

Honors Humanities 105
Introduction to the Arts and Humanities
Fall 2015

Tuesday, 9:30-10:45 Susquehanna Hall 1119

Thursday:

Section 0101: 9:30-10:45, Art-Sociology 3217

Section 0102: 3:30-4:45, Taliaferro 1103

Professor Gregory A. Staley

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:30-5:00; Thursday, 1:00-2:30, and by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Yvonne Slosarski

Office: 0101 Anne Arundel Hall

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:00AM - 12:00 PM; Thursday, 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM,
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Undergraduate Teaching Assistants:

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Course Website: www.elms.umd.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS

Please note: you do not need to use the specific editions listed for the following works and can choose alternative editions as appropriate.

1. William Powers, *Hamlet's Blackberry: Building A Good Life in the Digital Age* (HarperCollins), ISBN 9780061687174.
2. J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (Scholastic), ISBN 9780439358071.
3. Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Dover), ISBN 9780486278070.
4. Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* (Norton), ISBN 9780393312836.
5. Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (HBC Trade), ISBN 9780156028356.
6. Sophocles, *Antigone* (Hackett), ISBN 9780872205710.
7. A book which all of you will choose together.

Many additional readings will be provided on the course website in the form of pdf files.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A proper introduction to the arts and humanities would encompass much of the curriculum of the entire university, since our subject represents the

foundation of the Western educational tradition. The syllabus of this course, however, must be selective yet seek to represent the important themes and interests of the arts and humanities across time and across cultures. The course is subtitled “Fearless Ideas in the Humanities,” since Fearless Ideas serve as the University of Maryland’s motto and agenda. From their beginnings, the Arts and the Humanities (in antiquity they would not have been treated as two different things, which is why our program bears the single title of “Honors Humanities”) explored what it means to be human: to be born; to pursue the adventure in life which we call “growing up”; to relate to others who are same and different, male and female; to consider how we are defined in relation to gods and animals; to ask whether this life has an end or continues in another form. In this course we will consider five fearless ideas: the wonder that is humanity, the examined life, art and self-portraiture, the unity of humankind, and speaking truth to power.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Describe the nature of the arts and humanities and articulate the ways in which they constitute a shared subject and set of methods.
2. Trace the history of the humanities and appreciate why and how they have shaped the educational curriculum in the West.
3. Utilize a variety of methods in interpreting literature, art and music.
4. Appreciate how differing historical contexts and cultural traditions affect the values and uses of the humanities.
5. Conceptualize a project which uses the arts and humanities to explore some aspect of human experience and contemporary life.
6. Construct a persuasive and articulate defense of the humanities in a time when they are under challenge.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING

All of you come to this course with excellent preparation and strong motivations; we believe that you all can continue to perform at a superior level as you transition from high school to college. Success, however, must be earned and not be assumed. We aim to challenge you, to ask you to test your interests and abilities. We expect you to complete assignments, to attend and participate in classes, and in general to show a sense of curiosity and engagement in our shared work. We will encourage you to refine your ability to speak and to write, to argue and to persuade. Ultimately, we will ask you to do one of the most difficult of tasks: to come to know yourself and to recognize your capacity to become even more than you now are.

GRADING DISTRIBUTION:

1. Assignments: 40%
2. Course Engagement: 15%

4. Examinations: 30%
5. Keystone Work: 15%

COURSE POLICIES

1. Attendance and absences: your engagement in the work of this course and of this program is a vital element in your success. We will therefore expect you to attend all classes unless you have a valid reason for being absent. The University's policies on medical and other absences can be found at: <http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1540>

Absences due to religious observance are perfectly acceptable; however, it is your responsibility to notify us within the first three weeks of the course of any religious absences which will take place during the semester. When assignments or activities fall on such dates, we will schedule an equivalent experience for you at an acceptable time.

2. Academic Integrity: The student-administered Honor Code and Honor Pledge prohibit students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. All of your work in this course will be covered by this Honor Code.

3. The use of electronic devices in class: we will have a discussion of this issue early in the semester and reach a consensus about it. Class time should be focused on ideas and discussion and usually the use of cell phones, tablets or computers during class detracts from our task. Even if an individual student chooses to tune out and log in, this can create distractions for other students who inevitably see a flickering screen.

Honors Humanities 105 Course Schedule Fall 2015

Week One: August 31 – September 4

Tuesday: The Humanities: The Theory of Everything

Thursday: Many the Wonders: Sophocles' *Antigone*

Week Two: September 8-11

Tuesday: HuMANity? Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*, part two

Thursday: Women's Education: Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, "The Sacrifice of Antigone"

Week Three: September 14-18

Tuesday: Ho Hum at Hogwarts

Thursday: Harry Humanities (*Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*)

Week Four: September 21-25

Tuesday: Fearless Idea: The Unexamined Life

Thursday: Self-Examination (Plato, *Apology*, William Deresiewicz, *Excellent Sheep*, chapters one and five)

Week Five: September 28-October 2

Tuesday: The Keystone to the Humanities

Thursday: Only Connect? (William Powers, *Hamlet's Blackberry*)

Week Six: October 5-9

Tuesday: Test One

Thursday: Model Keystone Projects

Week Seven: October 12-16

Tuesday: Design Thinking

Thursday: Thinking Creatively

Week Eight: October 19-23

Tuesday: Life's Mirrors

Thursday: Selfies (Oscar Wilde, *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*)

Week Nine: October 26-30

Tuesday: Art Mirroring Nature (Professor Meredith Gill?)

Thursday: Art Gallery visit?

Week Ten: November 2-6

Tuesday: Fearless Idea: "All humans will become brothers/sisters . . ." Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and its cultural context

Thursday: The Power of Music (?)

Week Eleven: November 9-13

Tuesday: Musical Education (Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*)

Thursday: Cultural Conditioning (*Clockwork*)

Week Twelve: November 16-20

Tuesday: Countercultures

Thursday: Remembering the Sixties

Week Thirteen: November 23-25

Tuesday: Test Two

Thursday: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Week Fourteen: November 30- December 4

Tuesday: Lives in Color

Thursday: Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*

Week Fifteen: December 7-11

Tuesday: Your Book, Your Fearless Idea

Thursday: Teaching the Teachers