

LIB 100: Introduction to Liberal Studies

GVSU Fall 2002

Section M: MWF 10:00- 10:50

Dr. Kelly Parker

Contact

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Open Office Hours:

Mon & Wed 11-12 Tue 2-3; other times by arrangement

Orientation

In LIB 100 we raise basic questions about the value and purposes of higher education itself, and examine various answers that have been offered to these questions.

The course is directed toward students at or near the beginning of the college experience. While this does not mean that the course has nothing to offer to more advanced students, it has been my experience that such students have often already found more or less adequate answers to such questions. Be prepared to revisit these questions seriously!

The main pedagogical objectives of LIB 100 are:

1. to become familiar with the idea of liberal education, and with related concepts of education-including both those that complement liberal education and those that conflict with it.
2. to arrive at an understanding of the potential value of liberal learning for one's life in contemporary society.
3. to become active participants in liberal learning, at least within the confines of this class.

Texts

Dewey, John. *Experience and Education*. Collier Books.

Tolstoy, Leo. *The Death of Ivan Ilyich and Other Stories*. New American Library.

Weston, Anthony. *A Rulebook for Arguments*. Third edition. Hackett.

Gibaldi, Joseph and Phyllis Franklin. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Fifth edition. Modern Language Association of America.

Whipps, Judy (ed.). *Education: Power and Choices*. Copley Custom Publishing Group.

Other materials will be made available as needed.

Assignments and Grading

I will ask you to prepare written **Responses to Study Questions** for a number of the readings. These must typed and double-spaced. Their primary purpose is to facilitate in-class discussion, but I will ask you to turn in four of the papers (Study Questions #1, #6, and two others of your choice) for grading. (25%)

Carrot: For each SQ draft you bring to class, 1/2% extra credit will be added to your total semester grade.

Stick: You must bring a draft SQ answer to class on the assigned day if you wish me to grade that SQ for credit. Note the implications for #1 & #6!

Three **Critical Thinking Quizzes** on material from Weston's Rulebook (5%)

Educational Biography Project (50% total, as follows:)

A 5 to 10 item **Annotated Bibliography** for research on a significant person (10%)

A 2 page **Critical Evaluation** of a book-length biography about a significant person (20%)

An in-class **Group Presentation** on the life and education of a significant person (20%)

A **Final Essay Exam** designed to integrate themes covered throughout the semester (15%)

Two brief **Experience Reports:** reports on lectures, performances, or other events you attend that supplement the themes and ideas of LIB 100; or as an alternative assignment, post 4 substantial messages (questions, observations, comments about the writers and ideas we're discussing) to the class discussion board (5%)

I strongly recommend, but do not require, that you keep a **Personal Journal** of your thoughts and ideas during the semester. This is not graded but I will be happy to give you feedback on journal entries if you ask.

Attendance. The success of this class depends largely on in-class discussion. I expect you to be here on time, and to come prepared to discuss the assigned readings. I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. The equivalent of one week's absences will be tolerated without penalty. Each absence beyond that is the basis for a penalty, to be deducted from your final grade.

3 class periods missed - no penalty

4-6 class periods missed - 3% deduction from semester grade for each class

7 or more classes - No Credit (F)

Grade Definitions

[**A**] **Outstanding.** Work displays thorough mastery of material, exceptionally good writing, and genuine engagement with the subject-matter. This grade is reserved for those students who attain the highest levels of excellence in thought and scholarship.

[**B**] **Good.** Work displays accurate understanding of the material, writing is clear and free of mechanical errors.

[**C**] **Fair.** Work displays basic grasp of material, though there may be the occasional misunderstanding or inaccuracy. Writing quality acceptable.

[**D**] **Marginal.** Work displays a grasp of the material adequate for credit, but quality of work indicates lack of effort or aptitude.

[**F**] **Unacceptable.** Excessive absences, assignments not completed, or assignments unworthy of credit. Cheating or plagiarism will earn an automatic F for the assignment and/or the course.

Papers

I expect papers to be proofread, typed in dark print, double-spaced, with numbered pages. Cover sheets and external binders are unnecessary and wasteful. Please don't use them. Include your name, the course number and section, date, and the assignment name or title on the first page. A paper encumbered by excessive spelling, grammatical, punctuation, and/or documentation errors will not receive a grade higher than C-, regardless of whatever other merits the paper may have.

It is best to hand papers to me in class. If this is not possible, leave them at my office, 213 Lake Superior Hall. It is a good policy to keep a photocopy of any paper you turn in. Papers turned in after the announced deadline will not be graded except when the paper is late due to genuine emergency.

Special Note on Proper Citation of Sources and Plagiarism

"Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism" (GVSU Student Code, Sec 223.01). There is such a thing as unintentional plagiarism. It results from ignorance of proper citation practices, but is nonetheless a violation of academic standards and will not be tolerated.

In general, any use of words or ideas that one obtains from a specific source requires a citation of that source. Citations may take the form of footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references. Whatever its form, a citation identifies the author, title, and other bibliographic information for the work, and identifies the pages on which the information appears.

All citations and lists of works consulted should follow the guidelines in *The MLA Handbook*, which is a required text for this class. It is available in the bookstore and at good libraries everywhere.

<i>Fall 2001 Schedule</i>		
1 - 2	I. Life and Education at the Beginning of a New Millenium	
	Introductory Models. <i>Introductions, short biographies</i>	
	Forms of Wisdom, Forms of Education. <i>Russell</i>	SQ #1 (mandatory)
3 - 5	II. The Question of Meaning in Life	
	The World is Not Enough. <i>Tolstoy, St. Petersburg</i>	SQ #2 SQ #3
	Liberal and Other Arts. <i>Walker, Cronon</i>	SQ #4
5 - 6	III. The Search for Answers:	
	Appearance and Reality. <i>Plato's Cave; The Matrix</i>	SQ #5
	The Examined Life. <i>Socrates "Apology," MLK video</i>	SQ #6 (mandatory)
7 - 8	IV. Logic and Critical Thinking	
	Arguments & Non-arguments; Induction & Fallacies; <i>Weston and Class Notes</i> Deduction & Fallacies	Logic Quiz 1 Logic Quiz 2 Logic Quiz 3
9 - 11	V. Liberal Learning as a Way of Life	
	Democracy in Education? <i>Dewey, Maimonides</i>	Bibliographies due 10/28; SQ #7
		First Critical Eval. Papers due 11/13; SQ #8
12 - 14	VI. The Many Faces of Liberal Learning	
		Presentations Begin 11/18
		Final Exam noon Tues 12/10

<i>Important Dates</i>			
Drop (100% Tuition Refund)	Aug. 30, 5pm	Bibliography Due	28 October
Labor Day Recess	Sept. 1 -- 3	First Critical Evaluation Papers Due	13 November
Drop (75% Tuition Refund)	Sept. 20, 5pm	Presentations	Begin 18 November
Withdrawal Deadline	Oct. 18, 5 pm	Last Discussion Board Credit	Wednesday Dec. 4, midnight
Thanksgiving Recess	Nov 27-Dec 1	Final Exam Due	Tuesday Dec. 10, noon

Goals of the General Education Program

The General Education Program teaches both the skills and the general body of knowledge needed for students to intelligently participate in public discourse.

Knowledge Goals

1. The major areas of human investigation and accomplishment -- the arts, the humanities, the mathematical sciences, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.
2. An understanding of one's own culture and the cultures of others.
3. The tradition of humane inquiry that forms moral and ethical choices.

Skills Goals

1. To engage in articulate expression through effective writing and speaking.
2. To think critically and creatively.
3. To locate, evaluate, and use information effectively.
4. To integrate different areas of knowledge and view ideas from multiple perspectives.

The Structure of the General Education Program

The General Education Program is divided into three sections: the Foundations Categories, the Cultural Emphasis Requirements, and the Thematic Group.

The Foundations Categories

Courses in the Foundations Categories introduce students to the major areas of human thought and endeavor. These courses present the academic disciplines as different ways of looking at the world, they introduce students to the varied methods used to create knowledge, and they acquaint students with major questions and principles of the field. The pedagogy of the Foundation Categories helps students develop the essential skills of creative and critical thinking, articulate expression, and information literacy.

The Foundations Categories are:

- The Arts (one course)
- The Humanities
 - Philosophy and Literature (one course)
 - Historical Perspectives (one course)
- The Mathematical Sciences (one course)
- The Natural Sciences (one of the science Courses must contain a lab)
 - Physical Sciences (one course)
 - Life Sciences (one course)
- The Social Sciences (two courses from two disciplines)

The Humanities: Philosophy and Literature Courses

Completion of one of the following courses is required.

COM 202 Critical Interpretation

ENG 201 Classical Literature

ENG 203 World Literature

ENG 205 Literatures in English

ENG 212 Introduction to Shakespeare

LIB 100 Introduction to Liberal Studies

PHI 101 Introduction to Philosophy

PHI 102 Ethics

RST 331 Russian Literature in Translation (1800-1880)

RST 333 Russian Literature in Translation (1932 to present)