

**IDS2935: What is the Good Life [Fall 2010]**  
**M, W period 8 (3:00-3:50), plus 1 discussion section/week**  
**Turlington, room 007**

**Professors: Christopher Silver (College of Design, Construction and Planning),  
Brenda Smith (School of Music), Victoria L. Rovine (School of Art and Art History)**

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Office hours: to be announced in sections

Course web site: <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/humanities/goodlife/index.html>

### **Introduction**

Through a close examination of relevant works of art, music, literature, history, religion, and philosophy, students will consider the basic question, “What is the Good Life?” 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.

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 a 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?” It contains elements such as the gateway readings, museum exhibits, and performances that are common to the several sections being taught this semester. The lectures, discussion sections, and other readings are specific to your section of this course.

### **Common Activities**

This course includes special exhibits at the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, a musical performance, and a lecture by a distinguished scholar. We will discuss how these events fit into the larger themes of the course throughout the semester. More information on them can be found at the What is the Good Life Course Website

<http://www.aa.ufl.edu/humanities/goodlife/index.html>

### **Assignments**

One exam (finals week December 13, 3:00-5:00)

1 long essay, 1000 words each (due in sections week 13)

2 short essays, 500 words each (due in sections weeks 4, 12)

## Other Policies, Rules, and Resources

1. *Handing in Assignments:* Assignments due in class should be handed directly to your TA. Please also keep a dated electronic copy of all your papers.
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 ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
3. *Attendance and Participation:* Class attendance is required. Do not register for this class if you cannot arrive on time. Students should arrive on time and prepared to discuss the day's readings. 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 instructors will *not* excuse absences, provide notes, or discuss material that has already been covered, barring extraordinary circumstances.
5. *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.

## Grade Information

| Grade Proportion               | Grade Scale | Grade Value |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 long Essay: 25%              | 100-93=A    | A=4.0       |
| 2 Brief Essays: 15% each = 30% | 92-90=A-    | A-=3.67     |
| Final Exam: 25%                | 89-86=B+    | B+=3.33     |
| Participation Grade: 20%       | 85-82=B     | B=3.00      |
|                                | 81-79=B-    | B-=2.67     |
|                                | 78-75=C+    | C+=2.33     |
|                                | 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      |

## General Education Requirement

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 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 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.

### **Gordon Rule Requirement**

This course is categorized as 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.

The assignments due in sections on weeks 4, 12, and 14 will satisfy this Gordon Rule requirement, which means that students will be provided feedback on that written work before the last class meeting of the semester. These assignments will be assessed using a standard rubric that shall evaluate content, organization and coherence, argument and supporting evidence, and the style of writing.

Please keep in mind that in order to secure E2 Gordon Rule credit for this course, students 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.

### **Academic Honesty**

All students must conform to UF's honesty policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, and the use of copyrighted materials, which you can find at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>. Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted to the full extent of the UF honesty policy.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Schedule of Courses and Readings (\*gateway readings marked with asterisk)**

**Unless otherwise noted, all readings available on ARES Online Reserve.** (Access the system at [www.uflib.ufl.edu](http://www.uflib.ufl.edu) click on “Course Reserves.” Sign up for an account.)

**[The lead professor for each week’s lectures is noted in brackets.]**

**Week One (August 23 and August 25) Introducing What Is The Good Life**

**Week Two (August 30 and September 1 lectures): Thinking About the Good Life**

**[Prof. Smith]**

\*1. Wendell Berry, “The Way of Ignorance,” from, *The Way of Ignorance* (Berkeley, CA: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2005), 53-67.

\*2. 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.

\*3. Dominik Wujastyk, ed. and trans. *The Roots of Ayurveda* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 61-70.

4. Leo Tolstoy, “After the Ball,” from *The Death of Ivan Ilyich and other stories*, trans. by Wilks, et. al., (New York, NY: Penquin Classics, 2008); 219-233.

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

6. Edna St. Vincent Millay, “On Hearing A Symphony of Beethoven” from *The Buck in the Snow in Collected Poems: Edna St. Vincent Millay*, (New York, NY: Harper& Row, 1956); 629.

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

Enhancement Material: Kerry Oliver Smith (Curator of Contemporary Art, Harn Museum “Contemporary Latin American Art: Notions of Paradise and the Ideal World”

**Week Three (September 8 lecture): Seeking a Good Life [Prof. Smith]**

\*1. Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha* (1922) . Available for free as an e-Gutenberg text at the following address: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2500/2500-8.txt>

2. Peter J. Gomes, “Living for Goodness’ Sake”, Chap. 3 from *The Good Life* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 2003);49-69.

3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rlsZfce8jU> The National Geographic: Inside Mecca Part I (Pilgrimage)

Enhancement material: Video re: Paul Basler’s *Missa Kenya*, a work composed for the University Choir, School of Music, University of Florida, 1995.

**Week Four (September 13, September 15 lectures): Celebrating a Good Life**

**[Prof. Rovine]**

**\*\*Short Essay #1** due in sections

1. Emily Grosholz, “On Necklaces,” *The Prairie Schooner*, 81 #2 (Summer 2007): 182-195.

2. Manthia Diawara, “The Song of the Griot,” *Transition*, #74 (1997): 16-30.

3. Stephen Wooten, “Antelope Headdresses and Champion Farmers,” *African Arts* 33 #2 (2000): 18-33.

Enhancement Material: Kole Odotola, Dept. of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, “Life is like a Dance”

**Week Five (September 20 & September 22 lectures): Constructing the Good Life [Prof. Silver]**

- \*1. Kathleen Cox, "The Power of Space," from *The Power of Vastu Living* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 3-26.
  - \*2. Allison Arieff, "Opinionator: A Breath of Fresh Air for Health Care," from the *New York Times*, 13 December 2009. Available online at the following address:  
<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/12/13/a-breath-of-fresh-air-for-health-care/>
  - 3. Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* (1898, reprint MIT Press, 1965), pp. 50-57
  - 4. Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations and Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961), pp. 543-560.
- Enhancement Materials: Meg Portillo, Interior Design Dept., "Gift of the Senses: Living the Good Life in Living Color, A Design Perspective"  
Vandana Baweja, School of Architecture, "Mughal Gardens"

**Week Six (September 27 & September 29 lectures): Embodying a Good Life [Prof. Silver]**

- \*1. Sandra Steingraber, *Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 14-30.
- \*2. 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>
- 3. Frederick Law Olmsted, *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (original 1852, Library of American Landscape History, 2002), pp. 86-96.

**Week Seven (October 4 & October 6 lectures): Owning the Good Life [Prof. Rovine]**

- \*1. Michael Kimmelman, "Who Draws the Borders of Culture? Greece's claim for the Elgin marbles is as much about nationalism as about art," from the *New York Times*, 4 May 2010. Available online: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/09/arts/09abroad.html>
- 2. Alexandra Jacobs, "Happy Feet," *The New Yorker* (Sept. 14, 2009)
- 3. Monica Udvardy, Linda Giles, John Mitsanze, "The Transatlantic Trade in African Ancestors," *American Anthropologist* vol 105 #3 (2003): 566-580.

**Week Eight (October 11 & October 13 lectures): Sustaining the Good Life [Prof. Rovine]**

- \*1. Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic," from *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 201-226.
- 2. Geraldine Brooks, "The Painted Desert," *The New Yorker* 79 #20 (7/28/03): 60-67.
- 3. Wangari Maathai, "A People Without Culture Feel Insecure," *New African* #438 (March 2005): 36-38.

Enhancement Material: Peggy Carr, Dept. of Landscape Architecture, "Green Infrastructure to Support Humanity"

**Week Nine (October 18 & October 20 lectures): Governing the Good Life [Prof. Silver]**

**October 18:** Guest presentation by Latif Bolat, Turkish musician

- \*1. Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogues," from Richard Crawley, trans., *The History of the Peloponnesian War* (London: Everyman Press, 1993), 288-295.
- 2. Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999), p. 146-159.

Oct 18 **\*\*Special event:** Latif Bolat, Turkish music, 7:30 pm, University Auditorium\*\*

**Week Ten (October 25 & October 27 lectures): Fighting for a Good Life [Prof. Silver]**

- \*1. Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," (1963). Available online at the University of Pennsylvania's African Studies Center at the following address:  
[http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html)
- \*2. Pablo Neruda's 1971 Nobel Lecture, "Towards the Splendid City." Available online at the following address:  
[http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1971/neruda-lecture-e.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1971/neruda-lecture-e.html)
- 3. Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Tales from Djakarta: Caricatures of Circumstances and Their Human Beings* (original 1963, reprinted 2000), p. 3-22.

**Week Eleven (November 1 & November 3 lectures): Sharing a Good Life [Prof. Rovine]**

- \*1. Caroline Knapp, "The Color of Joy," from *Pack of Two: the Intricate Bond Between People and Dogs* (New York: Random House, 1999), 3-16.
- \*2. Martin Buber, "The Way of Man According to the Teachings of Hasidism," from Maurice Friedman, trans., *Hasidism and the Modern Man* (New York: Horizon, 1958). Reprinted in Charles Guignon, ed. *The Good Life* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publications, 1999), 288-293.
- \*3. Love poems from Indian literature, c. 5<sup>th</sup> century CE (1 page; includes poems from Merwin, W. S., and J. Moussaieff Masson, *Sanskrit Love Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 95 and 171; and Greg Bailey and Richard Gombrich, *Love Lyrics by Amaru, Bhartrhari and Bilhana* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 97, 131.
- 4. Ariel Levy, "The Lesbian Bride's Handbook," *New York* 40 #15 (April 30, 2007): 50-54.

**\*\*Special event:** Lecture by Dr Nalini Nadkarni, November 3 at 8 p.m. in the Reitz Ballroom \*\*

**Week Twelve (November 8 & November 10 lectures): Questioning the Good Life [Prof. Smith]**

**\*\*Short Essay #2** due in sections

- \*1. Henry Thoreau, "Where I Lived, and What I Lived for," "The Pond in Winter," and "Conclusion," from *Walden*. Available online at the following addresses:  
<http://thoreau.eserver.org/walden02.html> <http://thoreau.eserver.org/walden16.html>  
<http://thoreau.eserver.org/walden18.html>
- \*2. Selection of verses from Sanskrit literature Greg Bailey and Richard Gombrich, *Love Lyrics by Amaru, Bhartrhari and Bilhana* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 149.
- 3. Charles Ives, "Thoreau" from *Essays before a Sonata*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1969); 51-69.
- 4. Edward Hoagland, "About H.D. Thoreau" from *Balancing Acts: Essays by Edward Hoagland*, (New York, NY: Simon&Schuster,1992); 157-166.
- 5. Jacques Barzun "Toward a Fateful Serenity," (1990) from *A Jacques Barzun Reader*, ed. M. Murray, (New York, HarperCollins, 2002); 3-11.
- 6. Wiliam Deresiewicz, "Solitude and Leadership" from *The American Scholar*, Spring 2010, Vol. 79. No. 2; 20-31.

**Week Thirteen (November 15 & November 17 lectures): Creating a Good Life [Prof. Smith] \*\*Long Essay** due in sections

- 1. Aaron Copland "Music and the Human Spirit (1954) from *Aaron Copland: A Reader, Selected readings 1923-1972*, ed. by R. Kostelatz (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004); 26-32.
- 2. William Shakespeare, Sonnet 128 in *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* by Helen Vendler, (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); 543-548.

3. Jeanette Winterson, "Art Objects" from *Art Objects*, (New York, Knopf, 1997) ; 3-24.
4. Carlos Fuentes, "How I Started to Write," in *The Art of the Personal Essay*, ed. P. Lopate, ((New York, NY: Anchor/Doubleday, 1994); 432-453.
5. 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.

**Week Fourteen (November 22 & 24 lectures) [Prof. Silver]**

1. David C. Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ Press, 1991), "Mount Auburn and the Rural Cemetery Movement," :44-64
2. Life and Death in Tana Toraja in [www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/travel/narrative\\_travel\\_writing/life\\_and\\_death\\_in\\_tana\\_toraja\\_indonesia.shtml](http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/travel/narrative_travel_writing/life_and_death_in_tana_toraja_indonesia.shtml)

**Week Fifteen (November 29 & December 1 lectures): Ending the Good Life [Prof. Rovine & Prof. Smith]**

- \*1. Thomas Nagel, "Death," from John Martin Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Death* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 61-70.
- \*2. Chapter Two of Barbara Stoler Miller, trans. *The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War* (New York: Bantam Classics, 1986), 31-41.
3. Emily Dickinson, Poems #516, 712, 715, 1695, in *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. T. Johnson, (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1960) 252, 350, 351, 691.
4. E.B. White, "Once More to the Lake" in *Essays of E.B. White*, (New York, NY: Harper, 1977); 246-253.
5. 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.
6. Kwame Anthony Appiah preface and epilogue *In My Father's House* (Oxford University Press, 1992).

Enhancement Materials: Victoria L. Rovine, School of Art and Art History, "Art, Life, Death in the Ashanti Kingdom (Ghana)"

**Week Sixteen (December 6 & 8 lectures) Teaching the Good Life**

1. Christopher Silver, "Urban Village to World City: Re-planning Jakarta in the 1990s." in *Planning the Megacity: Jakarta in the Twentieth Century* (Abingdon, Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge, 2008), pp. 186-211.
2. Brenda Smith, "The Nature of the Amateur Singer" in *Choral Pedagogy*, 2nd ed. by Brenda Smith and Robert T. Sataloff, (San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing, Inc., 2006) 4-6.
3. Victoria L. Rovine, "Working the Edge: XULY.Bët's Recycled Clothing," in *Old Clothes, New Looks: Second-hand Fashion*. Edited by Alexandra Palmer and Hazel Clark. (Oxford: Berg, 2004): 215-228.

**Final exam:** December 13<sup>th</sup> 3:00-5:00