

Liberal Studies 300
Dr. Menaldo
Talbot 131
Office Hours: see message

Liberal Studies 300 is unlike any other course you probably have taken at this University. It is not an introduction to a discipline (major) but a way of thinking and reflecting on what it means to learn, speak the truth and write. How do you think is a much more significant question than how to think about a specific thing, like solving for x. Most of you want a career, but if you don't know how to express your thoughts and have a method for seeking clarity then you fall prey to ambiguous goals with no clear path toward attaining them.

This is a conversational class. On Monday and Wednesday, we will pour over the readings for the week, and on Friday, from your place of choice, you will have until the end of the class period to write a personal reflection on the week's readings and discussion. Everyone will have access to everyone else's writing. Yet, there will be no discussion posts.

I expect well-written communication and thoughtful conversations. It all depends on your focus and effort outside and inside the class. We do not read much writing in this class, but I demand focused reading. Everybody will speak in class; speaking is not voluntary. I used a Socratic form of questioning to elicit your opinion to help refine your opinion by updating your understanding of any subject.

We will not use a reading schedule; we will move through the readings at the pace the reading(s) demands. I want you to learn to focus on arguments and details and avoid hazy summaries.

I will also bring in new readings for a day when something strikes me worth sharing. I recommend you do the same.

Grades

Attendance and Participation: 25%

You will sit alphabetically in assigned seats.

Personal Reflections: 25%

Due each Friday through my Leo D2L. Each week's discussion will help generate the Friday question.

Op-Ed Writing Assignment 25%

You will write a 750 op-ed about Higher Education, which will be due on the last day of class.

Final Exam: Education Plan 25%

For the final exam, you will present to your classmates your education plan (retrospective and for the future)—more details to come.

Introductions

What is College For?

https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=college&utm_campaign=sd&utm_medium=serp&utm_source=ds_search

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/04/02/what-the-liberal-in-liberal-arts-actually-means/>

Personal Reflection 1. What is College For, why are you here, and what have you learned so far?

The Truth

The Difference Between Speaking ‘Your Truth’ and ‘The Truth’

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/01/the-power-and-perils-of-speaking-your-truth/549968/>

Staying for the Truth

A brief interrogation into the nature of truth.

Alan Jacobs

<https://hedgehogreview.com/issues/hope-itself/articles/staying-for-the-truth>

How do you Tell the Truth?

Emily Dickinson

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/56824/tell-all-the-truth-but-tell-it-slant-1263>

Socratic Irony Republic Book I, Thrasymachus and Socrates. PDF

Jesus's Parables: Matthew 13:10

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2013%3A10-17&version=NIV>

Wit and the Truth

<https://www.amazon.com/Wits-End-What-Works-Need/dp/0393254941?asin=0393357597&revisionId=&format=4&depth=1>

Aristotle, The Ethics(Social Virtues) PDF

Being Condemned for Seeking the Truth

Apology of Socrates to the Jury

Xenophon: PDF.

Comedy

Comedy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSiFLo3apiM>

Modernity and The Revolution of Truth
The Effectual Truth: Niccolo Machiavelli
Chapter 15, the Prince.

https://books.google.com/books?id=ehzOd8DVInkC&pg=PA61&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false

Alan Jacobs Chapter 4 and 5

Declaration of Independence

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.-

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Theme 3 Writing:

George Orwell, Politics and the English Language: <https://www.orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-foundation/orwell/essays-and-other-works/politics-and-the-english-language/>

Mark Menaldo Stewarding a Shapeless Culture:

<https://theconstitutionalist.org/2023/04/12/stewarding-a-shapeless-culture/>

Anne Lamont

The Moral Point of View, in *Bird by Bird*

Thinking about Liberal Education:

Excellent Sheep

https://books.google.com/books?id=F73nAgAAQBAJ&pg=PP5&source=kp_read_button&hl=en&newbks=1&newbks_redir=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

On Liberal Education: Jacob Klein

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/24423885/on-liberal-education-by-jacob-klein-march1965-st-johns-college>

Theme IV: Writing LAB