

Course|Gen_Ed|New-Close-Modify for request 10484

Info

Request: IDH3931 The Humanities and Social Change

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Responses

Course Prefix and Number : IDS3931

Course Title: The Humanities and Social Change

Request Type: Change GE/WR designation (selecting this option will open additional form fields below)

Effective Term: Earliest Available

Effective Year: Earliest Available

Credit Hours : 2

Prerequisites: None

Current GE Classification(s): None

Current Writing Requirement Classification : None

One-semester Approval?: Yes

Requested GE Classification: H

Requested Writing Requirement Classification: E2

Type of writing skill feedback provided : Grade

The Humanities and Social Change (IDH3931)

Section: 117D - Honors

Wednesdays, Periods 7-8 (1:55-3:50pm)

Little Hall 117

Spring 2016

Instructors:

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The Humanities and Social Change (H) (E2)

Why do more medical schools require their students to study art history? Why are veterans of the Iraq War performing Greek tragedies? What exactly is the "liberal arts attitude" that led Steve Jobs to such celebrated and creative innovation at Apple? And how have people used philosophy, literary criticism, and religious studies to enact social and technological change?

This course offers students of any major an interdisciplinary look at the humanities, with a focus on what humanists *do* and who the humanities are *for*. We will grapple with the humanities' shifting and often-controversial meanings, and we'll consider what is distinctive about the disciplines they encompass. We'll investigate literature, history, philosophy and art "in action," drawing case studies not only from classrooms, but also from prison libraries, graffitied street corners, and presidential inaugurations. And in each instance, we'll situate the texts of the humanities (books, speeches, art forms, and performances) in the social context in which they act. By connecting these case studies to their own experiences, students will explore how they can use the skills and substance of their humanities training – either as majors or simply participants in Gen Ed classes – to support their own interests and professional paths. The class will be team-taught by a cultural sociologist and a theatre historian from UF's Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere, and students will have opportunities to participate in the Center's public humanities programming.

Students who successfully complete the course will fulfill 2 credits of a general education requirement in the humanities as well as 2,000 words toward their writing requirement. Assignments include: two short essays that critically reflect upon readings, a presentation based on the student's observation(s) of a public space where the humanities happen, and class participation.

General Education Requirements and Learning Outcomes

This course is a humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education Program. Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

At the end of this course, you will achieve the following learning outcomes, as defined by UF's General Education Student Learning Outcomes:

***Content.** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the subject area.* By identifying and comparing accounts of the humanities in scholarly and popular texts, you will become conversant in theories, terms, methods, and concepts that characterize humanistic inquiry. You will demonstrate competence in this content area by synthesizing a working definition of the humanities that reflects the humanities' shifting meanings and applications.

***Critical thinking.** Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the subject area.* In this class, we will interpret texts by observing both their formal features and a social context in which they appear. This will allow you to hone your close-reading skills (relevant to all humanities disciplines), and apply them to questions about the nature of humanistic inquiry and social change. You will demonstrate these skills in two short essays that analyze case studies of the humanities in action, and in a mini-ethnography (shared via a presentation) of a local humanities site.

***Communication.** Students clearly and effectively communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning in written or oral forms appropriate to the subject area.* The scholarly articles we read in this course will model persuasive academic writing. They will also offer terms and concepts that you can use to connect your insights to broader discussions. You will have opportunities to practice written communication through in-class writing and journal entries, and oral communication through class discussion. You will demonstrate your communication skills in the clarity and organization of your short essays, and in an oral presentation of your humanities ethnography.

Required Texts

Anna Deavere Smith, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

All other readings will be available online and in a course pack.

Course Schedule

History, definitions, disagreements

Week 1 Introductions and in-class activity

Week 2 Definitions of the humanities

- Rens Bod, "Insights from the Humanities that Changed the World," from *A New History of the Humanities* (2013)
- Geoffrey Galt Harpham, "The Humanities as a Foreign Language" from *The Humanities and the Dream of America* (2011)

Week 3 Arguing for the value of the humanities

- Danielle Allen, Excerpt from *Talking to Strangers* (2009)
- Stanley Fish, "Will the Humanities Save Us?" (2008)
- Wilfred M. McClay, "The Beauty and the Burden of the Humanities" (2008)
- D. Edelstein, "How is Innovation Taught? On the Humanities and the Knowledge Economy" (2010)

Interpreting philosophical and literary texts

Week 4 *Plato* in the college classroom

- Plato (trans. Grube), "The Ring of Gyges" from *The Republic* (~380 B.C.)
- Scott Samuelson, "Why I teach Plato to plumbers" (2014)

Week 5 *One Today* at President Obama's Inauguration

- Richard Blanco, *One Today* (read and watch on YouTube) (2013)
- Excerpts from *For Everyone, One Today* (2013)

Week 6 Reading and social change

- Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" (1784)
- Elaine Scarry, "Poetry, Injury, and the Ethics of Reading," from *The Humanities and Public Life* (2014)

Interpreting images and objects

Week 7 Picasso's *Guernica* at MoMA

- Picasso, *Guernica* (1937)
- Benjamin Cousen, "Memory, power, and place: Where is *Guernica*?" (2009)
- Kopper Akos, "Why *Guernica* became a globally used icon of political protest" (2014)

- Week 8 Foreign aid photos in the news
- Figs. 1, 2, 3 (Reuters images of Port-Au-Prince, Haiti) in course pack (2010)
 - Patricia J. Williams, "The Raw and the Half-Cooked," *The Humanities and Public Life* (2014)
 - Hariman and Lucaites, Excerpts from *No Caption Needed* (blog)

- Week 9 Visual analysis and social change
- Dave Hickey, "Air Guitar" (1997)
 - W.J.T. Mitchell, "What do pictures really want?" (1996)

Interpreting sound and performance

- Week 10 Performance analysis and social change
- Diana Taylor, Excerpt from *The Archive and the Repertoire* (2003)
 - Jill Dolan, "Performance, Utopia, and the 'Utopian Performative'" (2001)

- Week 11 *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* in post-uprising L.A.
- Anna Deavere Smith, *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (1992)
 - Anna Deavere Smith, *Four American Characters*, http://www.ted.com/talks/anna_deavere_smith_s_american_character?language=en (2005)

- Week 12 *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* Cont'd
- Alison Forsyth, "Performing Trauma: Race Riots and Beyond in the Work of Anna Deavere Smith" (2009)

- Week 13 *Hamlet* in a High Security Prison
- Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act V (1603)
 - This American Life, http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio_archives/episode/218/act-v (2002)
 - Bruce Western, *Mass Incarceration, Visualized*: <http://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/404890/prison-inherited-trait/> (2015)

Interpreting institutions

- Week 14 Natural and cultural resources
- Meringolo, Excerpt from *Museums, Monuments and National Parks: toward a new genealogy of public history* (2012)
 - Alice Walker, "Everyday Use" (1973)

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Points (out of 1000)	Percentage of Grade
Short Essay 1	200	20%
Short Essay 2	400	40%
Ethnography Presentation	300	30%
Class Participation and In-Class Assignments	100	10%

1. Short Essay (1000 words, 200 points)

- *Due:* via email, no later than Week 10, on the day we cover the case study you've chosen. Please submit your paper by the beginning of class so that you can participate fully in discussion.

Select one of the literary, visual, or performance texts we read in class and the reading(s) that accompany it. Write a short analytical paper that addresses this prompt:

What social and/or political commentary might the text offer in its social context?

Because this is a short paper, you should focus on a specific theme or issue. For instance, if you submit a paper for Week 5, you might interpret the poem *One Today* as an argument for greater equality among Americans. Your essay would then analyze quotes from Blanco's poem to show how it envisions equality, and observations from the Presidential Inauguration (as described in *For Everyone, One Today*) that show how the context frames, alters, or amplifies this message. You should focus on analyzing the texts we read in class, but you may use 1-3 credible outside sources to learn more about the context in which the text is being used.

2. Short Essay (1000 words, 400 points)

- *Due:* no later than Week 13, on the day we cover the case study you've chosen. This paper should incorporate feedback from Essay 1, so space out the two papers by at least 2 weeks.

The assignment is the same as Essay 1, but with a different case study of your choosing.

3. Ethnography Presentation (5-8 minutes per group, 300 points)

- *Due:* Week 14

In small groups, you will present your observations and analysis of a space in Gainesville where humanities happen. Your presentation should analyze: the kind of humanistic activity that is

occurring (what is the text/object? How is it being interpreted?); who is participating, and how; and your reflections on what this might tell us on how/if the humanities work for social change in Gainesville.

Note that we will spend some time in class helping you plan and prepare for your excursion “into the field.” You should start thinking early however, about sites/events that might interest you. Possibilities include the benches around a public monument, a public lecture, a museum, a rally, a post-theatre “talk-back”, etc.

4. Class Participation/In-Class Assignments (100 points)

This portion of your grade reflects your contribution to lively, respectful, and productive classes. It encompasses constructive questions and comments, active listening, thoughtful in-class writing, and familiarity with the assigned readings.

Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
934-1000	93.4-100	A	4.00
900-933	90.0-93.3	A-	3.67
867-899	86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
834-866	83.4-86.6	B	3.00
800-833	80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
767-799	76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
734-766	73.4-76.6	C	2.00
700-733	70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
667-699	66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
634-666	63.4-66.6	D	1.00
600-633	60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-599	0-599	E	0.00

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Writing Requirement

This course confers 2000 words towards the Writing Requirement (WR), which ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. While helping students meet the broad learning outcomes of content, communication, and critical thinking, the instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on students' written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization. After receiving feedback, students may re-write their short essays up to one time per essay for an updated grade consideration.

Course grades have two components. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Writing Assessment Rubric

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to connect observations to argument through analysis.

STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

Attendance

This is a discussion-based course, so attendance is crucial. If you miss more than three class meetings, you will fail the course. Exceptions to this policy, if discussed with the instructors in advance, include university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, documented illness, and religious holidays. For each unexcused absence after the first, 50 points will be deducted from the final grade. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all material you may have missed. Two instances of unexcused lateness count as one absence.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

We appreciate your student feedback on the quality of instruction in this course through the online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are

open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

Materials and Supplies Fees

There are no additional fees for this course.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructors in this class.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- a.) Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

- b.) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the Writing Studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.