

San José State University, Humanities Honors

HUM 2A, Modern Culture and Social Institutions

Class Number 44618, Section 31, Fall 2017

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Instructor Homepage:	http://www.professorwood.com
Class days/time:	Tuesday, Thursday: 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Classroom:	DMH 226B
Office hours:	Tuesday, Thursday: 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Sign up via Google Calendar https://goo.gl/FMdtsH - and ensure that your calendar settings reflect the correct time zone) <i>For all visits, be prepared to show your reading/classroom notes.</i>
Prerequisites:	Permission of Humanities Honors Coordinator
GE/SJSU Studies Category	Over the four semesters of the course, the Humanities Honors Program satisfies areas: A1 (Oral Communication), A2 (Written Communication 1A), A3 (Critical Thinking), C1 (Arts), C2 (Letters), C3 (Written Communication 1B), D2 (Comparative Systems), D3 (Social Issues), F1-2 (U.S. History and Constitution), and F3 (California Government)

[NOTE: Much of the language in this syllabus comes from documents shared across the Humanities Honors program.]

Catalog Description

Humanities 2A offers an integrated, interdisciplinary introduction to ideas, events, and arts of Western and world culture that have influenced people and led to the creation of modernism and contemporary globalism. We look at the development of Western culture from a variety of perspectives. Our aim is to develop an understanding of the significant values, institutions and attitudes that have contributed to producing the complex global culture we share today. During 2A, we consider the Post-Reformation transformations of Europe, as well as the extension of new concepts of liberty and reform alongside practices of colonial oppression and exploitation. The rise of the middle and working classes as a reaction against the aristocracy, along with intellectual changes spawned by mathematical rationalism and scientific empiricism in its many contexts, direct the new ideas of politics and economics.

Course Goals

This course will aim to accomplish the following: Each student will have the opportunity to consider some of the significant ideas and other creations of humankind. Students will be able to become familiar with the milieu that yielded these important works. Students will be able to recognize the contributions and accomplishments of women and diverse cultural and religious groups in the movement of civilizations. Also, an aesthetic and poetic awareness regarding the many means of communication will be cultivated. Students will be encouraged to express their understanding, experiences and views in not only written discourse but also in by means of public speaking and, of course, in group discussions.

GE Learning Objectives:

LO1 (Area A1): Oral Communication courses should cultivate an understanding of the social, psychological, political and practical significance of communication, with special emphasis on the roles of public communication in a free society.

LO2 (Area A2): Written communication 1A courses should cultivate an understanding of the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication, with special attention to the nature of writing at the university.

LO3 (Area A3): Critical thinking courses should help students learn to recognize, analyze, evaluate, and produce reasoning.

LO4 (Areas C1-2-3): Arts and Letters courses should give students knowledge and understanding of significant works of the human intellect and imagination. Courses should enable students to participate in social and cultural communities associated with artistic and literary endeavors, enriching their personal and professional lives.

LO5 (Area D2): Courses in this area will enable students to compare and contrast two or more ethnic groups, cultures, regions, nations, or social systems.

LO6 (Area D3): Social Issues courses will enable students to apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels.

LO7 (Area F1-2-3): Courses in American Institutions (US History, US Constitution, and California Government) should expose students to alternative interpretations of the historical events and political processes that have shaped the social, economic, and political systems in which we live.

Required Texts

See lecture handout.

Classroom Protocol

Student Conduct: It is your responsibility to know what constitutes improper behavior at San José State University. This information can be found in the SJSU university catalog and on this website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Students/>. Sanctions for improper behavior can include removal from the class.

Attendance: In this class, we will frequently discuss issues and concepts that cannot be found in the assigned readings. Therefore, your participation is required. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get class notes or other necessary information from a colleague. As a means to that end, I recommend getting contact information for at least three classmates.

Tardiness: Be seated when class begins. I reserve the right to mandate a personal behavioral contract if you are excessively tardy.

Make-ups: Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period noted on the syllabus. Unexcused late assignments may be made up before finals week. However, I deduct 10 percent per 24-hour period after the assignment is due.

Back-ups: You are expected use a cloud-based backup system (eg., Dropbox or Google Docs) to limit the risk of document-loss.

Extra Credit: Allowing some students a chance to earn additional points is unfair to those who work within the range of assignment values, requirements, and opportunities available in this class. Accordingly I do not offer extra credit.

Intellectual property: Course material that I have developed for this class cannot be shared publicly without my approval. You may not publicly share or upload my materials (including lecture notes) without my consent.

Mobile devices: Cell phones, computers, and other tools are permitted in my classroom if they are used responsibly. Read my full policy: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/mobile-device-policy.html>

Written Work: Excepting the Personal Profile Sheet and exams, all work submitted for this class will be typed. You are expected to employ double-spacing, one-inch margins, and 12 point Times New Roman font.

FAQ: Read the Frequently Asked Questions page at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/faq.html>

University Policies

The following link contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Assignments

Critical Thinking Essay (LO2, LO3, and LO5)

Select and analyze one *brief* excerpt from one of our Descartes readings. In one to two pages (typed, double-spaced, standard margins, Times New Roman, 12 point font – the same for all assignments in this class), answer the following question: To what degree is this statement persuasive (and why)? Support your well-reasoned analysis with at least two arguments – and ensure that at least one of your proofs specifically reflect on Descartes' broader cultural context. Additional instruction:

- Download and attach gradesheet (*not rubric*) to final draft:
<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/gradesheet.pdf>

Persuasive Speech Presentation (LO1 and LO3)

Present a 5-7 minute in-class extemporaneous speech in which you assume the role of an historical figure directly related to one of our readings. Speaking as that person, you will advocate for a change in belief, attitude, value, and/or behavior, your audience being disinclined to adopt your perspective. To illustrate, after our lecture on *Candide* you might argue before an audience of radical reformers that we should abandon grand social plans and, instead, “tend to our own gardens.” Toward that end you will include at least three distinct oral citations from sources contemporary and/or historically relevant to your chosen historical figure. This speech will demonstrate mastery of public speaking fundamentals, including an introduction that inspires audience interest, a specific thesis statement and forecast of three body points, transitions that provide a logical connection between those points, a specific review of your points, and a thought-provoking conclusion. Be prepared for questions. Speech dates will be determined by topic choice.

Persuasive Letter (LO1, LO2, LO3, and LO4)

Produce an original and compelling refutation of an idea raised by one of the primary authors on this semester’s reading list in the form of a personal letter. In four to five pages, including an introduction and conclusion paragraph, construct a series of well-developed claims, each advancing from its predecessor, designed to convince the implied reader (your chosen author) to reconsider one of their ideas. Keep in mind that *tone* is especially important in this assignment. Your prose should indicate some degree of understanding and appreciation for the author’s point of view. You are not trying to attack your interlocutor; you seek to *persuade* your author. To the degree possible, work from within their framework, even as you propose potentially radical transformation. Remember also that your credibility depends on more than clever argumentation.

Deploy your chosen author's own words and directly cite their contemporaries and/or persons that they respect to build identification and bolster your claims – citing secondary research is generally not helpful in this assignment. Your goal is to express the depth to which you have *lived* in the historical, cultural, intellectual, and personal perspective of a person whose ideas demand careful consideration. Additional instructions:

- Download and attach gradesheet (*not rubric*) to final draft:
<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/gradesheet.pdf>

Experiencing Art Essay (LO2, LO3, and LO4)

Analyze a painting, piece of sculpture, or performance that you encounter in person. In one to two pages, develop an essay whose body points accomplish the following goals in turn: (1) Describe the artwork in terms of content, aesthetics, and experience, and (2) Use that artwork as a lens to affirm or critique an idea found in one of our course readings. Support your well-reasoned analysis with at least two quotations from that reading. Additional instructions:

- Download and attach gradesheet (*not rubric*) to final draft:
<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/gradesheet.pdf>
- Provide a ticket stub, a photograph, or some other souvenir from your artwork encounter.

Examinations (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6, and LO7)

Each exam invites you to synthesize the knowledge gained throughout the course, typically in the form of short- and long-form responses to questions posed by the faculty team.

Assessment

Activity	Due Date	Point Value
Critical Thinking Essay	Tue, Sept 19	___ out of 50 points (10%)
Persuasion Speech w/outline	Sept 26 through Oct 12	___ out of 100 points (20%)
Midterm Exam	Tue, Oct 17	___ out of 50 points (10%)
Persuasion Letter	Tue, Nov 7	___ out of 100 points (20%)
Experiencing Art Essay	Tue, Nov 28	___ out of 50 points (10%)
Final Exam (Seminar)	Mon, Dec 18 (9:45-12:00)	___ out of 100 points (20%)
Final Exam (Lecture)	Tue, Dec 19 (7:15-9:30)	___ out of 50 points (10%)
Total		___ out of 500 points (100%)
A+ = 485+ points	A = 465-484 points	A- = 450-464 points
B+ = 435-449 points	B = 415-434 points	B- = 400-414 points
C+ = 385-399 points	C = 365-384 points	C- = 350-364 points
D+ = 335-349 points	D = 315-334 points	D- = 300-314 points
F = 299 and fewer points		

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Class Schedule (subject to change with reasonable notice)

Dates	Assignments	Notes
Aug 24		We will discuss course concepts and activities.
Aug 29 Aug 31		
Sep 5 Sep 7		Sep 5: We will discuss speech outlines, topics, and dates. Come to class with a proposed topic.
Sep 12 Sep 14		We will discuss speech organization and delivery.
Sep 19 Sep 21	Submit Critical Thinking Essay on Tue, Sep 19	Sep 19: We will discuss more speech delivery. Sep 21: No seminar meeting after lecture.
Sep 26 Sep 28	Speech Day 1 Speech Day 2	
Oct 3 Oct 5	Speech Day 3 Speech Day 4	
Oct 10 Oct 12	Speech Day 5 Speech Day 6	
Oct 17 Oct 19	Midterm Exam on Tue, Oct 17	
Oct 24 Oct 26		
Oct 31 Nov 2		Oct 31: No seminar meeting after lecture.
Nov 7 Nov 9	Submit Persuasion Letter on Tue, Nov 7	
Nov 14 Nov 16		
Nov 21 Nov 23		Nov 21: No class on Thursday [Thanksgiving holiday]
Nov 28 Nov 30	Submit Experiencing Art Essay on Tue, Nov 28	
Dec 5 Dec 7		
Dec 18	Final [Seminar]	Seminar [bring essay booklets] 9:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Dec 19	Final [Lecture]	WSQ 109 - 7:15 to 9:30 a.m.