The Human Event (272)

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Hours: Wed/Fri 12.00-1.30

Catalog Course Description

The Human Event is an intensive, interdisciplinary seminar focusing on key social and intellectual currents in the development of humanity in its diversity. Students examine human thought and imagination from various perspectives, including philosophy, history, literature, religion, science, and art. Coursework emphasizes critical thinking, discussion, and argumentative writing. Exploring texts from approximately 1600 to the present, HON 272 is the second half of a two-semester sequence that starts with HON 171.

Course Objectives:
1. To improve the student’s ability to reason critically and communicate clearly.
2. To cultivate the student’s ability to engage in intellectual discourse through reading, writing, and discussion.
3. To broaden the student’s historical and cultural awareness and understanding.
4. To deepen awareness of the diversity of human societies and cultures.
5. To instill intellectual breadth and academic discipline in preparation for more advanced study.

Section-specific description and objectives

This course is a chronologically organized seminar course that looks at the intellectual history of the West, and other cultures, from 1650 CE until the present. The aim of the course is to stretch and strengthen your ability to analyze, draw connections to themes, and understand the historical narrative of these great works. Students are expected to be able to prove these abilities both verbally and in written work.

This should be primarily demonstrated through increasing competency in argumentative essay writing, with the use of appropriate academic conventions, and through depth reading and verbal discussion in the seminar classes.

The core themes we will encounter this semester are:
- How should we relate to others?
- What effect does technology play in creating a better world; and is this actually “progress”?
- What structural issues surround racial and religious conflict?
- What are human rights?
- What social and philosophical themes are explored through literature? What kinds of insights can we derive from these explorations?

This class is enabled through Blackboard so be alert to updates to the calendar below, including
specific chapters assigned for each week, online readings and other content.

List of Texts

You must have the following texts for this class. Please buy the version indicated as class members having editions with out-of-sync page numbers makes our discussions more difficult.


Other readings will be made available through Blackboard as PDFs or as links to online sites. You may use tablets, phones (although they are not my preference) or print the readings out. Please don’t use laptops as the screens act as a barrier to conversation. If you use a phone and you text during class I will bar you from using a phone for the rest of semester.

Requirements and Grade Breakdown

The final grade is assessed as follows:
40% (10% class facilitation assignment 30% general participation)
10% (Online quizzes)
50% (Formal Papers: Paper 1 = 10%, Paper 2= 20%, Paper 3= 20%)

Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98.0-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>80.0 - 83.9</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>93.0 – 97.9</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>90.0 - 92.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>70.0 - 76.9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>87.0 - 89.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>84.0 - 86.9</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>0 -59.9</td>
<td>E</td>
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Papers

The writing assignments for this course are formal papers of between 1200-1700 words in length each. The questions will be given out approximately two weeks prior to the due date. Formal writing consists of essay responses to specific questions. These questions are meant to be answered with clear and cogent arguments overarched by a clear thesis statement. They are not ‘prompts’ designed to let you go off on any tangent you feel like. Overly discursive writing that does not address the question specifically will be returned to you without a grade and is considered late work. All formal writing must be cited using the citation system detailed in the ‘citation guide’ provided online. If a citation is not covered in the guide, use the Harvard style of
citations. All papers are due by 5pm on their due date through Blackboard Safe Assign. Hard copies are also required except for the final paper. The hard copies should be turned in outside of my office door in the marked box, also by 5pm. Late work is penalized by a grade letter per day and is not accepted (0) after the third day (72 hours). The percentage of the grade allotted to papers may be divided into more than one component e.g. re-writes or reflections and/or extra credit MAY be offered in certain assignments.

**Participation**

The Human Event aims to develop critical thinking and mature writing skills. Taught in seminar style, this honors course is an intensive reading, writing, and discussion experience. Active student participation in each class, therefore, is absolutely essential. The participation grade is judged both on **frequency and quality** of class contributions. If you do not actively participate in each class, you cannot achieve an A for this component. Participation is your responsibility, take it and speak up, contribute to your break-out groups and use the opportunities for presentation.

Things that will raise your participation grade are as follows:

- Preparing notes for each class and bringing your text to class.
- Speaking up.
- Connecting previous readings to current ones.
- Asking questions and engaging other students.
- Being respectful of the classroom, the discussion, your instructor and your fellow students’ opinions.

Things that will lower your participation grade are as follows:

- Failure to bring your text to class.
- Use of phones or laptops.
- Sleeping or lack of focus.
- Chattering or having side conversations that are not invited by the instructor.
- Over-dominating discussion.
- Negative or defensive body language.

30% of the participation grade is graded on a four-point scale in every class where there is a reasonable opportunity for you to participate. This will likely include any class where any type of discussion or presentation is held, but none where writing workshops or movies are part of the class plan. Good participation (4/4) includes meeting all of the above positive criteria and none of the negative. Average participation (3/4) includes meeting some of both category or meeting only some of the positive criteria. Poor (2/4) participation includes meeting none of the positive and none of the negative criteria or meeting more negative criteria than positive. Absences will score 1/4.

10% of the participation grade is for a class facilitation assignment. You will do one assignment in the semester where you will sign up (in a group or pair) to lead the class in discussion (10 classes total). In consultation with the professor you will develop an outline lesson plan, i.e. a time breakdown, and a series of discussion questions or group exercises. This lesson plan will be
due by 11pm Monday for a Wednesday class or 11pm Wednesday for a Friday class. Email this to me. Failure to email a plan will result in a grade penalty of 10% for this component.

Quizzes

Other graded work will consist of ten quizzes on the week’s readings (10 points each – lowest score is dropped). If you prepare for class by reading and note-making, you will need to perform minimal extra preparation for this component. These will be due at midnight the night before the class they are due through Blackboard. Late submissions will receive a 0 for these components. Quizzes are marked below with a %. Please add them to your schedule and check Blackboard regularly.

Attendance

You are allowed 2 excused or unexcused absences per semester. Further absences will affect your overall grade in the class, by a grade letter per absence. If you are absent 6 times (or more) you will fail. Please discuss conflicts with me in advance as a courtesy. Excessive tardiness will be noted as an absence.

Writing Center

The Barrett Writing Center is available to assist Barrett Honors College students with their papers for all their classes. Directed by BHC faculty and staffed by BHC writing tutors who themselves have completed both HON 171 and 272, the Barrett Writing Center offers individual tutoring on writing papers for the Human Event and your other courses. Its goal is to help you improve your lifelong writing and critical thinking skills, so please take advantage of its services.

I recommend consulting with this syllabus and making appointments well in advance of the due dates of papers.

For more information, go to the BWC website: http://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/barrett-writing-center/

Student Conduct and Academic Regulations

Students must conduct themselves according to the ASU policies posted online at http://www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial. These include the ASU Student Code of Conduct and the Student Academic Integrity Policy. For information on BHC policies for grievances and grade complaints, go to the BHC web page at http://honors.asu.edu and follow the links for Prospective and Current Students, then Advising and Honors Curriculum, then Academic Advising Office, then Student Academic Grievance Procedures.

Academic integrity is essential to all values upon which a university is founded. A student with a documented case of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism or cheating) in an honors class will receive the grade of E for the course. Ask questions if you are unsure of how to cite others’ work. All work is electronically scanned through plagiarism software.
Multiculturalism Statement

Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University, is committed to creating a multicultural learning environment, which is broadly defined as a place where human cultural diversity is valued and respected. Barrett courses integrate multicultural and diversity issues in ways that are designed to enhance students’ honors experience and promote learning goals. We hope that our students will contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by respecting others’ identities and personal life histories and by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity as appropriate to individual course content.

Additional Notes:

The instructor reserves the right to modify the course calendar during the semester. The student agrees to this by registering and remaining in the course. Classes should not be recorded unless you have a disability statement that indicates it is necessary.

Calendar and Reading Assignments – will be changed according to semester’s dates

Please note that when “page range” is noted this is a minimum reading requirement. You may need to read beyond this to effectively answer certain essay questions. Expect to read novels in full and expect they may take you longer than a couple of days to do. Plan your time. * Indicates a student-led class. % Indicates an online quiz on this material due 11.59pm the night before.

Week 1 – 11/13 January
i) Introduction.
ii) The Reasonable Mind* %
   o Descartes. “I think, therefore I am…” TPER 181
   o Kant. “What is Enlightenment?” TPER 1
   o Locke. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding TPER 185
   o Hume. A Treatise of Human Nature TPER 195

Week 2 – 18/20 January
i) Savages, Slaves, and the Other Races* %
   o Diderot. “Who Are You, Then, to Make Slaves…” TPER 640
   o Diderot. “Enjoyment and Tahiti.” TPER 265
   o Paine. “African Slavery in America.” TPER 645
   o Gibbon. “Of Empires and Savages.” TPER 649
   o Woolman. “Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes.” TPER 630
   o Kant. “The Difference between the Races.” TPER 637

ii) The State and the Citizen * %
   o “The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen.” TPER 466
   o Rousseau “The Social Contract.” TPER 430
   o Smith, “The Wealth of Nations” TPER 505
The Bill of Rights PDF

**Week 3 - 25/27 January**

i) Grimm’s Fairy Tales %
   - Introduction
   - The Cat and the Mouse Set up the House
   - The Girl with no Hands
   - Hans-my-hedgehog
   - The Juniper Tree
   - Red Riding Hood
   - Rapunzel
   - The Golden Bird

   ii) Schubert/Muller Winterreise PDF and audio

**Week 4 1/3 February**

i) Schubert/Muller Winterreise PDF and audio*

ii) Communist Manifesto PDF %

**Week 5 - 8/10 February**

**Paper 1 Due 9 February 5pm**

i) Writing Workshop
ii) Metropolis (watch film on YouTube or rent DVD)

**Week 6 – 15/17 February**

i) Brave New World Ch 1-8*
ii) Brave New World Ch 9-end %

**Week 7 – 22/24 February**

i) Light in August
ii) Light in August

**Week 8 – 1/3 March**

i) Light in August* %
ii) No Class

**Week 9 -6/10 March**

i) No Class - Spring Break
ii) No Class – Spring Break

**Week 10 – 15/17 March**

i) The Origins of Totalitarianism PDF %
ii) Short story selection Philip K. Dick* PDF
Week 1 – 22/24 March

i) The Sea The Sea
ii) The Sea The Sea

Week 2 – 29 March/31 March

**Paper 2 Due 28 March 5pm**

i) The Sea The Sea* %
ii) Donna Haraway “A Cyborg Manifesto” PDF

Week 3 – 5/7 April

i) No Class Professor at Conference
ii) No Class Professor at Conference

Week 4 – 12/14 April

i) The Complete Maus
ii) The Complete Maus* %

Week 5 – 19/21 April

i) Ex Machina
ii) Ex Machina*

Week 6 – 26/28 April

i) Writing Workshop
ii) Final Class

**FINAL PAPER DUE May 3rd 5pm**