

Introduction to the Humanities  
HHUM105 | Fall 2020  
R. Ontiveros | J. DeCamillis  
Plenary: M/W 1-1:50pm (synchronous)  
Section: F 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm (hybrid)

### **Course Description**

This course will explore the the creative and intellectual traditions that together make up the humanities, including law, history, religion, music, literature, theater, film, painting, and linguistics, among others. As much as we can in the short time of a single semester, we will seek to understand what these traditions are, how they have evolved over time and place, and why they matter. Emphasis will be placed on the humanities as seen from global and historical perspectives. Students will be encouraged to make active, meaningful connections between what they learn in HHUM105 and what matters to them in their work, their lives, and their communities.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Each of us brings to this course the knowledge, experiences, feelings, and skills that make us who we are. Bring those things to the work you do in HHUM105 and make them a part of the learning we do together! In doing so, you will gain your own unique insights into the nature, history, and practical uses of the humanities.

That said, below are the learning outcomes that are built into the design of HHUM105. With the successful completion of this course, you will:

1. Be able to demonstrate a broad understanding of the history of the disciplines that make up the humanities, a knowledge of their past and present role in the university, and an appreciation of their significance in everyday life;
2. Be able to make sophisticated use of the arts and humanities to address real-world problems and to analyze the complex social, political, economic, technological, and ecological issues we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
3. Be able to express a sophisticated understanding of the many connections between the humanities and medicine.
4. Be able to articulate a college-level understanding of human diversity in all its forms (e.g. class, sexuality, religion, race, gender, nationality, language, etc.) as both the subject and object of the humanities;
5. Have shown improvement in the writing and research skills that are important for success in college and career.
6. Be able to explain on your own terms how your knowledge and training in the arts and humanities can be of value in your career and life.

### **Course Materials**

- *New History of the Humanities* by Rens Bod (ISBN 9780198758396)
- *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese (ISBN 9780375714368)
- Additional course materials will be available via ELMS or the web

## Instructor Contact and Class Information

Dr. Ontiveros Instructor of Record <a href="mailto:rjo@umd.edu">rjo@umd.edu</a>  Office hours: Wed. 2-3pm & by appt.  Office location: Online	Plenary Meetings: M/W 1-1:50 (online)  Section Meetings: F 10-10:50am (0101) F 11-11:50am (0102) F 12-12:50pm (0103) F 1-1:40pm (0104)
Justine DeCamillis Graduate Assistant <a href="mailto:jdecamil@umd.edu">jdecamil@umd.edu</a>  Office hours: Thu. 12-1 & by appt.  Office location: Online	Plenary Meetings: M/W 1-1:50 (online)  Section Meetings: F 10-10:50am (0101) F 11-11:50am (0102) F 12-12:50pm (0103) F 1-1:40pm (0104)

## Course Guidelines

### *REGISTRATION*

The last day to drop this class without a “W” is September 14<sup>th</sup>. The last day to drop with a “W” is November 9<sup>th</sup>. Students can consult the UMD Office of the Registrar website for more information about registration policies.

### *STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES*

The Accessibility and Disability Service office (1101 Shoemaker Building) has information and resources for students with disabilities. It is important for those in need of accommodations to contact ADS and me during the first two weeks of the semester.

### *RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE*

University policy states that “students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances.” Students who anticipate being absent from class for religious reasons should inform me of their intentions no later than the end of the schedule adjustment period (September 14<sup>th</sup>).

### *ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION*

HHUM105 is a “flipped” classroom that introduces content online and uses synchronous class time for active learning, including individual and group exercises. The Fall 2020 attendance policy for HHUM105 is therefore written with two goals in mind: (1) to foster an environment in which students can accomplish the learning goals of the course through consistent participation, and (2) to be as

flexible as possible in view of the many challenges COVID-19 has introduced into our lives.

Students will be allowed up to three “no questions asked” excused absences for synchronous meetings. You will be exempted from any assignments that were done in class on those days. However, make sure you watch the class recording and get clarification for anything you don’t understand because you will still be responsible for missed material when it appears on quizzes or the final exam. If you are absent more than three classes, you will be required to do meaningful makeup work in order to earn any points that were missed. Reach out to us for instructions about makeup work, and please let us know if you are facing health, financial, or other challenges that make it difficult for you to come to class. Together we will try to find a solution that allows you to take care of your personal needs and to fulfill your responsibilities as a student.

A word about participation: the best learning environments have a lot of different voices participating in discussion and debate, and for this reason my pedagogy includes calling on students during class meetings. I realize this can be nervous-making for some students, but I encourage you to approach this class as an opportunity to develop your skills in oral communication. (They are one of the main things employers look for when they go to hire!) If being called on causes extreme anxiety for you, please contact me via email so we can discuss other ways of participating.

Finally, I want to say at the outset that we’re sometimes going to be addressing complex and controversial questions of race, religion, class, gender, sexuality, nation, and more in HHUM105. Open dialogue is important, but so too is mutual respect. In that spirit, here are some good “ground rules” that I’ve borrowed from the University of Michigan’s Center for Research on Learning and Teaching:

- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Listen actively and with an ear to understanding others' views. (Don't just think about what you are going to say while someone else is talking.)
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Commit to learning, not debating. Comment in order to share information, not to persuade.
- Avoid blame, speculation, and inflammatory language.
- Allow others the chance to speak.
- Avoid assumptions about any member of the class or generalizations about social groups. Do not ask individuals to speak for their (perceived) social group.
- Be aware of and use preferred words that people and groups use to identify themselves.

### *TECHNOLOGY AND PRIVACY POLICIES*

We'll be taking advantage of a variety of different technologies this semester to facilitate learning. If you need help using ELMS or other platforms, or if you are struggling to get access to a laptop, high-speed wi-fi, or other technology essentials, please let one of your instructors know as soon as possible so we can assist.

In order to foster community and personal connections, the expectation and practice in HHUM105 will be for students to have their cameras turned on during synchronous meetings on Zoom. Of course there will be times when you need to mute your video to step away for a moment, or to answer a question from the younger sibling knocking on your door. However, try to make these moments the exception to the norm. If there are pressing reasons why having video enabled poses a problem, please contact Dr. Ontiveros via email to see about a workaround.

Our plenary sessions on Monday and Wednesday will be recorded so that students who are absent have access to the material covered in class. These recordings will be available on ELMS shortly after they are made. Student enrollment and participation in the classroom are protected as education records under the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act. To protect your privacy and the privacy of others in the class, please do not circulate course recordings, and do not post clips or screenshots of the recordings on social media or elsewhere. Additionally, you may not make audio or video recordings of any portion of our class meetings without permission in advance from the instructor of record.

Discussion sections are scheduled for Friday. Each section will meet synchronously as a class during the first week of the semester, but after that discussion section will generally be asynchronous. There will be three different types of section activities: (1) salons, in which small groups record a conversation amongst themselves about a given topic; (2) Humanities Exploration, in which individuals and groups interact with museums, archives, video, and other humanities material publicly available online; and (3) Writing Workshops, in which students learn about and practice advanced writing skills that will help them in college and beyond. Occasionally there will also be check-ins on progress towards completion of major assignments.

Presentations and course materials, including PowerPoint Presentations, tests, quizzes, and other content, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own use, but you may not and you may not allow others to reproduce or distribute course materials publicly, whether or not a fee is charged, without the express written consent of the instructor of record.

### *ACADEMIC DISHONESTY*

I don't expect academic dishonesty to be an issue, but as a precaution please be aware that UMD Student Policy outlines four different types of academic

dishonesty: cheating, fabricating information, facilitating the academic dishonesty of other students, or plagiarism. Any student found in violation of this policy faces the possibility of disciplinary action, including a failing grade on the assignment, a grade of “XF” on their permanent transcript, or, in the case of repeated violations, dismissal from the university. Consult the academic handbook or the honor council website ([www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/students.html](http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/students.html)) for more specifics about academic dishonesty, potential consequences, and your rights as a student.

It is worth noting that most plagiarism cases involve students who lack a good understanding of when and how to cite outside sources. Developing college-level research skills is one of the learning outcomes of the class and therefore we will be learning about and practicing these skills this semester. At any point, talk with us during office hours if you have questions about doing original work.

## Assignments and Assessment

### OVERVIEW

The assignments in this class are carefully designed not as hoops to jump through, but rather as opportunities to demonstrate and reinforce what you’ve learned, and in doing so to develop knowledge and skills that will help you in your personal and professional life.

All work completed outside and inside of class should be submitted via Canvas, unless otherwise stated. Please get your work submitted on time. Grades for major assignments handed in late will be lowered a half-letter (e.g. B- to C+) for each 24-period after the deadline. One point will be deducted for minor assignments (e.g. prep quizzes, prep activities) submitted late. If you have any questions or concerns about your ability to complete assignments on time or up to expectations, particularly amidst all the disruptions and difficulty of a global pandemic, let us know well in advance. We want to help you succeed!

If you have questions or concerns about a grade you received, please raise them promptly with the person who assessed your work.

The following scale will be used when converting number to letter grades for the course.

### GRADING SCALE

Name:	Range:	
A+	< 94%	to 93%
A	< 93%	to 92%
A-	< 92%	to 90%
B+	< 90%	to 87%
B	< 87%	to 83%
B-	< 83%	to 80%
C+	< 80%	to 77%
C	< 77%	to 73%
C-	< 73%	to 70%
D+	< 70%	to 67%
D	< 67%	to 65%
D-	< 65%	to 61%
F	< 61%	to 0%

*ASSIGNMENTS*

Prep quizzes: 150 points

Plenary activities: 150 points

Section activities: 200 points

Unit capstones: 200 points

“Real World Humanities” Case Study: 200 points

Final Exam: 100 points

*COURSE CALENDAR*

*Adjustments to the syllabus may be required based on pace and availability. Any changes will be announced well in advance.*

August 31

Course Opening

**UNIT 1: History**

September 2

Epidemics and Society (Preface and Preface to the Paperback Edition)

New History (pp. 1-12)

September 4

Friday Section 1: Synchronous All-Student Meeting

September 7

LABOR DAY

September 9

Epidemics and Society (Chapter 1)

New History (pp. 13-36)

September 11

Friday Section 2: Humanities Exploration

September 14

Epidemics and Society (Chapters 2 & Chapter 3)

New History (pp. 37-51)

September 16

Epidemics and Society (Chapters 21 & 22)

New History (pp. 52-73)

September 18

Friday Section 3: Writing Workshop

September 20

DUE by 11:59pm: Documenting a Pandemic (unit capstone 1)

## **UNIT 2: LITERATURE**

September 21

Cutting For Stone (pp. 1-180)  
New History (pp. 74-83)

September 23

Cutting for Stone (pp. 181-327)  
New History (pp. 84-102)

September 25

Friday Section 4: Salon

September 28

Cutting for Stone (pp. 328-492)  
New History (pp. 103-117)

September 30

Cutting for Stone (pp. 493-658)  
New History (pp. 118-129)

October 2

Friday Section 5: Humanities Exploration

October 5

Guest: [Dr. Abraham Verghese](#)

October 7

Library Session

October 9

Friday Section 6: Writing Workshop

October 11

DUE by 11:59pm: Creative Writing Project (unit capstone 2)

## **UNIT 3: MUSIC**

October 12

[K-Pop](#) (Explained on Netflix)

[Music, Dictatorship, & the Rise of 60s/70s Youth Culture](#) (The Korea File)

New History (130-141)

- October 14  
“Pop Cosmopolitics and K-Pop Video Culture” (Michelle Cho)  
[“3 Ways That BTS and Its Fans Are Redefining Liveness”](#) (Michelle Cho)  
New History (142-160)
- October 16  
Friday Section 7: Salon
- October 19  
Guest: [Dr. Michelle Cho](#)
- October 21  
“Alright” (Kendrick Lamar)  
“Lemonade” (Beyoncé)  
Excerpt from “Cultural Criticism” (Felice Blake)  
New History (161-183)
- October 23  
Friday Section 8: Humanities Exploration
- October 26  
Excerpt from “Why Black Lives Matter in the Humanities” (Felice Blake)
- October 28  
Guest: [Dr. Felice Blake](#)
- October 30  
Friday Section 9: Writing Workshop
- October 31  
DUE by 11:59pm: Music Podcast (unit capstone 3)

#### **UNIT 4: FILM AND TELEVISION**

- November 2  
Taxi Driver (Martin Scorsese, 1976)  
Selected secondary sources  
New History (184-197)
- November 4  
Taxi Driver (Martin Scorsese, 1976)  
Selected secondary sources  
New History (198-210)
- November 6  
Friday Section 10: Salon

November 9

Taxi Driver: Oko Ashewo (Daniel Oriaha, 2015)  
New History (211-228)

November 11

Taxi Driver (Daniel Oriaha, 2015)  
New History (229-249)

November 13

Friday Section 11: Case Study Check-In

November 16

How to Survive a Plague (David France, 2012)  
New History (250-271)

November 18

How to Survive a Plague (David France, 2012)  
New History (272-280)

November 20

Friday Section 12: Writing Workshop

November 22

DUE by 11:59pm: Film Treatment (unit capstone 4)

November 23

TBA

November 25

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

November 27

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

## **UNIT 5: VISUAL ART**

November 30

Selected Work of Frida Kahlo  
Selected supplementary material  
New History (281-300)

December 2

Selected Work of Frida Kahlo  
Selected supplementary material  
New History (301-310)

December 4

Friday Section 13: Salon

December 7

Selected Work of Kara Walker  
Selected supplementary material  
New History (311-325)

December 9

Selected Work of Kara Walker  
Selected supplementary material  
New History (326-345)

December 11

Friday Section 14: Humanities Exploration

December 13

DUE by 11:59pm: Humanities in the Real World: A Case Study

December 14

Course Closing  
New History (346-363)

December 17

Synchronous Final Exam (1:30pm-3:30pm)