

Eastern Kentucky University
Department of Foreign Languages and Humanities
Humanities 124: The Search for Meaning
Fall Semester 2013
CRN: XXXXX

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Catalog Course Description:

HUM 124 Humanities and the Search for Meaning. (3) I, II. An introduction to the comparative and interdisciplinary study of culture, including Western and non-Western literature, visual art, music, and design, emphasizing integrative thinking as a means toward affirming values for living meaningfully in today's world. Gen. Ed. E-3A, 3B.

Required Texts:

1. *Literature: The Human Experience: Reading and Writing* (a.k.a. LHE) (11th Ed.) by Richard Abcarian and Marvin Klotz
2. *The Complete Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway* (a.k.a. CSS) by Ernest Hemingway ISBN 0684843323
3. *Looking at Pictures* by Susan Woodford (pdf on Blackboard under Woodford's LAP tab)

GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS FOR ARTS & HUMANITIES COURSES

Students will be able to:

1. Use appropriate methods of critical thinking and quantitative reasoning to examine issues and to identify solutions. (Goal two)
2. Analyze the values, cultural context, and aesthetic qualities of artistic, literary, philosophic, and/or religious works. (Goal six)
3. Distinguish the methods that underlie the search for knowledge in the arts, humanities, natural sciences, history, and social and behavioral sciences. (Goal seven)
4. Integrate knowledge that will deepen their understanding of, and will inform their own choices about, issues of personal and public importance. (Goal eight)

Course-Student Learning Outcomes Integrated Arts and Humanities courses (IIIA/B): HUM 124

HUM 124: Humanities and the Search for Meaning

The student will:

1. Identify and describe basic human qualities as revealed in works of literature, visual art and music (Comprehension).
2. Define and employ relevant critical terms, to identify selected artists and their works, and to interpret these works in the context of the creative process and the creative potential of human beings (Comprehension, Formal Analysis, Contextual Analysis).
3. Use formal, structural and other interpretive concepts to explain selected works of literature, visual art and music to discover what they reveal about the creation, development and transformation of human values (Comprehension, Formal/Structural Analysis).
4. Discuss human experiences and values in selected works of literature, visual art and music through the consideration of major themes in written essays that are clearly formulated, grammatically correct, and stylistically competent (Comprehension, Expression, Contextual Analysis).
5. Illustrate through written work the development of a major theme, concept, or issue from several of the works studied (Integration Across Course).

Online Format: This is an online course, meaning the whole class will be conducted entirely online. This also means the course assignments will be completed online as well. This implies several responsibilities for the students:

1. Students have regular (if not daily) access to a computer and the Internet.
2. Students should have competent computer skills to browse the Internet and use computer programs. Excuses such as, "I could not figure out how to submit the assignment," will NOT be accepted.
3. Students are to be mature, responsible, self-motivated, and able to keep up with the reading assignments and complete the course assignments without the prodding of the instructor.
4. Students should be able to ask intelligent questions regarding the course objectives, readings, and/or assignments when they need proper clarification or further instruction. If you meet each of these criteria, you should be able to successfully complete this course.

Student Progress: Students will be notified of their progress in the course through the course website on Blackboard, whereby students will be able to log-in to the course and review their grades at any point during the semester. If you have any questions, please contact me directly as soon as possible, and we can discuss such issues as they arise.

Attendance Policy: Although this is an online class and we will not meet on-campus at a regularly scheduled time each week, students must have regular access to a computer and be able to keep up with the readings and other assignments throughout the course. Students should have regular (if not daily) access to a computer and Internet to complete assignments and receive updates.

Disability Statement: *A student with a “disability” may be an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as learning, seeing or hearing. Additionally, pregnancy or a related medical condition that causes a similar substantial limitation may also be considered a disability under the ADA.*

If you are registered with the Office of Services for Individuals with Disabilities, please obtain your accommodation letters from the OSID and present them to the course instructor to discuss any academic accommodations you need. If you believe you need accommodation and are not registered with the OSID, please contact the office in the Whitlock Building Room 361 by email at disserv@eku.edu or by telephone at (859) 622-2933. Upon individual request, this syllabus can be made available in an alternative format.

Use it or Lose it/1st-Day Disenrollment: Class attendance is a key component of academic success. Students increase the probability of success in class by being present on the first day. This policy is designed to ensure that students who are enrolled but are not attending class are identified and withdrawn during the 1st week of the term in a way that (a) provides full tuition reversal, (b) ensures no failing grades, and (c) makes unused class seats available to other students during the open registration period.

Course Drop/Withdraw Fee: During the first four weeks of the semester, students may withdraw from a class through EKUDirect without incurring a fee. During the 5th through the 10th weeks of fall/spring full semester classes, students will only be able to withdraw from class by completing a **Class Drop/Class Withdraw Form** and getting their instructor’s approval. Students withdrawing from a class during this time will be charged a fee of \$50 per credit hour (\$150 for a three credit hour course) for each withdrawn course. Students can obtain a **Class Drop/Class Withdraw Form** directly from the instructor or online at <http://www.forms.eku.edu>. **Only the instructor can sign for a student to drop a course.** Students must submit the completed withdraw form, with the instructor’s original signature, to the appropriate department/branch campus to be reviewed and stamped, verifying the instructor’s signature. Department/branch campus staff will provide the student with a copy of the stamped form. Students may either deliver the original, stamped withdraw form directly to the Registrar’s Office or leave it with the department/branch campus staff for forwarding.

Last Day to Drop: August 25 is the last day to Add/Drop with no “W”/fee and to convert a Pass/Fail/Audit to normal grade. September 6 is the last day to convert a normal grade to Pass/Fail/Audit. September 15 is the last day to withdraw from a class with “W”/no fee.

Academic Integrity Statement: Students are advised that EKU’s Academic Integrity policy will strictly be enforced in this course. The Academic Integrity policy is available at www.academicintegrity.eku.edu. Questions regarding the policy may be directed to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Email: It is necessary to have an EKU email and Blackboard account for each student to communicate with the instructor. All university communications to the instructor sent via email must be sent to through the student’s EKU email address. Please check your email each day for important updates and other information.

Expectations of the Students:

Overall: Students need to be able to keep up with the weekly reading assignments, ask questions when they do not understand the material or need further clarification, and complete the assignments on time. **Participation:** Participation is helpful in class to provide feedback. Participation is vital to class discussions because this class is designed to explore issues from a cross-disciplinary standpoint; thus, class discussions are important in order to express different ideas and raising new perspectives.

Assignments: Writings, papers, discussion boards, tests, and other assignments must be handled in a professional manner and should reflect your best efforts. Students who do NOT complete assignments by the due date will receive a 0 for each assignment not completed. Also, since you have ample time to complete the assignments, excuses such as, "Blackboard was down," will NOT be accepted. If Blackboard is down during the week, come back later and submit your assignment. I would NOT recommend waiting until the Friday night that the assignment is due to complete assignments. Submit your work early to be safe.

Online Discussions: Class discussions must be conducted with decorum and you should maintain a demeanor that is in harmony with a non-threatening exploration of sensitive issues. It is also your responsibility to have an open-minded approach to new ideas

presented in class. Let us be respectful as a class to one another's opinions and ideas.

Course Requirements: This course will implement a variety of assessment methods to diversify learning. These assessment methods will consist of online written discussions, tests, and quizzes. More detail on these assignments is listed below:

I. Assignments:

- Group Discussions (4x50 Points) 200 Points
- Unit Tests (3x100 Points) 300 Points
- Quizzes (10x10 Points) 100 Points
- 600 Total Points

• **Discussion Board:** (200 Points) There will be FOUR scheduled discussion board assignments throughout the semester. They each will be worth 50 points each for a total of 200 points. The discussion board topics will be available at the beginning of the semester. Students can complete them at any point prior to the due date. You are to review the topics and write a response. The discussion boards are designed to be less formal to enable students to discuss course themes in a more casual yet constructive manner (but in your posts please adhere to the rules of grammar as much as possible). There will be two sections to each of the FOUR discussion board assignments: first, you are to write a response to a topic for the week, and second, you will have to respond to at least three other student's post, commenting on the general persuasiveness of each of the three students' post to which you respond and indicating whether you agree or disagree with their ideas.

Requirements for Each Discussion Board Assignment:

- 1.) First, you are to write a response to one of the posted topics in no less than 100-150 words. The first round of posts is due by Wednesday at midnight of the week the discussion board is assigned (i.e. Discussion Board #1 first portion will be due Wednesday of Week 1). This portion will be worth 20 points.
- 2.) Second, you are to respond to at least three other students' posts. By Wednesday everyone should have posted a response to a discussion board topic. You then should review other students' posts and choose at least three posts (other than your own) and write a short (approximately 100-150 word) response to each of the three students. You may either agree or disagree with the student's response, but you should seek to fully explain your position. These second posts are to be completed by Friday at midnight of the week they are assigned (i.e. your response to three other students' posts for Discussion Board #1 will be due Friday of Week 1). This portion will be an additional 10 points per post (with the limit of receiving credit for three response posts per week) for a total of 30 points for this portion.

The discussion board assignment for each week will be worth 50 total points (20 points for your initial post and 30 points for your response to three other student's post). Again, there will be four discussion board assignments (one assignment per week) for a total of 300 total points for this section of the course. Students who do not complete the discussion board posts by time that they are due will receive a 0 for the assignment.

Due Dates:

- Discussion Board #1
 - (Week #1: 1st Portion- Wednesday, Aug. 21; 2nd Portion- Friday, Aug. 23)
- Discussion Board #2
 - (Week #6: 1st Portion- Wednesday, Sept. 25; 2nd Portion- Friday, Sept. 27)
- Discussion Board #3
 - (Week 11: 1st Portion- Wednesday, Oct. 30; 2nd Portion- Friday, Nov. 1)
- Discussion Board #4
 - (Week 16: 1st Portion- Wednesday, Dec. 4; 2nd Portion- Friday, Dec. 4)

To complete the discussion board assignments, click on the " Discussion Board" tab on the left-hand side of the course website. Click on the discussion board that you wish to complete. Then, click "Create Thread" at the top left-hand side. Copy and paste your response into the text box and click "Submit." To complete the second portion of the Discussion Board assignment, review other student's posts. Click on a post of your choice and write a response.

Tips For Discussion Boards:

First, make sure that you meet the minimum word requirement for each post. Posts that do not meet word requirement will not be graded.

Second, in your posts make sure that you cite some specific ideas from the reading assignments to support your claims and so that

I know that you have read the assignment. This does not mean you need to use specific quotes, but it means that you should use specific ideas or points from the reading assignments.

Third, make sure that you are answering more than one topic in your responses. I have noticed that some students have simply restated the same ideas from the same topic in their posts. Recycling ideas will not be sufficient. If you already covered one topic in a post, choose students' posts that cover different topics in your response posts. In short, diversify your responses as much as possible.

Fourth, make sure that you address the person to whom you are responding to give the person a chance to respond to you. Please do not regurgitated the same ideas from your initial post in your response posts (i.e. if you have discussed the interaction between Hector and Andromache in "Book 6" the Iliad in your initial post, do not solely discuss this interaction in your response posts). Students that diversify their ideas and responses as much as possible will receive higher grades.

Finally, remember that these are meant to be discussions. If we were meeting in class, we would be having these discussion with each other in class. Instead, as an online class, we are having these discussions online.

• **Unit Tests:** (300 Points) There will be three scheduled unit tests that will cover the ideas, readings, and themes from the beginning of class until the test. These unit tests occur online on the week they are scheduled and will mainly consist of, but not limited to, multiple choice and true/false questions. Each test will be cumulative, meaning each subsequent unit test will build upon the ideas and concepts learned from the previous unit(s). The questions for these tests will give students the opportunity to apply their ongoing learning from in-class discussions, lectures, and readings. The tests will be open at the beginning of the semester and students can complete them at any point prior to the due dates. Students that do not complete the test by the due date will receive a 0 for the test. The unit tests will be worth 100 points per test. There will be two unit tests for a total of 200 points.

Due Dates:

- Unit Test #1: Week 7
 - Due on Friday, Oct. 4
- Unit Test #2: Week 12
 - Due on Friday, Nov. 8
- Unit Test #3: Week 17
 - Due on Friday, Dec. 13

• **Quizzes:** (100 Points) There will be ten quizzes that cover the reading assignments to assess student learning and chart student development, as the quizzes will allow students to have a chance to become more familiar with important ideas from the reading assignments. **The ten quizzes will be online and cover the reading assignments.** This course is designed for students to move through most of the readings and lectures at his or her own pace. All ten quizzes will be open on the first day of class. You may complete the first four quizzes at any point before Friday of Week 7. Any quiz not completed after this date will receive a 0 on each uncompleted quiz. The remaining six quizzes will be due no later than the Friday of Week 16. The exact dates are listed in the schedule below. The quizzes will cover all the reading assignments in between unit topics. This means that after each unit subset (e.g. Unit 1, Subset A (Youth and Experience) or Unit 2, B (Cultivation of Value and Degradation of Value)) there will be a quiz that covers the all the reading material for this subset to ensure students have familiarity with assigned material to give them more insight to the themes for the week to enhance online discussions. The online quizzes will be completed through Blackboard and mainly consist of multiple choice and true/false questions and are to be closed book.

• **Late Work:** Late work will **NOT** be accepted and **NO** make-up quizzes or exams will be scheduled without the accompaniment of a doctor's note or some other official notification. So, please make note of the due dates and have all work completed by the deadline. Some extreme cases may constitute for make-up work to be accepted but these events will be at the discretion of the instructor. Foresight is much better than hindsight. This means you should tell the instructor of your extreme situation prior to the due date. The instructor probably will be less sympathetic if you inform him of your situation after the date the assignment is due.

Final Grades: Final grades will be determined by the total number of points received during the semester.

A = 600-540
B = 539-480
C = 479-420
D = 419-360
F = 359 and below

A Short Biography of the Professor: I am an Assistant Professor of Humanities at Eastern Kentucky University. I have lived in

Michigan, Florida, Nebraska, and Kentucky. I received my doctorate in interdisciplinary humanities from Florida State University, where I studied and taught theory, literature, art, and film. I grew up in a small town in Michigan that had a population of about 1400 people. I married a short while after graduating high school, and my wife and I soon decided to continue our education by attending a small university in Northern Michigan. I changed my major a few times but finally found my love for the humanities after taking a humanities course that was required for my general education requirements. I decided that I would like to become an educator of humanities but there were no humanities majors in the area, so I decided to transfer to the University of Michigan to study education, history, and political science so that I could learn how to teach the social sciences. I later moved to Tallahassee, Florida with my family to study interdisciplinary humanities at FSU. Although we miss the fair weather and sunshine of Florida, we have been excited to be here in Kentucky. My hobbies include playing sports, running, and traveling to new and interesting places.

Humanistic Studies: Many students are unfamiliar with the humanities and have questions about what a course in the humanities entails. Humanities is a study of human life. A course in the humanities will investigate previous and current inquiries of the human condition. We will ask questions like: What is the meaning of life; what is human nature; what does it mean to be human; etc.? We will seek to resolve these questions through studying philosophical, literary, artistic, and musical achievements that have grappled with such questions. A course in the humanities will enable students to better understand themselves and how they fit into the broader classification of man. This course will give students the opportunity to determine their responsibility to society and perhaps society's responsibility to them, noting the interconnectedness between the self and humankind. Completing this course will give students a better appreciation of our world and the values that we as humans share.

Skills Developed in the Humanities: Students that complete this course will gain greater verbal, written, and analytical skills to enable them to read, interpret, and evaluate literary and artistic works and be able to apply these skills to other academic areas. Students also will be able to think more critically and creatively, constantly seeking to question and improve their world.

Methods of Instruction: This course will use lecture and discussion format, relying heavily upon close readings and in-class group discussions; this course also will use electronic and film presentations.

Other Important Information:

Skype Office Hours: In addition to my regular office hours, I will be having Skype office hours on MW 1-2 p.m. and TR 2-4 p.m. During these times, I will log on to my Skype account to hold online office hours for students that have questions or concerns to access me through IM, phone, or video. My Skype Name is jonathan.austad. (You can browse my name through your Skype account by clicking on "Contacts" on the top toolbar and then "Add Contact." Type in my user name and then call.) Students who do not have a Skype account can obtain one for free at the following website: <http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/home>.

Syllabus Change Policy: This syllabus and schedule is articulated as an expectation of class topics, learning activities, and expected student learning. However, the instructor reserves the right to make changes that, within my professional judgment, would result in enhanced or more effective learning on the part of students. These modifications will not substantially change the intent or objectives of this course and will be done within the policies and procedures of Eastern Kentucky University. Simply put, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

Final Note: My most important concern in this course is you. I hope to provide an environment where new ideas can be shared openly and honestly. If you are struggling in any way or with any issue in the class please make an appointment to see me, see me during office hours, or email me as soon as possible.

Course Overview:

I. Unit I: Innocence and Experience

A. Youth and Innocence

B. Experience

C. Self-Reflection, Memory, and Irony

II. Unit II: Conformity and Rebellion

A. Beyond Pleasure and Compliance

B. Cultivation of Value and Degradation of Value

C. Placing the Other Above the Self

III. Unit III: Love and Hate

A. Theory of Knowledge

B. Interrupting the Present and Questioning the Self

IV. Unit IV: The Presence of Death

- A. Knowledge of Mortality
- B. On the Aged and Death

Tentative Schedule: Fall 2013 (N.B. all dates are tentative and subject to change)

****NOTE:** LHE stands for the *Literature: The Human Experience* text, CSS stands for *The Complete Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway* text, and LAP stands for the *Looking at Pictures* pdf online text.

Week 1 (Aug. 19-23)

Readings:

1. Aristotle's *The Poetics* (online)
2. LAP: Chapter 1: "Ways of Looking at Pictures" (pdf online: p. 7-13)

Assignments:

Discussion Board #1: Due Aug. 21 and 23 by midnight

I. Unit I: Innocence and Experience

A. Youth and Innocence

Week 2 (Aug. 26-30)

Readings:

1. William Blake's "The Chimney Sweeper," "The Lamb," and "The Garden of Love" (LHE p. 176-178)
2. Thomas Hardy's "The Ruined Maid" (LHE p.182)
3. LAP: Chapter 13: "Quality" (pdf online: p. 104-110)

Week 3 (Sept. 2-6)

Readings:

1. Ernest Hemingway's "Indian Camp" (CSS p. 65-70)
2. Ernest Hemingway's "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" (CSS p. 71-76)
3. LAP: Chapter 2: "Landscapes and Seascape" (pdf online: p. 14-20)

Assignments:

Quiz #1

B. Experience

Week 4 (Sept. 9-13)

Readings:

1. Langston Hughes' "Mother to Son" (LHE p. 215)
2. Peter Meinke's "Advice to My Son" (LHE p. 216)
3. LAP: Chapter 3: "Portraits" (pdf online: p. 21-29)

Week 5 (Sept. 16-20)

Readings:

1. Ernest Hemingway's "The Battler" (CSS p. 95-104)
2. Ernest Hemingway's "Soldier's Home" (CSS p. 111-116)

Assignments:

Quiz #2

C. Self-Reflection, Memory, and Irony

Week 6 (Sept. 23-27)

Readings:

1. Ernest Hemingway's "Father's and Sons" (CSS p. 369)

Assignments:

Discussion Board #2: Due Sept. 25 and 27 by midnight

Quiz #3

Week 7 (Sept. 30-Oct. 4)

Exam 1: Due Friday, Oct. 4 by midnight

Quizzes #1-4 will be due by Friday, Oct. 4 by midnight

II. Unit II: Conformity and Rebellion

A. Beyond Pleasure and Compliance

Week 8 (Oct. 7-11)

Readings:

1. Franz Kafka's "A Hunger Artist" (LHE p. 353-360)
2. Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Ulysses" (LHE p. 428-429)
3. Emily Dickinson's "Much Madness is Divinest Sense" (LHE p. 430)
4. William Butler Yeats' "Easter 1916" (LHE p. 431-433)
5. W.H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen" (LHE p. 443-444)

Assignments:

Quiz #4:

B. Cultivation of Value and Degradation of Value

Week 9 (Oct. 16-18)

Readings:

1. Ralph Ellison's "Battle Royal" (LHE p. 361-372)
2. Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" (LHE p. 373-379)
3. Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" (LHE p. 500-507)
4. LAP: Chapter 8: "Tradition" (pdf online: p. 74-78)

Assignments:

Quiz #5:

(NOTE: EKU campus closed Oct. 14-15 for Fall Break)

C. Placing the Other Above the Self

Week 10 (Oct. 21-25)

Readings:

1. Ellison's "Repent, Harlequin! Said the Ticktockman" (LHE p. 401-410)
2. Wilfred Owen's "Dulce Et Decorum Est" (LHE p. 462)
3. Thomas Hardy's "The Man He Killed" (LHE p. 461)
4. William Butler Yeats' "The Great Day" (LHE p. 455)
5. Robert Frost's "A Semi-Revolution" (LHE p. 455)
6. Oscar William's "A Total Revolution" (LHE p. 455-456)

Week 11 (Oct. 28-Nov. 1)

Readings:

1. Ernest Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants" (CSS p. 211)
2. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail in Historical Context" (LHE p. 525-532)
3. Martin Luther King, jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (LHE p. 533-546)
4. LAP: Chapter 12: "Hidden Meanings" (pdf online: p. 101-103)

Assignments:

Discussion Board #3: Oct. 30 and Nov. 1 by midnight

Quiz #6:

Week 12 (Nov. 4-8)

Exam 2: Due Friday, Nov. 8 by midnight

III. Unit III: Love, Hate, and Death

A. Theory of Knowledge

Week 13 (Nov. 11-15)

Readings:

1. Ernest Hemingway's "The End of Something" (CSS p. 77-82)
2. Ernest Hemingway's "Three Day Blow" (CSS p. 83-94)

Assignments:

Quiz #7:

B. Interrupting the Present and Questioning the Self

Week 14 (Nov. 18-21)

Readings:

1. Ernest Hemingway's "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (CSS p. 5-28)

Assignments:

Quiz #8:

C. Knowledge of Mortality

Week 15 (Nov. 25-26)

Readings:

1. Woody Allen's *Death Knocks* (LHE p. 1280-1287)

Assignments:

Quiz #9:

Week 16 (Dec. 2-6)

Readings:

1. E.B. White's "Once More to the Lake" (LHE p. 1297-1302)
2. Ernest Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (CSS p. 39-56)

Assignments:

Quiz #10:

Discussion Board #4: Due Dec. 4 and 6 by midnight

Week 17 (Dec. 9-13)

Exam 3: Due Friday, Dec. 13 by midnight

Quizzes #5-10 will be due by Friday, Dec. 13 by midnight