# HUMA 1100:

# Introduction to the Humanities

**Spring 2013**

Section 002—Tue &Thur, 8:30-9:50,

Taylorsville Campus, TB 310

Section 012—Tue & Thur, 10:00-11:20,

Taylorsville Campus, TB 310

Section 062—Tue &Thur, 4:00-5:20

Taylorsville Campus, TB 437

**Course Website:**

<http://rwdacad01.slcc.edu/academics/dept/huma/1100/>

**Instructor: Derek Bitter**

Office: No Office

Phone: No Phone

Mailbox: TB 324

**Email:** dbitter7@bruinmail.slcc.edu

[Note: emails should tell me in the subject line what they are about, and make sure you include your name.]

Consultation times: Preferably by appointment, either before or after class

**Required Textbook:** ***It Begins with Our Questions: A Thematic Introduction to the Humanities***, edited by Paul Allen & Jennifer Bauman. No other textbook is acceptable for this course. Daily access to the Internet is required for supplemental materials.

The **humanities consists of** all those branches of learning that are concerned with **human thought and relations**, including literature, philosophy, religious studies, languages, art history, sociology, psychology, political science, musicology, etc. Humanities subjects investigate the human world, what it is to be human, and how human beings relate to their political, religious, social, intellectual, economic, and geographic environments. Using a thematic approach, this course will introduce you to some of the primary and universal conditions of human existence.

The goal of the thematic approach is to demonstrate that the humanities are truly interdisciplinary and that because of this, it is possible to find a multitude of complementary answers proposed to humankind’s fundamental and perennial questions. This course looks at these questions from the perspectives of the different mediums used in the humanities: poems, novels, plays, dance, philosophy, painting, sculpture, and music.

**Learning Outcomes**

With effort, at the completion of this course you should have expanded your minds and imaginations, have become interested enough to pursue further study in the humanities disciplines, and have developed essential lifelong learning skills that will prepare you not only for further studies, but also for employment in our demanding new interdisciplinary and intercultural world. Specifically you should be able to:

* read, view, and listen to a variety of humanities “texts” – poems, plays, stories, speeches, paintings, sculptures, musical compositions, etc. – and demonstrate improved facility in comprehension, interpretation and argument, and demonstrate this through both oral and written communication.
* demonstrate the ability to think independently, analytically, critically, and creatively about the products of culture and the information they contain.
* demonstrate the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in your own work and that of others.
* demonstrate the ability to evaluate the effects of geography, economics, politics, religion, philosophy, science, etc. on the values of a culture and the stylistic features of the arts. This includes the ability to analyze similarities and differences among values of diverse cultures, eras, and artistic products.
* demonstrate the ability to relate another’s culture to your own and demonstrate tolerance for the different answers to major questions about the human condition that exist as a result of the myriad of cultures, ideas, and artistic products in the world and the United States.

**Above all, I expect you all to learn to ask questions of everything and to engage in meaningful and productive conversation that seeks to understand various ideas and issues**

**Course organization:** This course is organized around some broad **universal themes** (Sacredness, Spirituality, and Morality; Identity, Privilege, and Inequalities; Freedom, Responsibility, and Justice; the Experience of War; and Death). Each of them has its own set of readings, exercises, assignments, and assessments. In addition there is also an introductory theme that will outline some of the skills you will need in this course. Each theme is broken into topics.

**THIS COURSE *IS VERY REWARDING,* BUTIS NOT ALWAYS EASY.** There will be considerable reading in this class and everything must be studied, thought about, and sometimes reread. I will occasionally present PowerPoint slideshows to help illuminate the musical, oral, and visual elements of the course.

**Requirements of this Course**

1. **Reflection Journal (100 pts):** You will be required to keep a “Reflection Journal.” This is the most significant part of your grade and consists of a total of 25 journal entries. It will include writings based on the readings. See additional instructions on separate sheet.
2. **Discussion/Participation (20 pts):** Weekly reading and intelligent discussion of the reading and other materials in class is your first priority. Every student must participate in the discussions to receive a grade. You can show your participation by contributing to our discussion and also by asking questions. (I will pass out a rubric that details some expectations.) I know not everyone feels comfortable speaking in class, but you are still expected to participate. It will be helpful for you if you have some thoughts and questions prepared and ready to share. And don’t worry about not having an opportunity to talk; if you raise your hand, I will let you speak.
3. **Cultural Activities (30 pts):** Each of you will be required to complete all three of the following cultural activities and fill out a **critique sheet which you will download from the** **course website** (that is shown at the top of this syllabus [go to the “Cultural activities” page]), **or from Canvas**. Download the critique form to your computer, then **type your answers straight onto the form.** (If you do not type into the form then you will lose points.) Print the forms with your answers and turn them in. I would suggest that you look over the questions before you complete the activity so you know what to look for and evaluate. These are worth **10 points each**:
   1. Watch one **foreign language film.** The basic requirement for this film is that it is spoken in a foreign language with English subtitles, and that it was made in a non-English speaking country. There is a list of suggested films on the course website, or you can talk to me for ideas. You can obtain these films from the SLCC library, the Language Center (TB 418), the Salt Lake County Library, Netflix, or rent from a video store. (**Due Thursday 26-Feb)**
   2. **Museum visit:** Visit the **Utah Museum of Fine Arts** (UMFA) on the University of Utah campus (map & information is on our website), or the **BYU Museum of Art**. *No other art museums/galleries are permitted*. If you visit the UMFA, you can take with you a coupon that is found on the course website, and have me sign it in order to obtain entrance for free. I also recommend that you go to the museum with other classmates or friends, this will help you to discuss them as you go. **(Due Tuesday 26-March)**
   3. One additional **Cultural Event** of your choice that you have not done before and that is unfamiliar to you (symphony, play, concert, ballet, lecture, etc.) The point of this is that you **expose yourself to something new.** If I find that it is something you are already familiar with, I will deduct points. The idea is that you go out of your way to go to something new. For ideas, just keep your eyes and ears open to the various events that take place in the community and on campus. **(Due Tuesday 23-April)**
4. **News Article and other assignments, ePortfolio exercise (30-40 pts):** At various times over the semester you will be required to find news articles that relate to the themes and readings being discussed. The purpose of these assignments is to get you to see how and where the ideas we discuss are still in effect. These assignments can become part of your ePortfolio at SLCC. More information will be provided about this assignment in class.
5. **In class assignments/quizzes (20-30 pts):** I will occasionally have other in class assignments for you to complete that will be worth 2-5 pts each. These are to be completed in class only. If you happen to miss class or are late when we do one of these, then you will not be able to make up the assignment.
6. **Attendance in class (20 pts):** Attendance is also part of your grade. **You will lose 3 points for every class you miss.** Much of your grade will depend upon what you glean from class discussions. Additionally, you are responsible for any announcements about assignments or grades I make in class. **Excused absences** (illness or family death or emergency) must be verified with a physician’s note or memo from Student Affairs. Deaths in the family require the presentation of an obituary. **Unexcused absences** (illness, work, vacation) can be made up *only if* you notify me beforehand. In other words, if you ask me after you have already missed class if you can make it up, then you will not be allowed to. To make up for the points you lose from being absent, I will give you a specific assignment to do. You can make up absences up to 3 times. If you miss *more than 6 class periods*, you may receive an E grade. **Tardy policy:** Any student who arrives late should see me after class to change the absence to a tardy. Every three late arrivals will equal one absence. If you withdraw from the class, you MUST contact the registrar or you will receive a failing grade. This all may sound complicated, and it is, so please just don’t miss class. If you do miss class, then it is best for you if you contact me or someone in class to find out what you missed.
7. **Personal Visit (10 pts, optional extra credit):** You will have the opportunity to set up an appointment with me to have a one-on-one discussion. The purpose of this is to give you and I a chance to discuss a particular reading and topic outside of class. This is open to everyone, but is designed for those that feel they need some extra credit, and may be of particular interest to those that participate less frequently in our class discussions. In order to receive points for this, however, you need to come prepared with questions about a particular reading. I will be looking to see how well you have read and thought about the reading we discuss. You will not be guaranteed the points for just showing up to meet with me. It is expected that we meet for about 30 min. *Please make an appointment with me beforehand and email me at least 24hrs in advance to let me know what reading and questions we will discuss.* If I see that you are ill prepared and do not follow these instructions, then I will deduct points. It is best for me if we meet before or after class, if you would like to meet outside of those times, then it can be arranged. *You may only do this once, and the last day to do so is Thursday April 11.*

**Canvas:** You must check Canvas regularly. I will post the assignments on here. I will also be posting grades on here as the semester goes, so you will be able to see your progress.

**Late Work:** You are allowed to turn in late work **up to one week after the due date**, but will receive partial credit of no more than 70% for the assignment, depending on the quality of the work. If you are absent when an assignment is due, you’re work will still be marked late if you turn it in the following class. Please show up to class and turn things in when they are due.

**Emailing assignments:** You are *only allowed* to email your assignments to me if I have given you permission to do so beforehand or if you are absent and need to turn it in on time. **However,** you are still expected **to turn in a hard copy** to me. If I do not receive a hard copy of the assignment, you will not receive credit for it.

**We have no tests in this class,** quizzes, yes, but no midterm or final. This is not necessarily a good thing. You are still required to demonstrate your learning, but that demonstration will be much harder without tests. Instead you must prove to me you have mastered the material through the way you talk in class, through your application of critical thinking skills, and through your papers.

**Warning:** Both the content and expectations of this class are college level. We will be viewing paintings, sculptures and short film clips that are of cultural and thematic importance. These are chosen for their artistic quality and relevance to our studies and may contain content which have themes and sometimes language suitable only for mature adults**.** You may be exposed to nudity, sexual themes, violence, and swearing. All materials are chosen carefully and students are provided with ample background to appreciate and understand them in an academic setting. But we do not shy away from controversy and I expect that you, as mature college students, will have the appropriate critical faculties necessary for engaging with the material in an objective manner.

### Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated at SLCC. Academic dishonesty refers to actions such as, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, having someone else do your work, copying someone else’s work, etc. and includes all situations where students make use of the work of others and claim such work as their own even though some wording, method of citation, or arrangement of evidence, ideas, or arguments have been altered. Thus, it is expected that all assigned work for this course will be entirely original. In cases of academic dishonesty, the student involved will receive a grade of “0” on the assignment for a first offense. A second offense garners a grade of “E” for the course and will be reported to the Registrar and the Office of Student Services and will go on the student’s permanent record. Unfortunately, each semester I catch someone in each class. Please don’t let it be you.

In addition, you are also required to review the following information:

The student is expected to follow the SLCC Student Code of Conduct found at  [http://www.slcc.edu/policies/docs/Student\_Code\_of\_Conduct.pdf](http://www.slcc.edu/policies/docs/Student_Code_of_Conduct.pdf" \t "_blank)

ADA Statement [http://www.slcc.edu/drc/faculty/index.aspx](http://www.slcc.edu/drc/faculty/index.aspx" \o "Disability Resource Center Faculty Information" \t "_blank)

Emergency Evacuation Procedures in case of an emergency.  [http://www.slcc.edu/requiredtraining/docs/ER-PRO.MAN%20December%202008.pdf](http://www.slcc.edu/requiredtraining/docs/ER-PRO.MAN%20December%202008.pdf" \t "_blank)

**And finally, I’m including a student’s comment about this class:**

"Professor Bitter, This here e-mail is just to say thanks for a great semester. We all had the chance to take away from your class what we needed. I learned that the Humanities is much more than human interaction, but that it had much to do with human emotion and outreach. We all need to get in touch not only with the characteristics of our own humanness, but also with the humanness of those who are around us. Culture and diversity is an area that at times can get touchy. We all seem to want to hold onto our own ideas on how we view life to be, yet somewhere in the process we find that our ways of thinking just may be old and outdated. Never in my life did I ever enjoy an assignment like going to the Art Museum. To share with fellow students the art and mystery of what makes us human. Somehow through all the reading and writing summaries I find a part of myself that I never knew was there.” –Charles H.