

The Human Event
HON 272
Dr. Michael Stanford

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 C.E. to the present, HON 272 is the second half of a two-semester sequence that begins with HON 171.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To improve the student’s ability to reason critically and communicate clearly.
- To cultivate the student’s ability to engage in intellectual discourse through reading, writing, and discussion.
- To broaden the student’s historical and cultural awareness and understanding.
- To deepen awareness of the diversity of human societies and cultures.
- To instill intellectual breadth and academic discipline in preparation for more advanced study.
- To acquaint the student with enduring masterpieces of thought and art—what one literary critic called “the best that has been thought and said in the world.”

REQUIRED TEXTS

Puchner, et. al., eds., *Norton Anthology of World Literature*, Shorter Third Edition, vol. 2 (Norton)
Knoebl, ed., *Classics of Western Thought*, Fourth Edition, vol. 3 (Wadsworth)

These texts are available at the ASU Bookstore. You are required to have them in printed book form—not in versions downloaded to an e-reader.

GRADING

Final grades will be calculated according to these percentages:

First Essay	15%
Second Essay	15%
Third Essay	20%
Class participation	35%
Quizzes	15%

I use the following rubric when assigning final grades:

A+	98-100	C+	77-79
A	94-97	C	73-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D	60-70
B	83-86	F	below 60
B-	80-82		

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Quizzes: Approximately 9-12 quizzes will be given during the course of the semester. Each quiz will be given at the beginning of class and include questions testing your knowledge of the reading assignment for that day, as well as, potentially, one or more historical dates from a list which I will give you to memorize. The quiz will only last a few minutes and be followed by a brief review of the answers. I will not be able to repeat the question for your benefit if you show up late; thus, to avoid failing quizzes you must make it to class on time. However, I will drop your lowest quiz grade before computing your final grade. Quizzes will account for 15 percent of your final grade.

Class participation: This is a discussion-based class. Class participation will account for 35 percent of your final grade. To help get our conversations going, you are required to write out two discussion questions focused on the reading and hand these in at the beginning of each class. I use the following standards in grading class participation:

90-100: The student in this grade range arrives in class each day thoroughly prepared with comments and questions on the assigned reading. Comments reveal that the student has read carefully; this student occasionally initiates the discussion without waiting for the instructor to do so. He or she does not, however, try to dominate the class, but listens carefully to the remarks made by fellow class members, and responds as readily to these as to the instructor's questions.

80-89: The student in this grade range participates in most discussions, although not as fully or reliably as the student described above. He or she gives evidence of having done the reading. This student pays attention to the comments of the other students

70-79: The student in this grade range participates only intermittently, and is more willing to discuss broad, general questions than to engage in concrete analysis of an assigned text. Sometimes unprepared, this student lacks interest in the ideas of other members of the class.

60-69: The student in this grade range seldom if ever participates.

Attendance: It counts. You get 2 free absences; after that every absence takes 5 points off your participation grade.

Essays: You will write three out-of-class essays, each of about 1800 words. These will be critical essays, based on *your* ideas, not research papers. Together they will account for 50 percent of your final grade. Further details to follow.

Extra credit: Extra credit in the form of a plus (+) will be added to your final grade when you successfully memorize and recite for the class a complete poem or poems we have studied in this course. The work(s) recited must contain no fewer than 75 lines of English or 50 lines of the original non-English language used by the poet (Urdu, French, German, Russian, Spanish, or Greek). To receive extra credit, you must recite the poetry without significant error.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty which consists of knowingly presenting others' words and ideas as your own. All instructors in Barrett have zero tolerance for plagiarism. They also have access to an extensive database that checks websites, Spark Notes, old papers, and other sources used by plagiarists. Put simply, plagiarizers will be caught. The *minimum* sanction for plagiarism is failure of the course.

CLASS RULES

This class is a free-speech zone. No student should hesitate in voicing his or her own opinion, no matter how presumptively unpopular or controversial. Of course, other students are free to challenge that opinion. The one requirement is that disagreements be expressed in respectful terms. You are free to attack your fellow students' arguments, not to attack them personally.

No use of electronic media. At all. Put laptops, e-readers, tablets, and cell phones away. This means, unfortunately, that you may not consult your phone in class—not to play a video, not to see your messages, not to look up a course-related fact, not to text, not even to check the time. Doing so will have a highly negative effect on your class participation grade. In the short time we spend together each week, we will be looking not at electronic screens but at printed pages, and at each other.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

NAWL=*Norton Anthology of World Literature*
CWT=*Classics of Western Thought*

- W Course introduction
 F “Early Modern Chinese Vernacular Literature”; Wu Ch’eng-en
 (NAWL 165-203)
- W Wu Ch’eng-en cont. (NAWL 204-245)
 F “The Enlightenment in Europe and the Americas”
 (NAWL 3-11); John Locke (CWT 68-82)
- W Antoine de Condorcet (CWT 178-201)
 F “An Age of Revolutions in Europe and the Americas”
 (NAWL 369-381); Jean-Jacques Rousseau (NAWL 381-401
 and CWT 131-140)
- W Edmund Burke (CWT 202-220)
 F William Blake; William Wordsworth (NAWL 574-596)
- W no class
 F Ghalib (NAWL 618-635)
- W Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (CWT 367-389)
 F Walt Whitman (NAWL 646-653)
- W Emily Dickinson (NAWL 666-676)
 F Charles Baudelaire (NAWL 654-666)
- W John Stuart Mill (CWT 323-337)
 F “Realism Across the Globe” (NAWL 697-702);
 Anton Chekhov (NAWL 917-960)

SPRING BREAK

- W Rabindranath Tagore; Higuchi Ichiyo (NAWL 961-979)
 F “Modernity and Modernism” (NAWL 1003-1013); Marcel
 Proust (1132-1168)
- W Lu Xun (NAWL 1236-1246); Zhang Ailing (NAWL
 1345-1354)
 F Virginia Woolf (NAWL 1309-1335)
- W Constantine Cavafy (NAWL 1355-1365); Rainer Maria
 Rilke (NAWL 1378-1382)
 F William Butler Yeats (NAWL 1366-1377)
- W V. I. Lenin (CWT 577-596); Anna Akhmatova (NAWL
 1403-1412)
 F Pablo Neruda; Octavio Paz (NAWL 1421-1433)

- W “Postwar and Postcolonial Literature”; Leopold Senghor (NAWL
NAWL 1435-1451); Doris Lessing (NAWL 1474-1484)
F Saadat Hasan Manto (NAWL 1485-1492); Naguib Mahfouz (NAWL
1596-1606)
- W “Contemporary World Literature”; Yehuda Amichai (NAWL 1611-1623);
Seamus Heaney (NAWL 1645-1650)
F Salman Rushdie (NAWL 1709-1723)
- W V.S. Naipaul (NAWL 1658-1682)
F student recitations; conclusion