expected to review and understand all CEA Student Policies, including the academic policies outlined on our website. CEA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. For the most up to date policies, please review the policies on our website.

Class & Instructor Policies can be found [here](#)

General Academic Policies can be found [here](#)