ENGLISH 1373 FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR IN HUMANITIES
Theme: The Art of Being Human
Fall 2022

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Classes meet: MWF 9-9:50 a.m. and 11-11:50 a.m.
Classroom: Irby 303
Office hours: MWF 10-10:50 a.m. and by appointment

Course Objectives

The FYS (first-year seminar) in Humanities provides a small-classroom environment for students designed to

- Promote community
- Reinforce the importance of written and oral communication
- Develop critical-thinking skills
- Reflect on some of the major themes of world literature
- Arrive at a deeper understanding of what it means to be human

Text

W.W. Norton, *The Norton Anthology of World Literature. Volume 1, Shorter 4th edition.*
Supplemental readings and online lessons will be posted on Blackboard and noted by the abbreviation (BB) in the schedule of readings and assignments below. The additional abbreviation (PPT) denotes that the assignment is a PowerPoint presentation.

Format & Method of Instruction

As its name suggests, this class will be conducted not as a lecture course but as a seminar in which everyone present is expected to participate and the instructor, using Socratic dialogue, serves as a discussion facilitator of the assigned readings and focus topics for each class meeting.

Course Organization

As will become clearer after a review of the detailed Schedule of Classes & Assignments below, this course is not a chronological study of literature but will be arranged thematically, with a sequential focus on six (6) major themes in world literature which poignantly express the hopes and fears, the trials and triumphs, and the joys and sufferings of humans throughout history.

Schedule of Readings & Assignments

► **NOTE:** The reading assignments listed on the dates below are to be completed before coming to class on that day. The posted schedule — as well as the format of instruction for this course — is subject to change. In the event that changes are required, students will be notified by email and by announcements on Blackboard. The schedule will also be posted on Blackboard.

Overview

August 26: Introductions & Course Overview; "Syllabus" (BB); "Navigating Blackboard" (BB, PPT)
August 29: "Toward an Understanding of the Humanities" (BB); *The Heart of the* Matter, pages 9–13 (BB); John Henry Newman, "The Idea of a University" (BB)

Unit 1: Community & Individualism

August 31: David M. Chavis & Kien Lee, "What Is Community Anyway?" (BB); John Gardner, "Building Community" (BB)
September 2: "Community and Social Responsibility" (BB); Henry David Thoreau, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" (BB)

September 5: Labor Day Holiday (No class)

September 7: "Homer & the World of Ancient Greece, Part 1" (BB, PPT), *The Odyssey*, Books 1 and 5 (195–216), Book 16 (295–306)
September 9: *The Odyssey*, Books 21–23 (334–365); Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Ulysses" (BB)
September 12: "The Enlightenment Period" (BB); John Locke, from *Two Treatises of Government*, pages 4–5, 91–123 (BB)
September 14: John Locke, from *Two Treatises of Government*, pages 124–158 (BB)
September 16: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (BB)
September 19: Critical Thinking – "Logical Arguments" (BB)

Unit 2: Seeking the Divine

September 21: **Submit Journal Installment from unit on Community & Individualism**; The Hebrew Bible (74–118)
September 23: "Creation Stories from Around the World" (BB); from Popol Vuh (1693–1697)
September 26: "The Literature of Ancient India" (BB, PPT), *The Bhagavad-Gita* (669–687)
September 28: From *Analects* of Confucius (708–721; From the *Daodejing* of Laozi (722–731)
September 30: The Gospel of Mark, Chapter 1 (BB); The Christian Bible (747–755, 756–762)
October 3: From *Confessions* of Augustine (763–791)
October 5: "The Spread of Islam" (737–741); The Qur'an (791–836)
October 7: "Catholicism and the Protestant Reformation" (BB); Martin Luther, "The Ninety-Five Theses" (BB)

Unit 3: Love & Its Opposites

October 10: **Submit Journal Installment from unit on Seeking the Divine**; "Love in Ancient Greece" (BB); Sappho (370–389)

October 12: Euripides (438–440), *Medea* (441–472)

October 14: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (577–619)

October 17: "The Art of Courtly Love" (BB); Medieval Ballads (BB); Medieval Troubadours (BB)

October 19: Francis Petrarch (1480–1486); Elizabethan Sonnets (BB)

October 21: Fall Break (No class)

Unit 4: The Quest for Power & Glory

October 24: **Submit Journal Installment from unit on Love & Its Opposites**; *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (18–74)

October 26: "Homer & the World of Ancient Greece, Part 2" (BB, PPT), *The Iliad* (138–194)

October 28: *The Aeneid* (474–498, 521–540, 569–576)

October 31: *The Ramayana* (629–669)

November 2: *Beowulf* (836–871)

November 4: Beowulf (871–912)

November 7: *The Prince* (1487–1511)

Unit 5: Crime & Punishment/Sin & Redemption

November 9: **Submit Journal Installment from unit on the Quest for Power & Glory**; *Oedipus the King* (395–437)

November 11: The Parable of the Prodigal Son (755–756); "Sonny's Blues" (BB); "Amazing Grace" (BB)

November 14: Dante Alighieri (925–929); The Nine Circles of Hell (928); *Inferno* (929–992)

November 16: Dante's *Inferno* (1004–1022, 1027–1036, 1041–1045, 1049–1059, 1069–1084)

November 18: Flannery O'Connor: "Everything That Rises Must Converge" (411–426*), "Revelation" (492–513*)

*Note: Click on this link to access the stories by Flannery O'Connor: The Complete Stories (d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net). The page numbers here refer to the pages in the short story collection.

November 21: Flannery O'Conner: "The Lame Shall Enter First" (450–487*). See above note.

November 23 & 25: Thanksgiving Holiday (No class)

Unit 6: Mortality & Death

November 28: **Submit Journal Installment from unit on Crime & Punishment/Sin & Redemption;** William Shakespeare: *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (1708–1752)

November 30: *Hamlet* (1752–1808)

December 2: Leo Tolstoy: *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (BB)
December 5: Henry James: *The Beast in the Jungle* (BB)
December 7: Ernest Hemingway: "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (BB)

December 9: Study Day – No class; **Submit Journal Installment from unit on Death & Mortality**

December 12: **Submit Term Essay**

The Learning Experience

The learning experience offered in this course will involve a four-part process which includes 1) reading, 2) discussion, 3) reflection, and 4) assimilation. Course-related activities have been designed to facilitate that process.

Reading Assignments

Course participants are expected to be just that: active and contributing members in the learning experience. As such, they should stay current with reading assignments and be prepared to contribute to classroom discussions.

> ► **NOTE**: Equally important to willing and active participation is the respect for the opinions of other students and their opportunity to participate freely as well.

Discussion Topics: Talking Points

To encourage active participation in class discussions, students will be required to submit by the time class begins a minimum of three (3) talking points. These talking points may be observations or insights from the assigned readings for that class or questions posed to the instructor or other course participants. In cases where there is more than one reading assignment, you should have at least one (1) talking point for each reading. Further instructions on submitting talking points will follow. Students must submit talking points by the time class begins in order to receive credit for the assignment.

Reflection: Journals

To facilitate the process of personal reflection on readings and classroom discussions, students will maintain a reading journal. Writing prompts for each reflection will be posted on Blackboard at the beginning of each unit. Each journal entry must be a minimum of one full page, using Times Roman font and font size no larger than 12-point. Students will submit their journals in six (6) installments on the dates noted in the Schedule of Readings & Assignments above. Again, further instructions on submitting journal installments will follow.

Assimilation: Term Essay

As evidence that they have assimilated the major concepts from this course and developed the appropriate critical thinking skills, students will submit a term essay at the end of the semester. The due date for the essay, also listed in the Schedule of Readings & Assignments above, is December 12.

The essay will be typed and double-spaced, using Times Roman font and font size no larger than 12-point. The minimum length is seven (7) full pages. There is no maximum length limit. Additional guidelines regarding the topic and format for the essay will be posted on Blackboard later in the semester.

Tests

There will be no tests or final exam in this course.

Make-up Policy

Please inform the instructor as soon as possible when you see that you will not be able to complete assignments on the dates scheduled. With the exception of the term essay, work must be completed within one calendar week (7 days) of the original due date. Failure to make up the missed assignment within that grace period will result in a grade of "0".

Grading

Students may earn a total of 700 points throughout the semester from the following sources:

Participation (Talking Points): 100 points
Journal Installments: 500 points (100 points per installment)
Term Essay: 100 points

Actual points awarded for talking points and journal installments will be determined on a percentage basis, depending on the degree of completion. For example, a student who submits a minimum of three (3) talking points for every class will earn 100 points, while a student who does so only 90% of the time will earn 90 points, and so forth.

A student's final grade will be determined using the following point scale for the semester:

637-700 points = A
567-630 points = B
497-560 points = C
427-490 points = D
0-420 points = F

Class attendance (see below) may be a secondary factor in determining a student's final grade.

Attendance

In order to create and sustain a vital learning experience, it is important that students attend class on a regular basis. In addition, excessive absences may lead to a reduction in a student's final grade or failure, regardless of the average on assignments.

"Excessive absences" is defined as follows: 1) a reduction of one letter grade after three (3) total absences without a legitimate and verifiable excuse; 2) a grade of "F" for six (6) or more total absences, again without a legitimate and verifiable excuse; 3) elimination from the class roster for three (3) consecutive absences without notice to the instructor. As in all good relationships, communication is the key. Please inform the instructor in advance when you foresee an absence or as soon as possible when absences are not foreseeable.

Policy Regarding Wearing Face Coverings

This course will follow the directives and mandates of UCA administration regarding the wearing of face coverings while the possible spread of the COVID-19 virus poses a health risk to students, faculty, and staff.

Electronic Devices

Before class begins, students should turn off their cell-phones and any other electronic devices. Exceptions are laptops and tablets used for taking notes in class and/or downloading reading assignments.

Food and Drinks

Students are permitted to bring to class and consume snacks and non-alcoholic beverages. They are reminded that such consumption should not be a distraction to other course participants and that they must discard their trash at the end of class. Failure to leave a clean classroom will result in a forfeiture of this privilege for the entire class.

Academic Integrity

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the University's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

Evaluations of Instruction

Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining

knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

Emergency Procedures Summary

An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

Title IX disclosure

If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs and the obligations to conduct an investigation will depend on those specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: https://uca.edu/titleix. *Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.

University Policy and Disabilities

If you have any questions about a university policy, including Academic policies and the Sexual Harassment policy, please see the Student Handbook. The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3135.