



## Liberal Studies 300

Spring 2013

### An Introduction to Liberal Studies

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Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 1:00 to 4:00; and by e-mail

**Required Texts:** Ruggiero, Vincent Ryan. *Beyond Feelings: A Guide to Critical Thinking*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008.

Kimmel, Michael and Amy Aronson. *The Gendered Society Reader*, 4th edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Dettwyler, Katherine. *Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa*. Prospect Heights, IL, Waveland Press, 1994.

**Course Description:** Liberal Studies is designed to provide students with a wide-ranging (liberal) education. As an interdisciplinary major, Liberal Studies looks at the world from a variety of perspectives unlike traditional majors that focus on one particular area. In this class, we are going to begin by reading a book on critical thinking which will help us to understand, evaluate and write about interdisciplinary topics. Then we will read, discuss and write about one interdisciplinary subject area, gender studies. We will examine gender and issues regarding gender from the perspectives of women's studies, masculinity studies, biological sciences, psychology, sociology, education, communication studies, and the humanities. Finally, we will read a book titled *Dancing Skeletons* which is an excellent example of global and multicultural studies, one of the four alternative concentrations in the Liberal Studies program.

## Course Objectives:

This course will teach students to:

Reason and write clearly

Reason and write analytically

Comprehend writings from an interdisciplinary perspective

Write a critical review of an assigned book

## Discussion Board:

You will be required to post contributions to the Discussion Board twice per week, once to respond to the week's discussion question and once to respond to someone else's posting. The deadline for posting will be 12:00 Noon on Monday. The grading criteria for these postings follows:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Your Points</b>
Student followed directions (posted The required # of times	2	
Student answered question posed (rather than got off track, or discussed topics not germane to the course	3	
Student contributes to discussion and moves topic forward with substance and depth	5	
Student uses critical thinking & evidence from texts & lectures (rather than anecdote or personal opinion	3	
Student uses proper grammar, complete sentences, spell-check & cites when appropriate	2	
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>15</b>	

We will be using the discussion board frequently so it is necessary to lay some ground rules to guide your postings. Remember the postings should allow me and your classmates to see that you have read and thought about the reading assignments before logging on. It is fine to disagree with someone else's point of view, but do so politely and avoid any sorts of personal insults or

attacks. I have included a link below to a website that covers the basic rules of etiquette for those working online. We will follow these rules for this class. Thanks for your cooperation. <http://albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.

Please do your best to meet course deadlines. Be aware that 5 points will be deducted for each day a paper is late.

### **Critical Book Review:**

The book review should be 4-5 pages in length, double spaced with one-inch margins. Remember “critical” reviews are not necessarily negative reviews. The paper should consist of a brief summary of the book followed by a longer evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, and suggestions for who might wish to read a book of this type. You will be expected to apply what you have learned in the Ruggiero text in crafting your review, and proper, grammar and spelling do count. The book review is worth 40 points.

Criteria	Possible Points	Your Points
Student makes few if any grammatical and spelling errors	5	
Student applies critical thinking skills based on Ruggiero’s book and lecture, and points out strengths and weaknesses of book	20	
Student provides a brief summary of book which contains key points	10	
Student’s paper is not based merely on personal opinion but on sound reasoning and evidence	10	

Overall the paper is well-organized with clear paragraph structure, introduction and conclusion	5	
SCORE	50	

### Grading Scale

90-100 %	A
80-89	B
65-79	C
56-64	D
< 56	F

#### **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION** (QM 1.1, 1.2, 7.1)

##### **eCollege Access and Log in Information** (7.1)

*This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>. You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu).]*

#### **How to be a Successful Student**

- What Makes a Successful Online Student?
- Self-Evaluation for Potential Online Students
- Readiness for Education at a Distance Indicator (READI)
  - o *Login Information:* Login = **tamuc**; password = **online**

#### **How is the eCollege Course Organized?**

*This is an online course. This means that all lectures, reading assignments, discussions and writing assignments will be done online. Homework assignments and discussions must be in Microsoft Word so that they can be uploaded to the course dropbox.*

#### **How Should Students Proceed Each Week for Class Activities?** (Online Courses)

*In order to find out what sorts of assignments and activities are required for the course log into eCollege, then into this course. Browse through the links on the left hand side of the page where you can look at the course syllabus and assignments and discussions for each week of the course.*

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*Online Course Examples:*

1. The student will access and follow all course instructions found in the weekly/unit content area of the eCollege course. The weekly/unit content area of our course is found on the left navigation bar.
2. The student will read all online lectures by going to each week's link and clicking on lecture. You can move through subsequent weeks in order to see future assignments/activities.
3. The student will respond to posted online course discussion questions using the eCollege discussion tool . Discussions are linked to each week. So for the discussion for Week One simply click on Week One and then on the Discussion link.
5. The student will complete and submit assignments electronically using the eCollege dropbox tool/tab which is located on the bar at the top of the screen.
6. The student will complete an on-going semester project, in this case an annotated bibliography in accordance with the instructions given in this syllabus. Further instructions are available on Week Two of the course.

**COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT** (QM 1.3, 6.6, 7.1)

**Consult the course syllabus for access to my office hours. I am available on a face-to-face basis as well as by email and phone. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or concerns and I will get back to you as quickly as possible. If for some reason I am unavailable use the live support tab at the top of the course screen.**

**Please Note:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library, Room 132

Phone (903) 468-8148 or (903) 886-5835

FAX (903) 468-8148

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

**Reading Schedule:** Please note that the Reading Schedule is subject to change as circumstances warrant. I will announce any changes as far in advance as possible.

**Week One:** Ruggiero: January 14-18

Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5

**Week Two:** Ruggiero: January 21- 25

Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9

**Week Three:** Ruggiero: January 28-February 1

Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13

**Week Four:** Ruggiero: February 4- 8

Chapters 14, 15, 16

**Week Five:** Ruggiero: February 11-14

Chapters 17, 18, 19

**Week Six:** February 18-22 (**Ways of Seeing and Knowing**)

Kimmel and Aronson: "Testosterone Rules" p.22

"Dude You're a Fag" p. 113

**Week Seven:** February 25-March 1

Kimmel and Aronson: "The Feminization of Love" p. 545

"Men as Women and Women as Men" p. 51

**Week Eight:** March 4-8 (**Global and Multicultural Perspectives**)

Kimmel and Aronson: "To Veil or not to Veil" p. 353

Anson: "Black Men and Public Spaces (online)

**Spring Break March 11 – 15**

**Week Nine:** March 18-22

Kimmel and Aronson: "Racializing the Glass Escalator" p. 401

"Who Makes the Clothes We Wear" (online)

**Week Ten:** March 25-29 (**Child and Family Studies**)

Kimmel and Aronson: "American Marriage in the Early Twenty-First Century"

"Household labor and the Routine Production of Gender" p. 257

**Week Eleven:** April 1-5

Kimmel and Aronson: "The Trouble with Black Boys: The role and Influence of Environmental and Cultural Factors on the Academic Performance of African American Males." p. 333

"The Myth of Sexual Symmetry in Marital Violence" p. 618

**Week Twelve:** April 8-12 (**Popular Culture**)

Kimmel and Aronson: "Misogyny in Rap Music: A Content Analysis of Prevalence and Meanings: p. 453

"Growing up in the Culture of Slenderness" p. 517

**Week Thirteen:** April 15-19

Kimmel and Aronson: "Little in Common: Racial and Gender Differences in Adolescents' Television Diets"

Anson: "Why I [Still] Want a Wife" (online)

**Week Fourteen:** April 22-26

Work on Writing Critical Review of "*Dancing Skeletons*"

**Week Fifteen:** April 29-May 4 Work on Writing Review of "*Dancing Skeletons*"

***Book Review due by NOON , Monday, May 6***