

INTEGRATION OF LIBERAL STUDIES Humanities 85, Fall 2004

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Course Description

This course will introduce students to the Liberal Studies program through critical evaluation of the aims and purposes of liberal education, the nature of “good work” (work that is excellent, ethical and personally meaningful), and the connection between the two. In addressing the first area, the course will introduce students to certain fundamental questions in undergraduate education including:

- What is education?
- What can we know?
- What should an educated person know?
- What is wisdom?

These questions will be examined through literature and philosophical writings.

To address the nature of “good work,” the course will explore the following questions:

- What is good work and why it is important?
- What kind of person-worker am I and what do I want to become?
- What does it take to do good work?
- What are factors that challenge people in carrying out their best work? What can one do to prepare for these challenges?
- What are the standards by which work is judged? What are my own personal standards or markers of success? Whose standards are most important?

These questions will be examined through readings and cases of professionals in a variety of fields.

Learning Objectives

- Students will demonstrate conceptual knowledge of the fundamental aims and purposes of liberal education.
- Students will demonstrate understanding of fundamental questions, critical issues, and challenges involved in liberal education and good work.
- Students will begin to reflect critically about their roles as students and workers.
- Students will begin to forge or clarify their own philosophies of education and work.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to respectfully and intelligently participate in class discussions.

Learning Objectives Assessment/Course Requirements

Reading responses/quizzes (10): 70 points
Participation in class discussion: 30 points
Total: 100 points

In this course, the instructor will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be characterized by correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

The course is designed to create a community in which all members are teachers and learners. Responsible participation from everyone in the community is required. It is important, therefore, that you be prepared to participate by doing the readings and assignments, thinking about the topics in advance, writing down comments or questions you might have, and sharing your reactions, experiences and thinking with the class. The final page of this syllabus consists of a grading rubric for classroom participation. You will be expected to fill out and turn in this sheet at the end of the semester as a self-evaluation. The instructor will also assess you according to the rubric at the end of the semester.

When assigned, one page reading responses must be handed in at the beginning of the day the readings are to be discussed. They should *critically* address the discussion questions that will be announced in class. They should not be summaries. Late reading responses will not be accepted.

All assignments should be turned in with the last four digits of the student's ID number instead of names on the upper right-hand corner. **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON YOUR ASSIGNMENTS!** Do not throw away any assignments or work done in or for this class; it may be collected or re-collected.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions for the entire length of the class period.

I would like to hear from anyone who has a disability or personal situation that may require some modification of the seating, assignments or activities in this course.

Course Materials

The course reader is available at Maple Press
481 E. San Carlos Street (cross-street is 10th, next to Subway Sandwiches)
(408) 297-1000

Class Schedule and Assignment (reading and writing assignments are *due* on the date listed)

January 26: *Course Aims and Logistics*

February 2: *The Aims of Liberal Education*

- “What is Liberal Education,” Leo Strauss (Internet)
- “A Moral and an Educational Revolution,” Mortimer J. Adler
- “Serving to Learning, Learning to Serve: The Goals of Higher Education at the Dawn of a New Millennium,” Michael S. Russo

February 9: *Good Work and Its Connection to Liberal Education*

- Q-Sort (explanation given in class)

February 16: *Good Work and Its Connection to Liberal Education* (continued)

- “The Meaning of Life,” *What Does It All Mean?* Thomas Nagel
- “Knowledge and Wisdom,” Bertrand Russell

February 23: *What Does it Mean to Be an Educated Person?*

- Examination of SJSU Educated Persons document

March 2: *What Sort of Person-Worker Am I and What Do I Want to Become?*

- Values in Action (don't pay for anything)
<http://www.viastrengths.org/register.aspx>
- Kiersey Temperament Sort (don't pay for anything)
http://www.advisorteam.com/temperament_sorter/register.asp?partid=1

March 9: *What Do I Know and How Do I Learn?*

- Plato's "Allegory of the Cave"

March 16: *What Do We Know and How Do We Learn: Surgery*

- Selected readings from *Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science*, Atul Gawande

March 23: Excellence in Work

- What is Excellent Work (worksheet)
- Investigating professional Goals (worksheet)
- "In Pursuit of Excellence in Higher Education"
- "Democracy, Deliberation, and Reflective Equilibrium"

March 30: *Spring Recess*

April 6: *Challenges to Good Work: Cultural*

- "Costs and Rewards"
- "Everybody Does It," *The Cheating Culture*, David Callahan
- Plato's "The Ring of Gyges"

April 13: *Challenges to Good Work: Personal and Professional Values Clash*

- "A Good Lawyer"
- "Religion to the Core"
- "The Cost of Principles"

April 20: *Challenges to Good Work: Ethical Dilemmas*

- "Serving a Cause vs. Serving a Client"
- "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas," Ursula Le Guin

April 27: *Challenges to Good Work: Ethical Dilemmas* (continued)

- "Unwavering Standards"
- "Good Censorship?"

May 4: *Challenges to Good Work: Ethical Dilemmas* (continued)

- "Making the Grade"
- "Grading Policies," *The Ethics of Teaching*, Strike and Soltis
- "Equal Treatment of Students" *The Ethics of Teaching*, Strike and Soltis

May 11: Last Class Meeting: Liberal Education and Good Work – Connections and Disconnections

- Class participation Rubric due

Academic Integrity

(See S04-12 policy on Academic Senate website: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>)

Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded.

Violations to the academic integrity policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. They also demonstrate a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students, and the course instructor. Even worse, they can ruin the University's reputation and the value of the degrees it offers.

We all share the obligation to maintain an environment that practices academic integrity. Violators of the academic integrity policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action, which can result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University.

* Your feedback on any aspect of this course is always welcome. Please contact me via e-mail, phone, by stopping by my office during office hours, or by setting up an appointment to meet.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION
Fall 2004

Student ID# (last four digits) _____

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely		
When speaking, the student:					
• Respects other people's opinions	5	4	3	2	1
• Contributes to the dialogue	5	4	3	2	1
• Says things that are related to the topic; builds on previous comments	5	4	3	2	1
• Speaks or refers directly to the comments of other students or the teacher, citing the comments with the person's name ("In response to")	5	4	3	2	1
• Demonstrates mastery of the text under discussion by referring to a specific part of the text under consideration when making a comment or asking a question	5	4	3	2	1
• Makes connections to outside examples	5	4	3	2	1
• Monitors his or her own verbal participation in class; makes comments of appropriate length	5	4	3	2	1
• Speaks with honesty and sincerity	5	4	3	2	1
• Works well in small groups	5	4	3	2	1
When speaking, the student shows the ability to:					
• Make both open-ended comments/questions and closed comments/questions	5	4	3	2	1
• Uncover the underlying logic of the argument or dilemma at hand	5	4	3	2	1
• Generalize from specific issues to abstract principles	5	4	3	2	1
• Summarize a text or argument	5	4	3	2	1
• Be a "critical friend" to others in the class through respectful disagreement	5	4	3	2	1
• Defend one's opinions with reasons and evidence	5	4	3	2	1
When listening, the student:					
• Makes eye contact with the speaker	5	4	3	2	1
• Does not disrespect another speaker with disdainful comments, noises or laughter	5	4	3	2	1
• Does not interrupt a speaker	5	4	3	2	1
In general, the student comes to class:					
• With all necessary materials for the class	5	4	3	2	1
• Having done the reading	5	4	3	2	1

TOTAL POINTS: _____

100

