

Exploration and Discovery I
Core 106 Section 10
Fall Semester 2015
Lewis & Clark College

Professor: Ian McDonald, Ph.D.
Meets: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
..... 12:40 – 1:40 pm
Classroom: J.R. Howard 243
Email: imcdonald@lclark.edu
Office Hours: MWF 11-12, or by appointment

Exploration and Discovery: Being in the World

Human desire reveals itself through great writing. The writers in this course, accompanied by one of the great films of the 20th century, give us original and brilliant slants on the quest for happiness, and the struggle against the chaos and panic of contemporary civilization. You'll read selections from a very diverse group of thinkers. They will link their extraordinary powers of observation to a profound awareness of their own consciousness, and through the power of their art, will bind their consciousness to yours.

Some of these works show how our search for happiness and achievement, inevitable and ennobling as it can be, conspires against us. Others will demonstrate that self-mastery, combined with the habits of peace, observation, and reflection, infused with a sense of humor and acceptance, are the foundations of greatness. Through careful analysis and lively conversation, we can together learn how these authors confronted the problem of "being in the world," and perhaps begin to seek solutions for ourselves.

Required texts available in the bookstore:

Sarah Bakewell. *How to Live: Or, a Life of Montaigne in One Question and Twenty Attempts at an Answer*.

Other Press, 2010. Introduction ("Q: How to Live"), Chapters 1-4, 7, and 10. *

Don DeLillo. *Libra*, Penguin, 1988. *

Frederick Douglass. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself*.

Penguin, 2014.

Plato. *Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo*. 2nd Edition. Hackett, 2002.

Marilynne Robinson. *Gilead*. Picador, 2004. *

Alan Watts, *The Wisdom of Insecurity: A Message for an Age of Anxiety*. Pantheon Books, 1951. *

Virginia Woolf. *A Room of One's Own*. Mariner, 2005.

Muriel Harris and Jennifer L. Kunka. *The Writer's FAQ's: A Pocket Handbook*. Prentice Hall, 2011.

* These four books will be available sometime in the first two weeks of the semester. Sorry for the delay.

Texts and Film Available in Moodle:

George Orwell. *Politics and the English Language*. 1946.

David Foster Wallace. *Shipping Out: On the (Nearly Lethal) Comforts of a Luxury Cruise*. Published in *Harpers Magazine*, January 1996. (Renamed as the title essay in *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, Little Brown 1998.)

David Foster Wallace. Kenyon College Commencement Address, 2005.

E.B. White, *Here is New York*. Little Bookroom, 1949, plus the introduction by Roger Angell.

Film: *The Graduate*, Directed by Mike Nichols, 1967.

Essay Due Dates:

Essay 1 due Wednesday, Sept. 23

Essay 2 due Monday, Oct. 7

Essay 3 Working Draft due Friday, Nov. 6

Essay 3 Peer Editing Letter due Monday, Nov. 9

Essay 3 Revised Draft due Friday, Nov. 13

Essay 4 Working Draft due Friday, Dec. 4

Essay 4 Peer Editing Letter due Monday, Dec. 7

Essay 4 Revised Draft due at the beginning of our Final Exam Session

Moodle Page: The Moodle page for this course is the location of the syllabus, which is subject to change. Check it routinely for essential information, links to readings, schedule updates, and the like.

Learning Objectives: This course brings students together to read, discuss, and write about a group of texts and other works foundational to a liberal arts education. The course aims to engage students with some of the enduring questions that reverberate through all academic disciplines and that have shaped some of humanity's great intellectual achievements. Engaging with such enduring questions requires engaging the materials, tasks, and assignments in this course, and doing so will afford students the opportunity to develop the following skills and capacities:

1. Work collaboratively and constructively in a group setting.
(Demonstrate capacity to listen, respond reasonably to, and build on the intellectual positions staked out by course materials, instructors, and fellow students.)
2. Perform careful, critical reading of sophisticated texts.
(Demonstrate understanding of form and contents of texts; discern patterns and anomalies in form and content; produce thoughtful informal and formal commentary on texts.)
3. Articulate in spoken and written word effective analysis and synthesis of texts and ideas.
(Demonstrate capacity to collect, evaluate, and employ evidence for analytical, synthetic, or interpretive claims and to weigh the merits of competing arguments.)
4. Compose effective formal academic writing, both in class (during exams or other exercises) and outside of class (for take-home writing assignments).
(Demonstrate capacity to compose clear and compelling prose, formulate persuasive arguments supported with evidence, and pursue creative and eloquent expression of ideas.)

Participation: *Participation is one of the course requirements, and is indeed the heart of this class.*

For our discussions to work, each of you must come to class having closely read and thought about the day's readings. What I am looking for in our discussions is not just your opinions but your views based on good reasons, including especially a solid understanding of the texts. I hope for discussions which are informed and lively, and where no one is afraid to ask about something they didn't understand or to challenge the dominant view. Passion is good as long as there is thoughtfulness and patience as well, and respect for everyone in the room. It's important that *everyone* participate, whatever your temperament. I may elicit your views by calling on people during class discussion.

Prepare a short response to the reading assignment every class session: The response should be 200 words or so, though you can write as much as you want. Don't spend too much time on these, but write enough so that you can quickly recall questions you find interesting or important, or something you're confused by, or a list of significant points, or free-flowing thoughts that the reading evoked. I may call on a few of you, or all of you, to read (or describe) what you wrote.

You will post your responses into Moodle before class; you should see a link which you can use to post your response. Generally, any file format is fine. These short assignments will not be graded, but will figure into your participation grade, which is 20% of the final grade. *Most important in determining your grade for participation will be the quality and frequency of your contributions to class discussion.*

Note Taking and Electronic Devices: Plan to take notes in this class, and also plan to use paper and pen. Because of the emphasis on participation in this class, the use of laptops, smart phones, and other such devices in class is prohibited. (Trust me: no one you know loves his computer and his gadgets more than I love mine. But our time together is short, and the discussions will be electric).

Attendance: Regular attendance at class sessions designated in the syllabus is essential for successful completion of this course. Attendance will be considered in the assignment of final grades. Should you need to miss class for medical reasons, it is your responsibility to notify me as soon as possible and to arrange to make up any missed work. Should you ever have a medical or other condition that results in the need for extended absence, you must both speak with me and provide appropriate documentation. The Student Support Services Office can assist you in the event of necessary prolonged absences.

Papers: There will be a total of 20 pages of formal writing assigned in four papers. **All formal writing must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course.** In your formal writing you will be responsible for producing a well-reasoned, articulate, and literate paper free of grammatical and proofreading errors.

Using Moodle, you will keep a **portfolio** of their papers, informal writings, drafts, and the like. The portfolio will figure into specific writing assignments, so it is critical that you faithfully preserve your writings in it, including your daily responses.

Late Work: All assignments are due on the scheduled dates. As a general rule, late work will not be accepted for a full grade. Typically, I will lower the grade of written by 2/3 of one grade for each

late day (e.g., a “B” will drop to a “C+”, and then to a “C- “). In unavoidable circumstances, such as illness, you have the responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements for timely completion of assignments. I will not, however, accept work that is more than three days late.

Incomplete Work: Students must complete ALL of the assigned work (i.e., every single assignment) in order to receive any credit for the course.

The Final Exam Date: The Final Exam must be taken on the official assigned date. Do not make travel arrangements that will require you to miss the exam. **For this section, the final exam is held Tuesday, December 15, from 8:30am – 11:30am in our usual classroom.**

Learning Disabilities: If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (x7156). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible. If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (x7156). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

Academic Integrity: I expect that any work you submit in this course will be your own and that you will cite any sources you have used. Failure to do so can be plagiarism, a serious academic offense that can result in your suspension or even expulsion from the college. I expect you to understand and abide by the College’s Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures. If you have any questions about the policy, I encourage you to come and talk with me as soon as possible.

The Writing Center: I encourage you to make use of the Writing Center. Their consultants can help you out at all stages of the writing process, from getting those first thoughts down on paper, to formulating a thesis statement, to organizing a paper, to understanding issues of style and mechanics. The Center is also a great resource if you would like to make writing a less stressful and a more satisfying experience. For hours and more information, visit the Center on the main floor of Watzek Library, or go to their web site:

http://college.lclark.edu/academics/support/writing_center/

Other Campus Resources: Because you are new to the college and because of the nature of the course, please consider using some of the many helpful resources available to you on campus: Information Technology, Watzek Library, International Student Services, SAAB Tutoring, and (especially important) the Writing Center. To maximize your benefit from these resources, you need to plan ahead and to be active and professional when consulting them. When appropriate, tell me about how you are using these resources to advance your performance in the course. I may be able to enhance your use of the resource, and I am also happy to consider your work as part of your effort at course participation.

Changing Sections: If you have any questions about changing sections, contact the CORE Program Coordinator, Dawn Wilson (Miller 404, explore@lclark.edu). Because it is a required

course designed for first year students, withdrawal from E&D is not permitted (unless a student is withdrawing from all courses for the semester).

Grading Formula

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|-----------------------|------|
| Four Papers: | 50% |
| Midterm: | 10 % |
| Final exam: | 20% |
| Participation: | 20% |

Reading and Colloquium Schedule:

Friday, August 28: Opening E&D Plenary Lecture in Flanagan Chapel: Plato. We will meet as a class afterward, and you will receive a copy of Orwell's *Politics and the English Language*, plus a short introductory assignment.

Week 1

Mon., Aug. 31: Introduction and Orwell.

Wed., Sept. 2: Plato, *Euthyphro*

Fri., Sept. 4: Plato, *Apology*

Week 2

Mon., Sept. 7: Labor Day (no class)

Wed., Sept. 9: Woolf, Ch. 1-2

Fri., Sept. 11: Woolf, Ch. 3-4.

Week 3

Mon., Sept. 14: Woolf, Ch. 5-6

Wed., Sept. 16: Woolf Colloquium 3:30-5pm Flanagan Chapel [*takes the place of regular class*]

Fri., Sept. 18: Douglass, *Narrative*, Preface, Letter, Ch. 1-9

Week 4

Mon., Sept. 21: Writing workshop

Wed., Sept. 23: Douglass Ch. 10-Appendix; **Essay 1 Due**

Fri., Sept. 25: Douglass, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"

Week 5

Mon., Sept. 28: Douglass Colloquium 3:30-5pm Flanagan Chapel [*takes the place of regular class*]

Wed., Sept. 30: Plato, *Crito*

Fri., Oct. 2: Bakewell, Introduction and Chapter 1

Week 6

Mon., Oct. 5: Writing workshop

Wed., Oct. 7: Preparation for Second Half Readings, **Essay 2 due in class**

Fri., Oct. 9: **Fall Break (October 8-11)**

Week 7

Mon., Oct. 12: Bakewell, Chapters 2 and 3

Wed., Oct. 14: Bakewell, Chapters 4 and 7

Fri., Oct. 16: DeLillo pp. 1-116

Week 8

Mon., Oct. 19: DeLillo pp. 117-214

Wed., Oct. 21: DeLillo pp. 217-339

Fri., Oct. 23: DeLillo pp. 340-456

Week 9

Mon., Oct. 26: Wallace, *Shipping Out*

Wed., Oct. 28: Review for midterm

Fri., Oct. 30: Midterm

Week 10

Mon., Nov. 2: Robinson, pp 1-70

Wed., Nov. 4: Robinson, pp. 71-123

Fri., Nov. 6: Robinson, pp. 124-215 **Essay 3 working draft due in class; exchange with peer editors**

Week 11

Mon., Nov. 9: **Peer editing letters due in class; group meetings**

Wed., Nov. 11: Robinson, pp. 217-247

Fri., Nov. 13: Watts, c. 1-3; **Essay 3 revised draft due in class**

Week 12

Mon., Nov. 16: Watts, c. 4-6

Wed., Nov. 18: Watts, c. 7-9

Fri., Nov. 20: White (and Angell introduction)

Week 13

Mon., Nov. 23: **Essay 4 working draft exchange with peer editors**

Wed., Nov. 25: Watch *The Graduate* outside of class.

Fri., Nov. 27: **Thanksgiving Holiday Nov 26- Nov 29**

Week 14

Mon., Nov 30: Class Discussion of *The Graduate*

Wed., Dec. 2: Bakewell, Chapter 10

Fri., Dec. 4: Wallace, Kenyon College Commencement Address 2005, **Essay 4 working draft due**

Week 15

Mon., Dec. 7: **Peer editing letters due in class; group meetings**

Wed., Dec. 9: **Last Day of Class**

Fri., Dec. 11: **Reading Days Dec 10-11**

Final Exam: Tuesday, Dec. 15 8:30am – 11:30am; Essay 4 revised draft due at beginning of final exam period.