

Syllabus (1/4/12)

HUM2305: What is the Good Life?

Lecture: M,W period 3 (9:35-10:25)

Room: CSE A-101

Discussion Sections, Meeting Times, and Rooms:

PROFESSORS:

Brenda Smith (School Of Music)

Ferdinand Lewis (School of Landscape Architecture & Planning)

Contact: Dr. Lewis -- fslewis@ufl.edu

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Preceptors (discussion leaders):

Elizabeth Saari Browne

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David Whitehead

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the enduring question “What is the Good Life?” from the perspectives of the humanities. Topics include the cost of the good life, how people have chosen to live as members of local and global communities, and conceptions and expressions of beauty, power, love, and health.

COURSE WEB SITE

General Good Life course site at <http://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/hum-course.aspx>

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Through a close examination of relevant works of visual and expressive arts, architecture, literature, history, religion, and philosophy, students in this class will consider the basic question, “What is the Good Life?” and the price human beings are willing to pay to achieve it. Common elements in all sections of the course include reflecting upon and critiquing readings, a common humanities lecture, museum exhibits, and performances. The course will serve as an invitation to the Humanities and to a lifetime of reflection on the human condition through the unique opportunities available to the students at the University of Florida.

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The Humanities, a cluster of disciplines that inquire into the very nature and experience of being human, provide many approaches to the question ‘What is the good life,’ as well as a multiform treasury of responses that comprises the cultural and intellectual legacy of world humanity.

The question is especially relevant for a detailed examination as you become more and more involved in making the decisions that will shape your future and the future of others. In order to make reasonable, ethical, well-informed life choices, it is useful to reflect upon how one might aspire to live both as an individual, and a member of local and global communities.

The course is interdisciplinary and draws on the considerable humanities resources at UF. It is also cross-cultural and draws on the full range of human experience across the world and through time in trying to answer the question: “What is the good life?” The lectures, discussion sections, and other readings are specific to each section of this course.

SYLLABUS

The syllabus is posted on Sakai, and can be downloaded there. Note that the syllabus is subject to change, and the student is responsible for having the most recent version at all times. If any change to the syllabus is made, the change will be announced in lecture, and posted in the “announcements” section on Sakai.

COMMON ACTIVITIES

This course expects students to become actively engaged in experiences unique to UF. As such, course requirements include attending a performance at the Phillips Center, visiting the Harn Museum, and participating in a Humanities lecture. More information on these activities can be found at the general Good Life course site at <http://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/resources.aspx>

TEXTS

All common (“gateway”) readings and other materials are available on ARES Online Reserve, while those assigned by individual instructors (“pillar” readings, images and videos) will be made available in a manner to be determined by each instructor.

ENHANCEMENT MATERIALS

In addition to the readings, some weeks you will be assigned enhancement materials, including on-line presentations, podcasts, audio and video files, etc. Examples are available at <http://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/resources.aspx>

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

This course meets three (3) hours of the University of Florida’s General Education Requirement in the Humanities (H) area by providing instruction in the key themes, principles and terminology of several humanities disciplines. By focusing on the history, theory and methodologies used within these disciplines, you will be able to identify and to analyze some of the key elements, biases and influences that shape human thought. By introducing students

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to the rich legacy of the humanities, this course will emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach to issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

This course has several targeted Student Learning Outcomes. By the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Know the history, underlying theory and methodologies used across several humanities disciplines.
- Identify and analyze key elements, biases, and influences that shape thought within those disciplines.
- Approach issues and problems from multiple disciplinary perspectives.
- Communicate knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning clearly and effectively in forms appropriate to the disciplines, individually and/or in groups.

ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. One 500-word essay, due 2/8/12, on how Siddhartha exemplifies the themes of the Good Life learned thus far. Detailed assignment instructions will be supplied prior to the due date. (10% of course grade)
2. One 500-word essay, due 3/27/12, on a topic relating to one or more of the three events experienced outside of class (the concert, Harn Exhibit, or common Humanities lecture). Students will choose one or more of the events and evaluate the experience as it relates to the Good Life theme. Detailed instructions will be supplied prior to the due date. (15% of course grade)
3. One 1000-word essay on the question: What is the Cost of the Good Life? In consultation with the teaching assistants and instructors, students will select a subject for an analytical essay. Topics will be chosen by 4/12/12. The first draft of the paper is due on 4/18/12. Students will peer-review papers during discussion groups as part of the grade, and instructions for this will be provided in the discussion group. (15% of course grade total for draft, final, and peer reviewing)
4. A one-hour Midterm Exam in class on 2/29/12. (20% of the course grade)
5. A one-hour Final Exam on 5/3/12. (20% of course grade)

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6. Oral and written quizzes--given at the discretion of instructor and teaching assistants. (10% of course grade)
7. Attendance and participation in discussion sections. Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions throughout the semester. (10% of course grade)

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and completion of required reading is expected in this course. Students are responsible for all the material covered in this course. Lectures will complement the reading. Attendance will be taken during each lecture and discussion section. Do not register for this class if you cannot arrive on time. Tardiness harms your understanding of the material and disrupts the class. After the first late arrival, the instructor reserves the right to mark you absent for the day. The “preceptors” (discussion leaders) will *not* provide notes, or discuss material that has already been covered in class. You are allowed one absence; after that each unexcused absence will result in a one-step grade reduction (e.g. from a B+ to B, or a B to a B-).

GORDON RULE REQUIREMENTS

This course is an E2 Gordon Rule Course, which means that students will have a minimum of 2,000 written words evaluated on the effectiveness, organization, clarity and coherence of the writing, as well as the grammar, punctuation and usage of standard written English. Please make sure that your essays fulfill the minimum word requirements so that you can receive Gordon Rule credit for this class. Please keep in mind that in order to secure E2 Gordon Rule credit for this course, you will need to earn a C grade or better **and** satisfy the writing requirements of this course. It is possible not to meet the writing requirement and still pass the class. Students should review their degree audits after receiving their grades to verify receipt of credit for the writing component.

GRADING SCALE AND ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

Grade Proportion	Grade Scale	Grade Value
Analytical essay 15%	100-93=A	A=4.0
First Short Essay 10%	92-90=A-	A-=3.67
Second Short Essay 15 %	89-86=B+	B+=3.33
Mid-Term Exam 20%	85-82=B	B=3.00
Participation 10%	81-79=B-	B-=2.67
Quizzes 10%	78-75=C+	C+=2.33
Final Exam 20%	75-72=C	C=2.00
	71-69=C-	C-=1.67
	68-66=D+	D+=1.33

	65-62=D	D=1.00
	61-60=D-	D-=0.67
	59-0=E	E=0.00

Please note: An earned grade of “C-“ will not be a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen. Ed., Gordon Rule, or basic distribution credit.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students must conform to UF’s academic honesty policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of cheating. This means that on all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php> and <http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html>.

All students found to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in *any assignment* for this course will be prosecuted to the full extent of the university honor policy, including judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code. For serious violations, you will fail this course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please do not hesitate to ask for accommodation for a documented disability. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drpf/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Please ask the instructor if you would like any assistance in this process.

OTHER POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES

1. *Handing in Assignments:* Assignments due in class should be handed directly to your preceptor.

2. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* You may receive an extension on an assignment *only* in extraordinary circumstances *and* with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down 1/3 grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.

Each instructor will explain their policy regarding late papers during discussion, as well as steps for delivering a late paper.

3. *Completion of All Assignments:* You must complete all written and oral assignments and fulfill the requirement for class participation in order to pass the course.

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4. *Common Courtesy*: Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls or text messages during class will be asked to leave and marked absent for the day. The instructors may ask students engaging in disruptive behavior, including but not limited to whispering or snoring, to leave the class. If that occurs, the student will be marked absent for the day.

5. *Computer Use in Class*: You may take notes on a laptop computer ONLY WITH PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE INSTRUCTOR. Such permission is usually granted only in cases of documented disabilities. If you are given permission to use a computer in class, you must sit in the back row where the preceptors can check your screen to make sure you are taking notes rather than playing poker, emailing, or otherwise straying off task.

7. *Counseling Resources*: Resources available on-campus for students include the following:

- a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;
- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

8. *Software Use*: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

WEEK ONE: THINKING ABOUT THE GOOD LIFE

*Gateway Readings (Available on Sakai):

Vivien Sung, *Five fold Happiness: Chinese concepts of luck, prosperity, longevity, happiness, and wealth*. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002); 11- 12; 18- 19; 34, 49, 70-71; 94-95 and 97; 152, 156-157; 204-205; 207; 210-211, 214.

Dominik Wujastyk, ed., trans. *The Roots of Ayurveda* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 61-70.

1/9/12

- Lecture
 - “Defining the Humanities in a Good Life/ ‘Ancient Wisdom’ and the Good Life”
FL & BS

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1/11/12

- Lecture
 - “Tools of Exploration” BS

Pillar Readings:

Marcel Proust, “Another Memory” from *The Complete Short Stories of Marcel Proust*, trans. by J. Neugroschel, (NY: Cooper Square Press, 2001); 186-188.

Virginia Woolf, “How should One Read a Book?” from *The Second Common Reader* (NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960); 234-245.

WEEK TWO: THINKING ABOUT THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Richard Taylor, "Happiness," from his *An Introduction to Virtue Ethics* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2002), 107-22.

Aristotle, from *Ethics*, Chapter 10.

Pillar Readings:

Monday, 1/16/12 Martin Luther King Holiday NO CLASS

1/18/12

- Lecture
 - “Is Happiness an Action?” FL

WEEKS THREE AND FOUR: SEEKING A GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha* (1922). Available as an e-Gutenberg text at the following address:
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2500/2500-8.txt>

Pillar:

The National Geographic: Inside Mecca Part I (Pilgrimage)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rlsZfce8jU>

1/23/12

- Lecture
 - “The Road to Discovery” BS

1/25/12

- Lecture
 - “Dealing with Uncertainty” BS

1/30/12

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- Lecture
 - “Govinda’s Vision: Enlightenment and the Suffering of Others” FL

2/1/12

No Class

2/3/12

- **Evening Performance (field trip)**
 - Soweto Gospel Choir/Phillips Center for Performing Arts, 7:30 pm (Attendance is mandatory. Tickets will be distributed in class.)

WEEK FIVE: CELEBRATING A GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Bernstein’s “Ode to Joy” /Videos: Lecture + performance excerpt/(ca. 25 minutes)
“A Palace in Time” from *The Sabbath*, 13-23

2/6/12

- Lecture
 - “Music for the People” BS

2/8/12

- Lecture
 - “Creating a Palace in Time” BS

Essay One Due

WEEK SIX: EMBODYING A GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Interview and excerpt from Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (New York: Crown, 2010). Available online at the National Public Radio website at the following address: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=123232331> (37 minutes)

Emily Prager, “Our Barbies, Ourselves,” originally titled “Major Barbie” by Emily Prager. Originally appeared in the December 1991 issue of *Interview*.

Pillar Reading:

“The Diamond Necklace” by Guy de Maupassant.

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1799242&pageno=52

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Selections from the writings of Laurie Patton (TBA).

2/13/12

- Lecture
 - “Image, Essence, and ‘Commodification’” BS/FL

2/15/12 No Class

2/16/12

- **Humanities Lecture (field trip)**
 - **Laurie Patton, place and time tba**

WEEK SEVEN: OWNING THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

The painted desert by Geraldine Brooks

http://www.griffithreview.com/images/stories/edition_articles/ed2_pdfs/brooksed2.pdf

http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/ngurrara_the_great_sandy_desert_canvas/about_the_canvas

2/20/12

- Lecture “Ways of Valuing Art” FL

2/22/12

- Lecture “Value and Meaning in the Great Sandy Desert Canvas” FL

WEEK EIGHT: SUSTAINING THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” from *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 201-226.

Kevin Lynch, “Form Values in Urban History”

Jane Jacobs, “Four Generators of Diversity”

2/27/12

- Lecture “The Planet and the Community” FL

2/29/12

- **Mid-Term Exam (in-class)**

3/3-3/11/12

- **SPRING BREAK**

WEEK NINE: CONSTRUCTING THE GOOD LIFE

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Gateway: Multimedia gateway about meaningful spaces on campus accompanied by a cell-phone tour/scavenger hunt + supplementary reading (reference full proposal by MC)

3/12/12

- Lecture
 - “The City and the Good Life” FL

3/14/12

- Lecture
 - “The Community and the Good Life” FL

WEEK TEN: GOVERNING THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

1. Sherman Jackson, “What is Shariah and Why Does It Matter?”
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sherman-a-jackson/what-is-shariah-and-why>
2. Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp

Pillar Reading:

Louis Menand: “The Politics of Slavery” in *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America*, (NY: Farrar, Straus&Giroux, 2001), 3-22

3/19/12

- Lecture “The Experiment of Democracy” BS

3/21/12

- Lecture “Constitutions, Rights, and Civil Society” FL

WEEKS ELEVEN AND TWELVE: FIGHTING FOR A GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Martin Luther King, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” (1963). Available at
http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

Antigone. <http://classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/antigone.html>

3/26/12

- Lecture
 - “The Compassionate Fight” FL

3/27/12

- **Essay 2 Due (upload to Sakai)**

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3/28/12

- Lecture
 - “Compassion and Imagination” FL
- **Assignment Due:**
 - **Hard copy of Essay 2 (Turn in at start of class)**

4/2/12

- Lecture
 - “Wisdom and Waiting” BS

4/4/12

- Lecture
 - “The Power of Words” BS

Pillar Reading:

Carlos Fuentes, “How I Started to Write,” in *The Art of the Personal Essay*, ed. P. Lopate, (NY: Anchor/Doubleday, 1994); 432-453.

WEEK THIRTEEN: SHARING A GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Love poems from Indian literature, c. 5th century CE (one page; includes poems from W.S. Merwin and J. Moussaieff Masson, *Sanskrit Love Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 95 and 171

There will be an introductory piece introducing these readings and raising questions

1. Love poems from Indian literature, c. 5th century CE

2. Guido Guinizelli's manifesto of love

<http://www.elfinspell.com/GuidoGuinizelliPoems.html>

3. Selections from the *Song of Songs*. <http://www.hebrewsongs.com/songofsongs.htm>

4. Plato, *Symposium* 210a-212b (Diotima's Ladder of Love).

<http://www.mesacc.edu/~yount/text/plato-ladder.html>

Pillar Reading:

Jeanette Winterson, “Art Objects” from *Art Objects*, (NY, Knopf, 1997); 3-24.

Muriel Barbery, “Journal of the Movement of the World No. 4” from *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*, trans. by A. Anderson, (New York, Europa editions, 2006); 184-185.

Selections from the writing of Laurie Patton.

4/9/12

- Lecture “Love: The Universal Theme” BS

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4/12/12

- Lecture “Ideas of Love in the Poetry of Laurie Patton” FL
- **Assignment**
 - **Topic for analytic essay chosen (upload to Sakai)**

WEEK FOURTEEN: QUESTIONING THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway Reading:

Henry Thoreau, “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For” and “Conclusion,” from *Walden*.

Available online at the following addresses:

<http://thoreau.eserver.org/walden02.html>

<http://thoreau.eserver.org/walden18.html>

4/16/12

- Lecture
 - “Solitude and Society” BS

4/18/12

- Lecture
 - “Solitude and Leadership” BS
- **Assignment Due**
 - **First draft of analytical essay due in lecture (hardcopy) to be distributed for peer review.**

Pillar Reading:

Charles Ives, “Thoreau” from *Essays before a Sonata*, (NY: W.W. Norton, 1969); 51-69.

William Deresiewicz, “Solitude and Leadership” from *The American Scholar*, Spring 2010, Vol. 79. No. 2; 20-31.

WEEK FIFTEEN: PERPETUATING THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway Reading:

Chapter Two of Barbara Stoler Miller, trans. *The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War* (New York: Bantam Classics, 1986), 31-41.

4/23/12

- Lecture
 - “Identity and Infinity” BS

4/25/12

- Lecture
 - “Rituals of Remembrance/The Good Life in Action” BS/ FL

Pillar Reading:

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E.B. White, "Once More to the Lake" in *Essays of E.B. White*, (NY: Harper, 1977); 246-253.
Philip Roth, "Femme Fatale" in *Anne Frank: Reflections on her Life and Legacy*, ed. Enzer and Solotaroff-Enzer, (Urban, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000); 229-243.

FINAL EXAM (May 3, 2012; 7:30-9:30 am) Please note: The exam must be taken during scheduled exam time, with no exceptions.

***Gateway readings are required weekly readings. Pillar readings are texts chosen by the instructors as reference materials for lectures and discussions. It is essential that students remain current with all gateway readings. Pillar readings will be assigned from week to week.**