

PADM 7331 02 Special Topics: Seminar on Social Equity

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Office: 627 Ross Hall

Hours: On campus Tuesdays, 4:30-5:30pm and by appointment on Zoom, FaceTime, or by phone (501) 551-6524

How to Communicate with Me

- Use Bb messages for class communications, when possible, not UALR mail
- Post public questions and comments at Ask Dr. Scranton - I check this every day

Welcome to the Seminar on Social Equity! Since we continue to live under pandemic conditions, I am putting UA Little Rock's Covid-19 Policies and Resources that are available for you at the top of our syllabus.

Covid-19 Policies and Resources

I am aware that many of us continue to have increased anxieties and challenges and more work and caretaking responsibilities due to the pandemic. Please stay in touch with me during the semester. Let me know ahead of time if you are worried concerns about completing an assignment so that I can work with you. As much as possible, stick to the deadlines in the Class Schedule, but if the pandemic sets you back, let me know right away so that we can make a plan together.

If you need help, don't hesitate to use these campus resources:

- PACT prioritized the procurement of 287 **laptop computers for students**. Students can request needed laptops or other technical hardware, software, or internet through the Care Team, which prioritizes student need and coordinates with the Ottenheimer Library to check laptops out to students.
- **UA Little Rock Counseling Services** provides free, confidential counseling online for enrolled students. More information about the UALR Counseling Center, including hours and how to sign up here: <https://ualr.edu/counseling/>. Phone: 501.569.3185
- **The Office of Student Success** has prepared a list of [academic](#) and [community](#) resources for students. Some of these resources include the [Trojan Food Pantry](#), the [Career Closet](#), [Disability Resource Center](#), [Health Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Military Student Success Center](#), and more.

- The **UA Little Rock Care Team** fields requests for academic, technical, and financial assistance through the Care Team. A member of the Care Team will consult over the phone to identify appropriate campus and community resources. [Click here](#) to request assistance.
- **The Trojan Food Pantry** is open to all UALR students, faculty, and staff with a UALR ID. Participants can visit each week, and they receive a three-day supply of food when they visit. <http://ualr.edu/foodpantry/>

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Plan for adapting our class to fully digital mode if campus closes: we will hold Zoom classes during our regular class period. If I happen to need a substitute, the SPA will provide for that situation. Having previously taught this course online, I am confident that I have all the materials in place that we might need.

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Purpose of the course – why we are here

- Δ Social Equity is one of the pillars of Public Administration, along with effectiveness, efficiency, and economy. As a cornerstone of the discipline, Social Equity addresses desired outcomes of public policies and social services: that these be free from bias and fair to all in terms of access, processes, and quality. Guy and McCandless provide a straightforward reason for a Social Equity course: “social equity’s effects reveal themselves in every policy domain and in the daily work of all public service professionals.”¹ Thus, a course like this one provides essential, foundational knowledge for PA professionals’ management skills and practices, and for MPA students’ training in how to diagnose public problems and analyze policy issues.
- Δ Social Equity, as a concept, seems simple. A social equity perspective asks apparently simple questions: What is a fair solution? In situation X, what does fairness mean? Who decides what is fair? Yet, Guy and McCandless assert that social equity is “one of the least understood concepts in public administration.”² Therefore we will spend the semester delving deeper into the concept and applying a social equity lens to an inequity of each student’s choice (see your social inequity wiki project and analysis paper).
- Δ We live in troubled times that challenge our values as individuals and PA professionals. Inequities abound. We witness multiple harms falling



¹ Mary E. Guy and Sean A. McCandless, eds., *Achieving Social Equity: From Problems to Solutions*, Irvine, CA: Melvin & Leigh, 2020, Preface, p. vii.

² *Ibid.*

disproportionately upon disadvantaged people and marginalized communities. Social equity envisions government's role as serving the public justly, fairly, and equitably. These values require us to learn more about social equity and direct our behavior accordingly.

- Δ Commitment to Social Equity entails a call to action. A report on the Social Equity Manifesto issued after the 2018 "Minnowbrook at 50 Conference," called on MPA programs to pay attention and to act:



About Minnowbrook at 50

An intellectually diverse group of scholars and practitioners convened at Minnowbrook at 50 to consider the state of public administration fifty years after Minnowbrook I. New and old themes emerged in both the small group sessions and large group plenaries. The seven small groups wrote short summaries of the topics they tackled:

- [Relevance of Public Administration Scholarship](#)
- [Analytic Frameworks: Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Public Administration](#)
- [Overcoming American Centricity](#)
- [Integrative Public Administration](#)
- [Automation and Artificial Intelligence](#)
- [Democracy, Public Administration, and Public Values](#)
- [Social Equity in Public Administration](#)

- Δ This course boosts your preparation to enter the workforce of the 21st century. Responsible Bureaucracy (RB), a subfield of Social Equity, refers to participation in and management of this workforce. RB entails skills in non-discrimination, affirmative action, cultural awareness, and diversity management. MPA graduates need tools for addressing problems that arise over of race and ethnicity, gender and identity, age and disability; these include analyzing which workforce practices best support social equity and creating results-based strategies and diversity management plans.
- Δ Intellectually, to advance social equity, MPA graduates need strong analytical and methodological skills; they need a variety--a plurality--of skills for examining the origins and scope of inequities and skills for measuring concepts like race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Accordingly, Jocelyn Frye identifies **six competencies MPA students need to do social equity research:**
 - understand the intersection of social equity factors,
 - be able to balance the theoretical and practical,
 - demonstrate creativity,
 - understand the public interest organizations they may join,
 - write in a critical and accessible manner, and
 - have a true commitment to the work.³

³ Susan Gooden and Samuel L. Myers, Jr., "Symposium: Social Equity in Public Affairs Education," *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 10 (2004):2:91-97, at p. 96.

The ability to live up to the ideals of US democracy requires that public administration programs be intentional with its emphasis and integration of concepts like democracy, equity, and racial justice. Although inequalities in wealth and power, social and racial injustice, and environmental degradation has always been part of the US experience, the current political environment requires that current and future administrators understand how government institutions and administrative actions can facilitate injustice by using a neutral and objective lens. Raising the level of consciousness and preparing students to work in a world full of contradictions and complexities mandates more than introducing terms in one core class through an entire degree program. Programs need to ensure that students have the wherewithal to understand how inequity, disparity, injustice, and oppression operate within governance systems and governance structures if equity is ever to become a priority.⁴

- Δ Why we are here: to bolster understanding of the Social Equity pillar of Public Administration. In addition to our central focus on Social Equity, we will also explore cultural competency and ways to implement Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives.

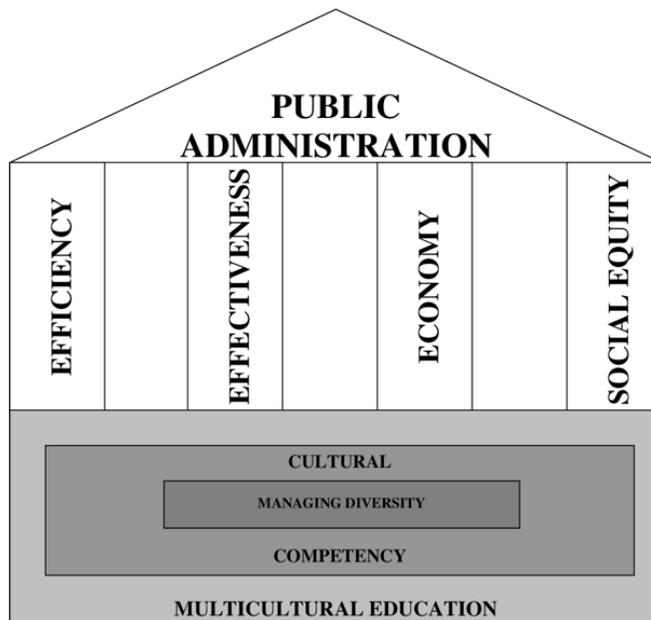


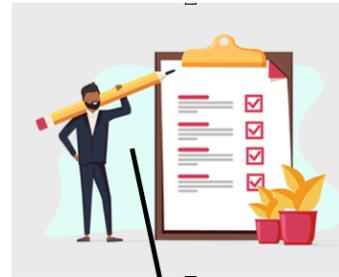
Image source: Susan Perry, PhD Dissertation, Social Equity for the Long Haul: Preparing Culturally Competent Public Administrators, available at <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Social-Equity-for-the-Long-Haul%3A-Preparing-Public-Perry/>

⁴ Brandi Blessett, Jennifer Dodge, Beverly Edmond, Holly T. Goerdel, Susan T. Gooden, Andrea M. Headley, Norma M. Riccucci, and Brian N. Williams, “Social Equity in Public Administration: A Call to Action,” *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance*, 2019, pp. 283-299, at p. 294; doi: 10.1193/ppmgov/gvz016.

Your Learning Performance Objectives

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

1. Explain the meaning of social equity in the development of the profession of Public Administration.
2. Explain the meaning of social equity, as an analytical concept, in various policy domains, socio-economic and political contexts and in the workplace;
3. Locate and use indicators of various inequalities, gathered online;
4. Operationally define and describe a social equity topic for a given population in a context and evaluate possible remedies.
5. Communicate ideas professionally and effectively in class discussions, written assignments and formal presentations.



A note about professional writing for our class

- All of your written assignments for our class should be prepared with the attention due to a professional presentation, and expected from a Master's degree candidate.
- When an assignment has a formal genre, follow the protocol/conventions for that genre.
- Always support claims and arguments with sourced, reputable evidence.
- Written assignments require proofreading and editing prior to submission with careful attention given to correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, paragraphs, and sentence structure.
- Writing competency is extremely important in graduate school as well as in your professional career; invest in polishing your writing skills!

Format for our Class and Components of your Semester Grade

Seminar = students are responsible for being prepared for each class, taking part in discussions and even presenting content and facilitating the class discussion.

- Outside of Class
 - Prepare assigned readings for class discussion and writing assignments
 - Use Ask Dr. Scranton and Bb messages for questions and comments
- During Class - **always bring your laptop, iPad or smartphone to class**
 - 2 sessions per class with a break in between
 - Blackboard Discussions, interactive activities and writing assignments
 - Document-based and scholarly article-based research and writing activities and virtual field trips

Required Reading

We have two required textbooks. Frederickson takes us on a tour of the development of the New Public Administration and Social Equity from the first Minnowbrook Conference to the closing decade of the 20th century. The chapters in Guy and McCandless review topics in social equity, assessing each inequity in terms of definitions, measures of the problem, contexts, programs and administration, and future directions.

- H. George Frederickson, *Social Equity and Public Administration* (New York: Routledge, 2015; 2010 M. E. Sharp). ISBN 9-780765-624727. Used copies should be available.
- *Achieving Social Equity: From Problems to Solutions*, eds. Mary E. Guy and Sean A. McCandless (Irvine, CA: Melvin & Leigh, 2020). ISBN 978-1-73393446-6. Used copies should be available
- Selected Scholarly Articles, videos, and social equity resources in Blackboard

Components of your Semester Grade

	Points	Grading Scale
Guy and McCandless chapter presentations (2)	200	A = 1089-1210
Wiki Pages for G & M chapters (2)	100	B = 968-1088
Graded Pre-Class and In-Class Activities (14)	420	C = 847-967
Weekly After Class Learning Journal (12)	140	D = 726-846
Reflective Feedback Surveys (2)	50	F = below 726
Literature review Project	<u>300</u>	
Total	1210	

Assignments, Deadlines and Attendance

Because every class builds upon the previous class, we have a strict attendance policy. If you miss more than three classes, your earned letter grade drops one letter. It is crucial for you to attend when you are scheduled to present a Guy and McCandless chapter!



To keep everyone on track and support your success in this class, **assignment deadlines are fixed**; please do not ask for extensions unless you are experiencing an emergency. In that situation, contact Dr. Scranton as soon as you can to arrange a makeup plan. We have many points available for credit in our seminar, so if you happen to miss a few deadlines you should be able to earn an A or B (see Grading Scale above).

In terms of making up work when you know you will miss a class, you can submit pre-class writing and discussion assignments **before** that class begins, but you cannot make up in-class participation activities.

Pre-class activities include assignments like watching documentary videos or lectures and writing summaries, preparing questions for class discussion, and reporting on websites or data sets. In-class activities include presenting your pre-class findings/reports, comparing and contrasting responses to documentaries and online-lectures, drafting mindmaps/matrices, and creating visual presentations of evidence - 420 points, 30 points per class/week.

Since you are in a seminar, you will take responsibility for presenting one of the substantive chapters in Guy and McCandless to the class: you will prepare a handout for classmates, an interactive activity to complete during class, and a wiki page of resources with definitions, links to data sets/index measures/surveys, links to useful case studies and/or several relevant, current scholarly articles - 200 points. Part of your presentation to the class will be a guided tour of the wiki you create. To prepare for doing a solo chapter presentation, you will participate in a group presentation first, sharing responsibility for creating the wiki, handout, and activity - 100 points. I will pick one topic chapter for us to pilot this process during our third class meeting, so you will be ready to take responsibility for your chapter when the time comes.

Your longer writing assignment is a literature review, a project that takes you through the process of defining a topic, selecting relevant scholarly articles, analyzing the articles for common and contrasting themes, narrating the discourse across the articles, and identifying fruitful areas for further research. I will conduct 4-5 investigative and writing workshops where you will draft sections of the literature review (100 points); you will submit a rough draft (50 points) and a final draft (150 points) - 300 points for the entire Literature Review Project.

Reflecting on your learning also contributes to your success, so once a week (for 14 weeks) you will write an entry on your weekly After Class Learning Journal - 140 points. I provide writing prompts you can use to start your reflection; you may also create your own reflection prompts. The important thing is to review what you learned and connect those ideas to what you already know, to other courses, to your job(s) and your career objectives. These entries must be submitted **before** the next class; it's even better to write your reflection within 24 hours after the class.

In addition to the regular student evaluations for our class, I solicit your feedback at mid-semester and at the end of the semester via surveys with questions about readings and assignments, what's working well for you, what needs to be improved, etc. I use the first reflective feedback survey to make course corrections rather than waiting until after the semester to find out how to improve your learning experience - 25 points for completing each survey.

You will find a calendar in Bb and a link to our weekly schedule. Add deadlines to your personal calendar and/or print out the schedule to keep track of readings, assignments and deadlines. Some students report that they set reminders on their phones the day



before an assignment is due or on the day when they prepare for class. To succeed in our class, it's essential to complete every assignment on schedule.

We do not have any extra-credit work for missed assignments. Extensions are only available in the event of an extreme emergency, such as your hospitalization, a documented family emergency or military deployment.

Submitting your assignments counts as your “attendance.”

Dr. Scranton's Teaching Philosophy

My Teaching = providing learning opportunities for you

I believe that great teaching focuses on students' learning more than telling students what I already know. My focus is on building up what you know and what you know how to do through learning opportunities. I create assignments that build your critical thinking and writing skills in a step-wise, scaffolded manner. In practice, this means that we have more small and medium-sized writing assignments rather than a mid-term, a final exam, and a major paper.

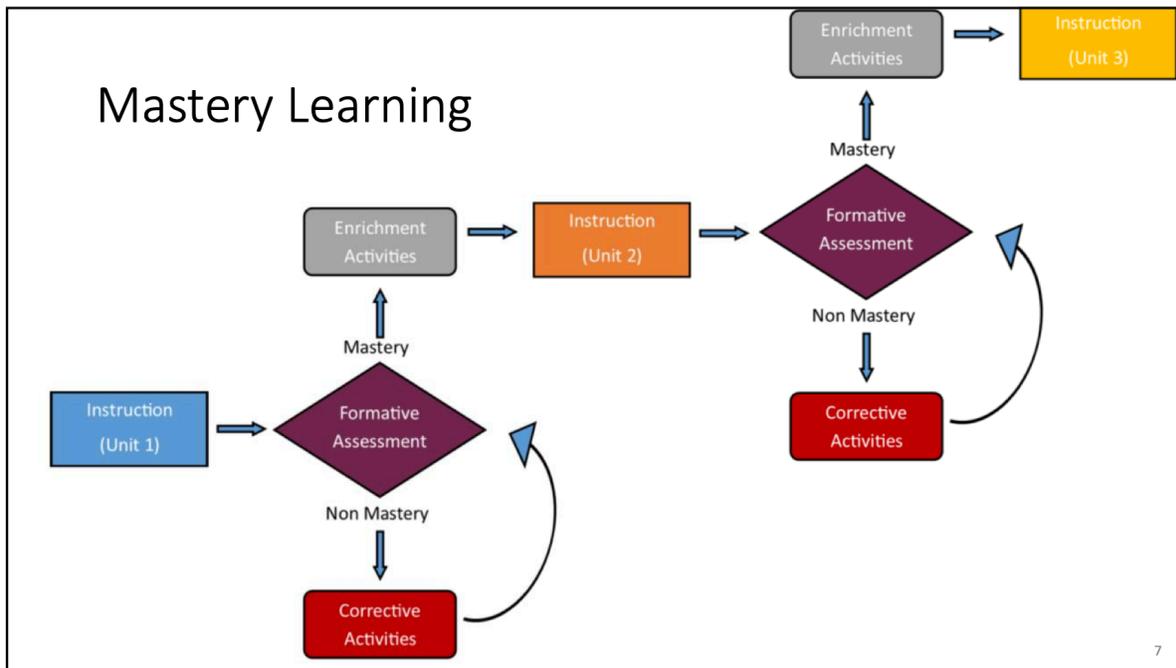
Your Learning = actively and mindfully reading, discussing and writing

I believe, and scholarly research confirms, that students learn best when they process assigned readings carefully and then write and talk about what they read. Research on retention of information confirms that reading alone is not as effective as reading plus writing in various formats. Class discussions are important for honing listening skills, awareness of multiple perspectives, and cultivating civil, academic discourse. That's why we have a variety of writing assignments and additional readings and in-class activities that supplement our textbooks.



Grading with Rubrics and Proficiency Standards

In my experience, students are more likely to score well on assignments when the instructions are quite specific and when the grading rubric matches the instructions. Mastery learning refers to creating assignments in sequences with formative assessments to gauge learning before moving on to the next task. That is why we have weekly writing and discussion assignments! With that feedback, I find out whether to review a topic or move on to the next one.



I provide detailed guidelines/instructions and grading rubrics. Supplemental assignments may be added (“corrective activities”) to move toward mastery. To measure learning, my rubrics for written assignments use proficiency standards.

- “proficiency” = completing all of the required elements of an assignment accurately, demonstrating mastery of the assigned readings, and providing relevant evidence and/or examples
- “competency” = most of proficiency but lacking one or more elements or using non-specific language that shows weak or vague understanding of assigned readings or lacking adequate evidence and/or examples
- “novice” = below average performance, especially errors of fact or interpretation of assigned readings, lack of evidence and/or examples or responses that are too generic to demonstrate knowledge of assigned material.
- “missing or upgradable” = no answer for that component of the assignment or an answer that is not responsive to the assignment or is not based on the assigned readings.

University Policies

- **If you have a complaint** about a grade, the way our course works or about me, your professor, UA Little Rock has complaint procedures and a form you can submit:

Student Complaint Form is located at <https://ualr.edu/deanofstudents/student-complaints/>.

- **Students with Disabilities**

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. For me to respond appropriately, I need to know what specific accommodations a student requires; letters from the Disability Resource Center include only vague, generic language about accommodations; each student must contact me about their specific needs and how these relate to an online learning environment. Such consultations must occur during the startup week of class; if you need a consultation, send me a Blackboard message right away.

The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at ualr.edu/disability. If you have any special needs or accommodations please let me know as soon as possible. Any delays can impact a student's ability to participate fully in the course. Reasonable accommodations will be implemented in a timely fashion, after official notification is received, and are not retroactive.

- **Academic Integrity**

The University has developed certain regulations to make possible an orderly academic environment where all members of the community have the freedom to develop to the fullest extent.



Promoting academic integrity is an essential component of any learning community. I want you to be successful in this course and there are many opportunities for assistance, including the Indiana University Plagiarism Tutorial and Certificate test for Graduate and Doctoral Students.

Achieving grades that do not represent your own work is not true success. Stress, lack of sleep, demands beyond being a student, and completing assignments at the last minute can contribute to poor decision-making. Research shows that violations of academic integrity are sometimes the product of a student's desperation.



If you find yourself tempted to cross the integrity line, I encourage you to speak with me so we can strategize, discuss ways you can

enhance your own learning, and make a plan for you to complete your assignment.

Academic dishonesty cannot be condoned or tolerated in the University community. Such behavior is considered a student conduct violation, and students found guilty of committing an academic offense ***on the campus, or in connection with an institution-oriented or sponsored activity, or while representing the University or academic department, will be disciplined by the University.***

In this class, a student is found to have committed of a violation of academic integrity will receive an F (zero points) on that assignment; the student will be reported to the Dean of Students for a disciplinary investigation and sanction. A student will get an F for the course if found guilty of a second integrity offense. You will complete academic integrity assignments during the first week of class to ensure that you are aware of the rules and how to avoid plagiarism. Each student must also complete an assignment in which they agree to abide by the UALR Code of Student Conduct.

UALR Academic Integrity Policy Statement:

Students may not gain undue advantage over their classmates by deceptive or dishonest means. Throughout their education students should be impressed with the facts that cheating, duplicity, unauthorized reproduction of classroom materials, and plagiarism are morally degrading and that such practices seriously interfere with learning and intellectual development. It is a responsibility of faculty members to make every effort to prevent dishonesty, protect honest students, and take appropriate action in instances of dishonesty. It is the responsibility of the student not only to abstain from cheating, but in addition, to avoid the appearance of cheating and to guard against making it possible for others to cheat. Courtesy and honesty require that any ideas or materials borrowed from another must be fully acknowledged. It is the obligation of each student to report all alleged violations of academic integrity to the faculty member, as well as the responsibility of all faculty to report all alleged violations of academic integrity to the dean of students. Consult the full policy statement and procedures for academic dishonesty cases at <http://ualr.edu/policy/index.php/50113/>.

- **Inclement weather:** If we know in advance of class that campus will close, plan to attend via Zoom. I will send you a UA Little Rock message with a Zoom link if we need to hold class digitally. I will record the Zoom class in case anyone loses power. The Campus inclement weather policy is available at <https://ualr.edu/policy/home/admin/weather/>

UA Little Rock Academic Resources

Blackboard Support (see link in Blackboard navigation bar)

- Blackboard Support website assists students with tutorials, helpful resources, downloads, and answers to their frequently asked questions.
- In addition to the website, students can call the Bb office during business hours; you can also find help within the Blackboard system using the Help tab or through social media outlets on Facebook and Twitter.

- You can connect to Blackboard Help at Net ID login page or directly from ualr.edu/blackboard, and your courses in Blackboard also have an online “help” link.

IT Services

- For technical support with other UALR systems, including logging into Blackboard, BOSS, or your UALR email, please contact the IT Help Desk at <http://ualr.edu/ITServices/> or by calling 501.916.3011.
- Business hours are Monday through Thursday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, and on Fridays from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Ottenheimer Library

The Library collects, organizes, and provides access to information resources and library services that enrich and support the University’s research and teaching mission, foster intellectual development, and promote academic excellence. Visit the Ottenheimer Library website for information about the library, its collections, and services for students: <http://ualr.edu/library/>

Communication Skill Center

The [Communication Skills Center](#) (CSC) is a resource devoted to helping campus and online students in the various stages of preparing a presentation. We help take the panic out of public speaking! Services include, but are not limited to, public speaking anxiety management, brainstorming, research, content organization, PowerPoint/Google Slide design and integration, and providing presenters with helpful rehearsal feedback. The CSC offers both in person (Learning Commons, first floor of the Ottenheimer Library) and virtual services:

- To schedule an in person or online video call appointment, please use the following link: calendly.com/ualr-communication-skill-center
- To access our online chat, please use the following link (and be sure to log-in to your email): <https://hangouts.google.com/group/ncmX9d991pbMAkV66>
- To request support via email, please use the following link: <https://forms.gle/Aq6sThHm9T6weZD66> Online Writing Lab

Visit the Online Writing Lab for more information about the services they provide, their online submission guidelines, and virtual writing conferences: <https://ualr.edu/writingcenter/>.

Let’s have a great semester – stay in touch! Dr. Scranton