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HONR 121L.84: Ways of Knowing

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WAYS OF KNOWING

HC 121, Fall 2014

T, Th 8:10-9:30 a.m.

Johnson, Section 84, DHC 118

Prof. Judith Johnson

Office: DHC 106; Office Hours T, Th 9:30 - 10:30 and by appointment

judith.johnson@mso.umt.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Using a diverse selection of readings representing more than two thousand years of human experience and numerous cultures, we will explore rational/quantitative, relational/sympathetic, sensory/empirical, and narrative/mythological ways of knowing. In the process we will become acquainted with some of the great ideas about the divine, the natural world, and the self in solitude and society. We will be alert for cracks in our apparent certainties and consolations in the midst of our doubts. As we look into these texts, we will also consider the ethical implications that flow from their various perspectives. Informed by class readings, plenary lectures, and discussions, students will work toward a deeper understanding of their own ways of knowing.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The Book of Job. Trans. Stephen Mitchell, Harper Perennial

Tao Te Ching. Trans. Stephen Mitchell, Harper Perennial

Lysistrata by Aristophanes. Trans. Douglas Parker, Signet

Three Dialogues by Plato. Trans. F. J. Church, Library of Liberal Arts

Discourse on Method by Rene Descartes. Trans. Laurence Lafleur, Libr. of Lib. Arts

The Tempest by William Shakespeare. Pelican

HC 121 Johnson/Bradford Course pack (available UC Bookstore)

Class Plan

CP = Course Pack

Dates in bold indicate three plenary lectures

Moodie readings require that you print them out and bring copies to class

Please do not e-mail me through Moodie; use e-mail address above

- T 8/26 Introduction; CP Pyle: "Moonlight Redux: or, Gone for Good"
- Th 8/28 CP Stevens "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird"
CP Yanagi "Seeing and Knowing" from the Unknown Craftsman
- T9/2 Tao Te Ching
- Th 9/4 CP Genesis 1-4: Creation, Cain and Abel
First Essay Assignment
Honors Convocation 7 p.m., U. C. Theater - required attendance
- T9/9 Book of Job, Introduction and pp. 1-65
- W9/10 Prof. Gary Hawk _1st Plenary Lecture: Oh My, God 7-8 p.m. GBB 106**
- Th 9/11 Book of Job, Summation, Encountering the Whirlwind, Epilogue (69-91)
- T 9/16 CP Parables, other Teachings: Prodigal Son, Good Samaritan, Woman Caught in Adultery, Lost Sheep, 2 versions of Syrophenician Woman
- Th 9/18 Aristophanes, Lysistrata
- T9/23 Plato, Euthyphro
First Essay due
- W 9/24 Prof. Ron Perrin - 2nd Plenary: The Passage from Mythology to Philosophy in Ancient Greece 7-8 p.m. GBB 106**
- Th 9/25 Plato, CP Allegory of the Cave. Apology
- T 9/30 CP Aristotle, excerpts from Metaphysics, Physics, Nichomachean Ethics
Second Essay Assignment
- Th 10/2 CP Euclid and Galileo, Millay's "Euclid Alone"

T10/7 Descartes, Discourse on Method

Th 10/9 CP Darwin, Origin of Species and Descent of Man (selections)

T 10/14 Moodie Carson Silent Spring Ch. 1-2, Lost Woods, Ch. 30

Print out readings and bring to class

 Second Essay due

Th 10/16 CP W.E.B. Du Bois, Souls of Black Folk, selections

T 10/21 CP Rebecca Harding Davis, Life in the Iron Mills

**W 10/22 Prof. Pat Burke, 3rd Plenary: Pika, Persons and the Practical Imperative:
Ethics in the Age of Global Climate Change, 7-8 p.m GBB 106**

Th 10/23 CP Black Elk Speaks, selections

 Third Essay Assignment

T 10/28 CP Earling, "Real Indians" and "Bad Ways"

Th 10/30 CP Arendt, "Truth and Politics"

T 11/4 HOLIDAY, Election Day

Th 11/6 CP Dickinson, selected poems

 Third Essay Due

T 11/11 HOLIDAY, Veterans Day

Th 11/13 Tempest Acts I and II

T 11/18 Tempest Acts III, IV and V

Th 11/20 CP Wordsworth, selected poems

 Final Essay Assignment

T 11/25 CP Frost, selected poems; Videlock handout for T 12/2

Th 11/27 THANKSGIVING

T 12/2 CP Bishop, Plath, Videlock (handout), Millay

Th 12/4 Moodie: Carver, "A Small, Good Thing"

Bring printout of this short story to class

12/8-12 Finals Week. Final essay due Tues., 12/9, no later than 11 :00 a.m., DHC 106

Assignments and Grades

Attendance and Active Participation: In a seminar your attendance and active participation is vital to the other students and the educational process and therefore expected. If you must miss class, notify the instructor in advance by email or in person. Unexcused absences will affect your grade (5 or more unexcused absences result in course failure).

Written Assignments: Ways of Knowing is a writing course (W). This requires that you pay attention to the quality of your writing and the thinking that underlies it. Therefore, you will write four (4) essays, one of which will be your final essay. You will receive prompts for these essays well in advance that will address some of the most challenging themes of the course. You also have the option of re-writing one (1) of your first two essays with the goal of receiving a higher grade. The re-write must be arranged in advance with your professor.

Ways of Knowing Grades

Your grade will rely on the quality of your writing and critical thinking in response to the four essay questions and one re-write. In the event that your grade hovers between one grade and another, your active and insightful participation in class and noticeable signs of improvement over the course of the semester will influence your final grade. Each essay, including the final one, will carry equal weight (4 x 25 points = 100 points).

Papers are due in class on or before the date listed in the syllabus. Unless you have made a prior agreement, we will take off one grade level (A becomes A-) for each class day an assignment is late.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. (For other options see <http://life.umt.edu/dss/>). Students with disabilities may obtain assistance with the registration process and the relocation of classes through Disability Service in Lommasson Center 154 (406)243-2243 VOICEITDD.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students should be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, avail for review at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php. We define plagiarism as representing another's work as your own. It is strictly forbidden; students must always remain careful to acknowledge another person's wording and ideas in written work.