

TBD (GNEG 199V – Section TBD)
Blueprints for Balance: Mental Wellness in Engineering

Instructor: Ms. Gayle Taylor (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Location: JBHT 149

Office: White Hall, ENGR 316

Cell Phone: 479-575-4786

Time: Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-2:50 pm

Office Hours: Email or UA Success

Email: cgnewman@uark.edu (best way to reach me)

Course Overview:

In this 8-week seminar course, "Blueprints for Balance: Mental Wellness in Engineering," students will embark on a transformative exploration of strategies to successfully navigate the demands of Engineering student life. This course is designed to equip Engineering students with the knowledge and skills to navigate the challenges of their academic and professional journeys while prioritizing their mental health. This course integrates principles of psychology, resilience, and communication to foster a culture of well-being within the Engineering community. Students will also learn to optimize their educational experiences, leverage campus resources, and seize opportunities available at the University of Arkansas. This course is open to all Engineering students seeking to proactively manage their well-being and create a supportive community within the Engineering profession. No prerequisites are required—just an open mind and a willingness to engage in discussions on personal well-being and professional development.

Course Goals: At the end of this course, you (the student) will demonstrate the following:

- Be able to identify and develop management strategies for stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout.
- Foster resilience in the face of academic and/or professional setbacks.
- Explore work-life balance and develop plans for maintaining it in an academic and professional world.
- Enhance communication skills and emotional intelligence to foster positive relationships.
- Continually assess your own wellness (physical, mental, social, financial, spiritual), knowing where and how to seek assistance, and be comfortable asking others for support when needed.
- Practice engaging with discomfort and develop skills to become comfortable in uncomfortable settings.

Diversity and Inclusion:

The University of Arkansas envisions a world committed to inclusivity, where diversity, equity, access and civility are valued as a part of our culture, climate and everyday lives. Each student has a unique and diverse viewpoint and our classroom strives to promote inclusivity within these walls. We must strive to make this vision a reality by reinforcing inclusive excellence in everything we say and do.

Classroom Guidelines:

Throughout the 8-week "Blueprint for Balance" seminar, we (your fellow students, your instructor, and you) will collaboratively build a nurturing environment to support your journey and exploration of wellness and balance. To effectively create this environment, there are five ground rules. (1) Listen respectfully and actively. Be present and do not speak over your classmates. (2) Commit to learning, not debating. (3) Assume the best intentions and that others are coming to the conversation to learn. (4) Embrace the awkwardness. Learning and growth can sometimes feel certain ways. (5) Respect unique experiences. There are multiple unique experiences and worldviews in this room. Allow people to share their own lived experience.

Self-Disclosure Etiquette:

During class time, we will engage in respectful discussions and uphold the established boundaries of the course. It is essential to refrain from sharing personal traumas during class, a practice referred to as 'trauma-dumping.' If you wish to explore specific topics further or have additional thoughts, questions, or concerns, I encourage you to schedule a private meeting during my office hours. Our commitment is to foster a safe and inclusive environment for all students.

Recognizing that we are all navigating new territory, let's commit to conducting ourselves with respect, embracing our diverse perspectives, and actively supporting one another's success. In "Blueprint for Balance," we understand the significance of unity in our shared pursuit of well-being and success in Engineering.

Communication and Expectations:

I am excited to support your academic and personal well-being throughout this seminar. Feel free to contact me via email at your convenience, and I'll aim to respond within 24 hours on weekdays or by the end of the day on Monday for weekend messages. If you find that an in-person or phone conversation would be more effective, we can schedule a time. I highly value your privacy, and while some information may be shared with U of A professionals dedicated to your success, I will adhere to applicable laws and university policies. Your success is my top priority, and I look forward to a collaborative and enriching semester exploring balance in the engineering profession.

Electronics Policy:

To create an environment that fosters engagement, active participation, and respect for everyone's time, the use of laptops during class time is not permitted. Please power off and put laptops before the start of each session unless otherwise stated. If you have specific accessibility needs that require the use of a laptop, please meet with me privately to make suitable arrangements.

Course Content

Texts and Materials:

No required textbook is necessary as course materials, articles, and resources will be provided via Blackboard.

If you are using Blackboard for the first time and have questions about how to use it, the Blackboard Help Desk is a great resource: <https://bbhelp.uark.edu/>.

Grading Scale:

“A” exceptional performance = 90% or above

“B” above average performance = 80-89%

“C” average performance = 70-79%

“D” below average performance = 60-69%

“F” unacceptable performance = 0-59%

Course Assignments and Grading:

Class Participation	15 @ 20 points each:	300 points
Reflections	3 @ 15 points each:	45 points
Assignments	3 @ 25 points	75 points
Office Hour Meeting	1 @ 50 points each:	50 points
Final Presentation	1 @ 80 points each:	80 points
Total Points:	550 points	

Class Participation and Attendance:

A main source of points will be your attendance and participation in class. Your classmates and I expect you to attend each class and actively contribute to our classroom discussions and activities. Class attendance is **mandatory** and essential to student learning in this course. You must be present in class to earn class participation points for the week, so missing multiple classes will have a detrimental impact on your grade for the course.

Our first and last class will have an in-class survey to complete for attendance points.

Reflections:

Throughout the seminar, you will engage in 3 reflective exercises that provide a platform for personal exploration and connection with the course material. These reflections will prompt you to consider the impact of that week's topic with your individual perspective, experiences, and goals. You'll have the opportunity to discuss the relevance of the information to your academic and professional journey, fostering a deeper connection to the course content. These reflections are your space to share insights, challenges, and personal discoveries, contributing to a richer and more meaningful learning experience. I will provide prompts for you to consider, but this is your own personal reflection and can be answered in a way that is meaningful for you. Reflections are a minimum of **one page**.

Assignments:

Students will engage in 3 homework assignments that provide an opportunity to connect with the course material outside of the classroom. These assignments will require a reflection of your time, goals, and long-term future planning. All assignments are intended to enhance the student experience in this class.

Surveys:

In this course, students will complete both a pre-survey and a post-survey. The pre-survey aims to gauge your initial understanding and expectations, while the post-survey allows you to reflect on your growth and insights throughout the course, as well as sharing thoughts and ideas to continue to make this course grow.

Office Hour Assignments:

As an integral part of your participation in this course, you will have the opportunity to meet with me (your instructor) at least once during the semester. In our office hour session, we will delve into your goals, assess your progress, and collaboratively strategize ways to effectively balance your academic and professional responsibilities while prioritizing your mental health. Your active involvement in these meetings will significantly contribute to achieving the course's overarching objectives.

How to Schedule:

Schedule and complete your meetings by the following deadlines using “UA Success”. There is an instructional video on Blackboard under “Helpful Info” on how to do this.

Deadlines:

Office Hour Meeting: **Friday, September 13.**

Final Presentation:

For your final, you will complete an in-class presentation on the outcome of your individual SMART goal from Week 2. What worked well, and what barriers (if any) did you encounter? What did you learn about yourself during this process? This presentation will need to be 3-4 minutes long and discuss insights you learned throughout this course about yourself and how your SMART goal has helped you pivot and find balance.

[**Course Schedule**] – Course schedule with dates and assignments can be found on Blackboard]

Course Policies & Procedures

Absences:

Class participation is a required component of success in this class. One unexcused absence equals **20 missed points**. Please be aware of this and communicate with me in a timely manner via email if an emergency arises so that we can discuss options.

Per the University of Arkansas: Education at the university level requires active involvement in the learning process. Therefore, students have the responsibility to attend classes and to actively engage in all learning assignments or opportunities provided in their classes. Instructors have the responsibility to provide a written policy on student attendance that is tied to course objectives and included in a course syllabus. There may be times, however, when illness, family crisis, or university- sponsored activities make full attendance or participation impossible. In these situations, students are responsible for making timely arrangements with the instructor to make up work missed. Such arrangements should be made in writing and prior to the absence when possible.

Examples of absences that should be considered excusable include those resulting from the following: 1) illness of the student, 2) serious illness or death of a member of the student’s immediate family or other family crisis, 3) University-

sponsored activities for which the student's attendance is required by virtue of scholarship or leadership/ participation responsibilities, 4) religious observances (see Students' Religious Observances policy below), 5) jury duty or subpoena for court appearance, and 6) military duty. The instructor has the right to require that the student provide appropriate documentation for any absence for which the student wishes to be excused.

Religious Observances:

Holidays of religious groups may not be accounted for. If you anticipate a conflict between a religious observance and your course schedule, and you seek to be excused from class, please provide a written schedule of the religious holiday(s) you will observe. Please submit this information before the completion of the first week of classes. We will work together to establish plans for completing any makeup work required for those dates.

Late Work:

Late work will receive an automatic grade deduction of 5% per day late. After 5 days, credit will not be awarded for late work.

Extensions:

In cases of extenuating circumstances, such as emergencies, I am open to considering granting deadline extensions without imposing a grade penalty. To request an extension, please notify me at the earliest opportunity, providing a clear explanation for your request and suggesting a reasonable timeframe for submission. While I will consider all reasonable extension requests, please be aware that extensions are not guaranteed and are offered as a courtesy at my discretion. Your best bet for earning full credit is to turn in your assignments on time, and there will be some assignments for which extensions are not possible.

Academic Honesty:

As a core part of its mission, the University of Arkansas provides students with the opportunity to further their educational goals through programs of study and research in an environment that promotes freedom of inquiry and academic responsibility. Accomplishing this mission is only possible when intellectual honesty and individual integrity prevail.

Each University of Arkansas student is required to be familiar with and abide by the University's 'Academic Integrity Policy' at honesty.uark.edu/policy. Students with questions about how these policies apply to a particular course or assignment should immediately contact their instructor.

Accessibility:

University of Arkansas [Academic Policy Series 1520.10](#) requires that students with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact me privately to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for accommodations through the Center for Educational Access (CEA) (contact 479-575-3104 or visit <http://cea.uark.edu> for more information on registration procedures).

As your instructor, it is very important to me to work with you to make this course accessible. Students who utilized accommodations at their prior educational institutions are strongly encouraged to work with CEA to support their continued educational success at the U of A.

Emergency Procedures:

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus; instructions for specific emergencies such as severe weather, active shooter, or fire can be found at emergency.uark.edu.

Severe Weather (Tornado Warning):

- Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel
- Seek shelter in the basement or interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside

- If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building
- Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors

Violence / Active Shooter (CADD):

- CALL- 9-1-1
- AVOID- If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
- DENY- Barricade the door with desk, chairs, bookcases or any items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it's safe.
- DEFEND- Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack.

In Case of Emergency:

If you are experiencing an emergency and require immediate attention, please contact the U of A Campus Police at 479-575-2222 or dial 911.

RazALERT:

The University of Arkansas has a campus-wide alert system for any hazardous conditions that may arise on campus. To learn more and to sign up: <http://safety.uark.edu/emergency-preparedness/emergency-notification-system/>

Class Cancellation:

- All classes are cancelled when the university is closed.
- Classes scheduled after cancellation will not be held.
- Your instructor may cancel class when the university is not closed by informing students by written notice (via email) before class time.
- Your instructor will provide you a chance to make up work without penalty if weather conditions prevent you from safely attending class.

Campus Resources:

Throughout the semester, we will be sharing and discussing many campus resources. I have included links to some of these resources below for your awareness.

- [Academic Support](https://www.uark.edu/academics/academic-support.php)
A complete list and brief description of academic support programs can be found on the University's Academic Support site, along with links to the specific services, hours, and locations. See <https://www.uark.edu/academics/academic-support.php>
- [Campus Life](https://www.uark.edu/campus-life/index.php#stay-healthy)
Please explore the numerous resources offered at the U of A, including things to do, ways to get involved, resources for staying mentally and physically healthy, and dining options, at <https://www.uark.edu/campus-life/index.php#stay-healthy>
- [Career Planning](http://career.uark.edu/cdc/students/ctr/)
Career Track Razorbacks is a nationally-recognized program offered by the Career Development Center that helps students develop and refine professional skills. It is free to all U of A students. Explore getting involved at <http://career.uark.edu/cdc/students/ctr/>
- [Wellness](https://urec.uark.edu/healthy-hogs.php)
Healthy Hogs is a free, 12-week program sponsored by University Recreation that complements the academic experience by connecting students with co-curricular recreation and wellness programming. To find out more, see <https://urec.uark.edu/healthy-hogs.php>

*This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
In the event of such changes, the updated revisions will be posted on Blackboard and you will be notified via email.*