

Year Course Offered: annually

Semester Course Offered: fall or spring

Department: Humanities

Course Number: HUMN 1301

Name of Course: Introduction to Humanities

Name of Instructor: TBD

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The information contained in this class syllabus is subject to change without notice. Students are expected to be aware of any additional course policies presented by the instructor during the course.  
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**Course Description:**

Introduction to Humanities will examine the human condition through careful study of foundational texts in the humanities. Representative works of major historical periods will allow students to gain an appreciation of the major historical epochs: ancient, medieval, modern, and postmodern. Students should thus gain an appreciation and understanding of major authors, ideas, and historical periods that have shaped the long discussion about the human condition.

**Learning Objectives**

1. Read, analyze, and critique works in the humanities.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of major arguments, problems, and terminology in the Humanities.
3. Present logically persuasive arguments in writing.
4. Demonstrate an ability to discuss and reflect upon the application of the course material to various aspects of life.
5. Evaluate the personal and social responsibilities of living in a diverse world.

**Core Objectives**

Introduction to Humanities addresses the following core objectives to ensure students develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in their lives. The core objectives meet the Texas Core Curriculum objectives for the Language, Philosophy, & Culture Foundational Component Area

- Social Responsibility - to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
- Personal Responsibility - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

## Major Assignments:

*Writing assignments=60% (two papers each worth 30%)*

*Reaction papers: 30%*

Attendance and participation: 10%

There will be two short papers (1000 words). The paper assignments are aimed at achieving the specified learning objectives. Assignments will achieve these goals by having students critically analyze the primary text (learning objective #1) and demonstrate their understanding of the various arguments (learning objective #2) through well-constructed academic prose (learning objective #3).

**In addition, students will write weekly reaction papers in which they draw out the personal and social implications (learning objective 5) of the reading for their own lives (learning objective 4). The reaction papers additionally satisfy the Texas core objective of personal and social responsibility.**

### Assessment of Texas Core Objectives:

The reaction papers will be used to evaluate a student's success regarding the designated core objectives of personal and social responsibility. Students will be evaluated on a three point scale: exemplary; satisfactory; or unsatisfactory. Although all of the material has both personal and social implications, two reaction papers (one targeted at personal responsibility and one targeted at social responsibility) will be used as a benchmark for evaluation. Students assessed an A for this assignment will receive exemplary status, students receiving a B or C will receive satisfactory status, and students receiving below a C will receive unsatisfactory status.

Learning Outcomes	CO	Assessment Methods	Criteria/Targets
Read, analyze, and critique works in the Humanities.	CT, COM	Short papers	Using a rubric, students will be assessed on a 3-point scale: excellent, acceptable, not acceptable. At least 70% of the students will score acceptable or above.
Demonstrate knowledge of major arguments, problems, and terminology in the Humanities.	CT, COM	Short papers	Using a rubric, students will be assessed on a 3-point scale: excellent, acceptable, not acceptable. At least 70% of the students will score acceptable or above.
Present logically persuasive arguments in writing.	CT, COM	Short papers	Using a rubric, students will be assessed on a 3-point scale: excellent, acceptable, not acceptable. At least 70% of the

			students will score acceptable or above.
Demonstrate an ability to discuss and reflect upon the application of the course material to various aspects of life.	SR, PR	Weekly reaction papers	Students will be evaluated on a three point scale: exemplary; satisfactory; or unsatisfactory. Although all of the material has both personal and social implications, two reaction papers (one targeted at personal responsibility and one targeted at social responsibility) will be used as a benchmark for evaluation. Students assessed an A for this assignment will receive exemplary status, students receiving a B or C will receive satisfactory status, and students receiving below a C will receive unsatisfactory status.
Evaluate the personal and social responsibilities of living in a diverse world.	SR, PR	Weekly reaction papers	Students will be evaluated on a three point scale: exemplary; satisfactory; or unsatisfactory. Although all of the material has both personal and social implications, two reaction papers (one targeted at personal responsibility and one targeted at social responsibility) will be used as a benchmark for evaluation. Students assessed an A for this assignment will receive exemplary status, students receiving a B or C will receive satisfactory status, and students receiving below a C will receive unsatisfactory status.

**Required Reading**

Homer, *Odyssey*; Plato *Meno*; Augustine *Confessions*; Rene Descartes, *Meditations*; Mary Shelly, *Frankenstein*; Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*; Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War did not Take Place*; Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*

**Recommended Reading**

Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind*

**List of Discussion/Lecture Topics**

The following is a list of topics that will be covered for each of the major course texts:

*Odyssey*: zoon politikon, hospitality, kingship, order of the soul

*Meno*: sophistry, Platonic forms, virtue, Socratic ignorance, opinion vs. knowledge

*Confessions*: Medieval synthesis of faith and reason, sin for its own sake, nature of evil,

*Meditations*: mind body dualism, rationalism

*Frankenstein*: man as machine

*Walden*: individualism

*Gulf War* and *Society of the Spectacle*: postmodern culture, consumerism