

## **HUM2305: What is the Good Life? (FALL 2011)**

Lecture: MW 4 (Monday, Wednesday 10:40 – 11:30 am)  
Room: LIT (Little Hall) 109

Discussion Sections, Meeting Times, and Rooms:

011C: Friday 3, Matherly 118  
011D: Thursday 4, Matherly 9  
011E: Friday 4, RNK 210  
011F: Friday 4, WEIM 1094  
011G: Thursday 6, CBD 210  
011H: Thursday 5, FLI 109  
012B: Wednesday 5, MCCA 2186  
013G: Thursday 5, Turlington 2353  
013H: Friday 6, MCCA 1142

### INSTRUCTOR

Travis L. Smith, Department of Religion ([tlsmith@ufl.edu](mailto:tlsmith@ufl.edu))  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-5pm, Anderson 008, **or by appointment**  
Office Phone: (352) 273-2941

### TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Khadidja Arfi ([karfi@ufl.edu](mailto:karfi@ufl.edu))  
Office Hours: Friday 11:45 am – 12:35 pm, Pugh Hall 310

Forrest Eddleton ([fke@ufl.edu](mailto:fke@ufl.edu))  
Office Hours: Thursday 10:30 - 11:30, office TBA

Kirk Walker ([kwwalker@ufl.edu](mailto:kwwalker@ufl.edu))  
Office Hours: Wednesday 11:45 am – 12:35 pm, office TBA

## 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>  
Course materials for Fall 2011 available on Sakai at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>

## 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.

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.

## 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 (AnDa Union, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm), visiting the Harn Museum (cell phone tour available between September 1 and October 31, 2011), and participating in a Humanities lecture. More information on these activities can be found at the course Sakai site.

## TEXTS

Doniger, Wendy and Sudhir Kakar, trans. *The Kamasutra* (Oxford, 2003).

Miller, Barbara S., trans. *The Bhagavad Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War* (Bantam, 2004).

Narayan, R.K. *The Ramayana: A Shortened Modern Prose Version of the Indian Epic* (Penguin, 2008).

Narayan, R.K. *The Mahabharata: A Shortened Modern Prose Version of the Indian Epic* (University of Chicago, 2000).

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

### **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 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 Tuesday, September 27, 2011, by noon. Submit via Sakai. Topic: 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 Tuesday, November 1, 2011, by noon. Submit via Sakai. Topic: Writing about one or more of the three events experienced outside of class (the

performance, 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. (10% of course grade)

3. One 1000-word essay on the question: What is the Cost of the Good Life? The first draft of the paper is due in Week 13 in your discussion section (November 16, 17, or 18, 2011). Please submit two copies, one for the instructors and one to be distributed to the student reviewer for a peer review. Instructions for peer review will be provided in advance. Completed peer reviews are due in discussion sections in Week 15 (November 30, December 1 or 2). Student reviewers must submit two copies of the reviewed paper, one for the instructor and one for the student author. The final draft is submitted via Sakai by noon on Tuesday, December 6, 2011. Please note: If you do not complete your peer review in a punctual and satisfactory manner, you will not receive a grade for your own paper. (20% of course grade total for draft, final, and peer reviewing)
4. A one-hour Midterm Exam in lecture class on October 12, 2011. (20% of the course grade)
5. A one-hour Final Exam on university assigned exam schedule. (20% of course grade)
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 instructors 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 20%	100-93=A	A=4.0
First Short Essay 10%	92-90=A-	A-=3.67
Second Short Essay 10 %	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/drp/>). 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 TA. If you cannot attend class on the date due, or if papers are due on a date when there is no class, please turn papers in to INSTRUCTOR'S NAME mailbox in the ACADEMIC UNIT Department office, ADDRESS. DO NOT slip papers under an office door. 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 1/3 grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
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.
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 TAs 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 GATEWAYS

### WEEK ONE: THINKING ABOUT THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

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

**M 8/22** No Reading – course introduction

**W 8/24** Sung, *Fivefold Happiness*  
Wujastyk, *Roots of Ayurveda*

**Discussion** Introductions

### 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.

**Pillar:**

Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (Grove Press, 1974).

"Yama's Instructions to Naciketas" in Fiser and Powers, eds. *Scriptures of the East* (McGraw-Hill, 2004), pp. 22-25.

**M 8/29** Taylor, "Happiness"  
Yama's Instructions to Naciketas

**W 8/31** Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, chapter 1 (pp. 1-11)

**Discussion** Happiness, pleasure and beyond  
**Harn Museum cell phone tour opens 9/1**

### WEEKS THREE AND FOUR: SEEKING A GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha* (1922). <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2500/2500-8.txt>

**Pillar:**

Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*.

- M 9/5**            **NO CLASS: Labor Day**
- W 9/7**            Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, chapters 2-5 (pp. 12-36)
- Discussion**      The Four Noble Truths
- M 9/12**           Hesse, *Siddhartha*
- W 9/14**           Hesse, *Siddhartha*
- Discussion**      The Buddha, Siddhartha and the seeking life

### WEEK FIVE: CELEBRATING A GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Brenda Smith, Multimedia Lecture on “Leonard Bernstein, Music and the Celebration of Life.”

Abraham Joshua Heschel, “A Palace in Time,” Chapter One from his *The Sabbath* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 12-25.

**Pillar:**

Wendy Doniger and Sudhir Kakar, trans. *The Kamasutra* (Oxford, 2003).

- M 9/19**            *Kamasutra*, Book One (pp. 3-27)  
B. Smith, Multimedia lecture
- W 9/21**            Heschel, “A Palace in Time”
- Discussion**      Cultivating and celebrating pleasure

### 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:**

Doniger and Kakar, trans. *Kamasutra*.

**M 9/26** Prager, “Our Barbies Ourselves”  
*Kamasutra*, Book Six, chapters 1-3 (pp. 131-147)

**Essay One Due Tuesday 9/27 at noon**

**W 9/28** Skloot, *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*  
*Kamasutra*, Book Six, chapters 4-6 (pp. 147-160)

**Discussion** Bodies

**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.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/](http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/ngurrara_the_great_sandy_desert_canvas/about_the_canvas/)

**Pillar:**

Doniger and Kakar, trans. *Kamasutra*.

**M 10/3** *Kamasutra*, Books Four and Five (pp. 94-130)

**W 10/5** **Guest lecturer: TBA**  
Brooks, “The Painted Desert”

**Discussion** “To have and to hold”

**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.

<http://home.btconnect.com/tipiglen/landethic.html>

<http://www.aldoleopold.org/about/LandEthic.pdf>

**M 10/10** Leopold, "The Land Ethic"

**W 10/12** **In-class Midterm Exam**

**Discussion** The Land Ethic

### WEEK NINE: CONSTRUCTING THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Margaret Carr, Multimedia lecture on UF's "The Plaza of the Americas."

**Pillar:**

Film: *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968)

**M 10/17** *Once Upon a Time in the West*

**W 10/19** **Guest lecturer: Forrest Eddleton**  
Carr, "The Plaza of the Americas."

**Discussion** Space and place

### WEEK TEN: GOVERNING THE GOOD LIFE

Gateway:

Sherman A. Jackson, "What is Shariah and Why Does It Matter?"

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sherman-a-jackson/what-is-shariah-and-why-d\\_b\\_710976.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sherman-a-jackson/what-is-shariah-and-why-d_b_710976.html)

Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/rightsof.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp)

**Pillar:**

R.K. Narayan, *The Ramayana: A Shortened Modern Prose Version of the Indian Epic* (Penguin, 2008).

**M 10/24** Narayan, *Ramayana*  
Jackson, "What is Shariah and Why Does It Matter?"

**W 10/26** Narayan, *Ramayana*  
Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen

**Discussion** Ideals of governance and kingship

### **WEEKS ELEVEN AND TWELVE: FIGHTING FOR A GOOD LIFE**

Gateway:

Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," (1963).

[http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html)

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

**Pillar:**

R.K. Narayan, *The Mahabharata: A Shortened Modern Prose Version of the Indian Epic* (University of Chicago, 2000).

**M 10/31** *Antigone*

**Essay Two Due Tuesday, 11/1 at noon**

**W 11/2** Narayan, *Mahabharata*, chapters 1-6 (pp. 1-46)  
**Friday no section meetings**

**Discussion** Righteousness and War

**M 11/7** Narayan, *Mahabharata*, chapters 7-11 (pp. 55-111)

**W 11/9** Narayan, *Mahabharata*, chapters 12-16 and Epilogue (pp. 121-179)  
King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

**Discussion** Mahabharata  
**Friday no section meetings**

### **WEEK THIRTEEN: SHARING A GOOD LIFE**

Gateway:

Guido Guinizelli's Manifesto of Love. <http://www.elfinspell.com/GuidoGuinizelliPoems.html>

Song of Songs. <http://www.hebrewsongs.com/songofsongs.htm>

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

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

**Pillar:**

Film: *Sant Tukaram* (1936)

Plato, *Republic*, excerpts from Book IX

**M 11/14** Guido Guinizelli's Manifesto of Love  
Song of Songs  
Film: "Tukaram" (via YouTube)

**W 11/16** **Guest lecturer: Kirk Walker**

Plato, *Symposium* 210a-212b (Diotima's Ladder of Love)  
Plato, *Republic*, excerpts from Book IX

**Discussion** Love, Human and Divine

**WEEK FOURTEEN: QUESTIONING THE GOOD LIFE**

Gateway:

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>

**Pillar:**

Barbara Stoler Miller, trans., *The Bhavavad Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War* (Bantam, 2004).

**M 11/21** **Guest lecturer: Khadidja Arfi**  
Thoreau, *Walden* selections

**W 11/23** **First draft of analytical essay due on Sakai; will be distributed for peer review.**

Miller, *Bhagavad-Gita*, Introduction and Afterword (pp. 1-14; 147-154)

**Discussion** **No section meetings**

**WEEKS FIFTEEN AND SIXTEEN: PERPETUATING THE GOOD LIFE**

Gateway:

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

**Pillar:**

Miller, trans. *The Bhagavad-Gita*.

**M 11/28** Miller, *Bhagavad-Gita*, chapters 1-3 (pp. 23-49)

**W 11/30** Miller, *Bhagavad-Gita*, chapters 4-6 (pp. 51-72)

**Discussion** The three yogas of the Gita

**M 12/5** Miller, *Bhagavad-Gita*, chapters 9-11, 18 (pp. 85-108; 135-146)

**Essay Three (Analytical Essay) due Tuesday, 12/6 at noon**

**W 12/7** Final Exam review

**Discussion** No section meetings

**FINAL EXAM (DATE/PLACE according to UF Exam Schedule)**

**Please note: The exam must be taken during scheduled exam time, with no exceptions.**