MLS 702: A survey of intersections among major themes in history, literature, philosophy, and the fine and performing arts. Introduction to methodologies necessary to analyze textual and visual evidence historically and critically. Credits: 3

What are the humanities?

The humanities can be described as the study of how people process and document the human experience. Since humans have been able, we have used philosophy, literature, religion, art, music, history and language to understand and record our world. These modes of expression have become some of the subjects that traditionally fall under the humanities umbrella. Knowledge of these records of human experience gives us the opportunity to feel a sense of connection to those who have come before us, as well as to our contemporaries.

Overview:

The Ancient World, Politics and Gender Wars:

*Lysistrata* by Aristophanes

Article: “Ancient Greece’s Legacy for Liberty--Aristophanes’ Flirtation with Feminism”

The Renaissance and Universal Humanism:

*Leonardo’s Universe: The Renaissance World of Leonardo Da Vinci* by Atalay Bulent

*Hamlet* (Shakespeare) with focus on modern subjectivity

Article: “Revisiting Shakespeare: A Study of Human Nature in Hamlet and Macbeth”

The Enlightenment and Science/The Religion/Science divide:

Article: “Darwinism versus Creationism” article by Akudo Ejelonu

Film: “Inherit the Wind” (1960, dir. Stanley Kramer)

The Overturn of Humanism

Film: “Blade Runner” directed by Ridley Scott (1982)

Article: “The Subversion and Redefinition of Categories” by Grace Russo Bullaro

The Advent of Postmodernism, Post-Humanism and Technology

*Personal Connections in the Digital Age by Nancy K. Baym*

The Digital Age of Information Overload

*Beyond Wikileaks by Arne Hintz*
Workload will consist of weekly assigned readings, frequent writing of short papers (1,500 wds), presentations, and a final paper (3,500 wds min.).

Goals and Objectives for ENG/MLS 702 Introduction to the Humanities

The course aims to bring students to the “capstone” level in critical thinking, information literacy and written and oral communication. Where the student is already skillful in these areas, the course will serve as reinforcement and extension of these skills.

On fundamental cognitive skills and strategies:

Specifically, the student will be able to:

- Critically consider an issue and describe it comprehensively, synthesizing information taken from experts and question it thoroughly.
- Effectively research the topic, evaluate the viability of sources, select them, and retrieve them successfully.
- Communicate, organize and synthesize information from sources to achieve the specific purpose conceived.
- Reach conclusions based on this information that are logical and sustained comprehensively with relevant evidence.
- Be able to use grammatically and syntactically correct standard written English that communicates meaning in a clear and graceful manner.
- Be able to deliver the outcomes of the research/written project orally to his/her peers, in a clear, concise and engaging manner.

On the Content for the course:

The student will:

- Gain knowledge of some of the principal philosophical and historical discourses that have shaped human society (ie. Democracy, Humanism, Modernism, Postmodernism and Posthumanism)
- Engage with texts that have expressed and illustrated these discourses in a manner that demonstrates the ability to make discursive connections and extrapolate relevance to our current society.
Classroom and Grading Policies

This is just a brief outline, more information regarding the classroom policies will be explained in
the classroom, so please make sure that you stay informed at all times regarding what is expected of
you. Also note that the syllabus can change at any time, as the need arises in the classroom and you are
responsible for staying up to date. I would suggest that you exchange contact information with several
of your classmates so that you can be sure to do so. This course meeting only once a week, you are
entitled to ONE unexcused absence (= 3 credit hours). If you know ahead of time that you must miss
class, then you should inform me of the fact. Please keep in mind that a late entry is extremely
disturbing and disruptive.

If you have a problem that may impact on the quality of your work please come and talk to me about it.

NO LATE WORK OF ANY KIND WILL BE ACCEPTED UNLESS YOU HAVE NOT MADE PREVIOUS
ARRANGEMENTS WITH ME.

Final Grade Components:

Attendance, Punctuality, In-Class Preparedness: 30%

(This includes not only doing the readings and the written assignments, but a positive,
proactive attitude towards learning and vigorous engagement in class discussions):

Final Paper: 25%
Short papers: 30%
Presentations: 15%

Note:

To express vague opinions or subjective responses that are not anchored in informed critical judgment
does not constitute an appropriate level of graduate work and this will be reflected in the grade you
receive. Ideally, you should blend your own understanding of primary material with ideas and concepts
gleaned from the critical sources. And never forget that there is no need whatsoever to agree with the
critics, as long as you can justify your position. Indeed, you are here to challenge and be critical of ideas
anytime that you believe it to be necessary, while of course remaining respectful of the classroom
environment and your peers.
Policies you need to be aware of:

• Being late or absent does not mean you automatically have permission to miss or hand in an assignment late. If you miss class, you are still responsible for that day’s work, and the following assignment. Make sure you have the contact information of someone in this class so that if you are absent you can obtain any assignments due: the fact that you “did not know it was due” will not be accepted as an excuse for coming to class unprepared. Do not call or write me in order to ask if you “missed anything important” in class or expect me to “fill you in” on what you missed.

• **Plagiarism:** Plagiarized assignments will receive zero credit (that’s an F). Plagiarism may also result in a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action by the college. Paying for a prefabricated paper and passing it off as your own is the most egregious forms of plagiarism, but it hardly stops there. Having a friend or relative “go over” a sketchy draft and fix it up for you (rather than pointing out problem areas) may look more honorable, but it isn’t. Whether you intend to cheat or not, you are plagiarizing if you present words, ideas, or examples taken from a book, a newspaper, article, website, or any other source, without making it absolutely clear to your reader a) exactly what you have taken, b) from whom you have taken it and c) what use you are making of it. A paper that consists of quotations and paraphrases end to end is plagiarized, even if everything is carefully documented. At this level you should already have learned the basic methods for distinguishing between your own language or thinking and those of other writers in your text. You are also welcome – in fact encouraged – to make an appointment with me. Every resource is at your disposal to help you avoid plagiarism. It is your responsibility to find out what they are and use them.

• The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:
  1. Copying another person’s actual words without the use of quotation marks and endnotes attributing the words to their source;
  2. Presenting another person’s ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source;
  3. Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
  4. Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, and cutting and pasting from various sources without proper attribution.

Some papers that you write for this course will be submitted directly through a SafeAssign link to check for any plagiarized material. However, ALL your papers must also be submitted electronically as an attachment to an email sent to me on the same day you submit a hard copy in class.

**Accommodating Disabilities**
Lehman College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may require any special considerations should register with the Office of Student Disability Services in order to submit official paperwork to instructor.

For more information, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services, Shuster Hall, Room 238, 718-960-8441. For detailed information on services and resources visit: http://www.lehman.edu/student-disability-services/, or email: disability.services@lehman.cuny.edu.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy**

“Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.”

For detailed information on definitions and examples of Academic Dishonesty, including Cheating, Plagiarism, Obtaining Unfair Advantage and Falsification of Records and Documents, please refer to the student handbook or visit: http://www.lehman.edu/undergraduate-bulletin/academicintegrity.htm

All violations are reported to the Department of English and college’s Academic Integrity Officer.

**Tutoring Services**

Lehman College’s Instructional Support Services Program (ISSP) is home of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and Science Learning Center (SLC). Both offer students an array of activities and services designed to support classroom learning. Open to students at any level, there are individual, small group, and/or workshop sessions designed to improve “proficiency in writing, reading, research, and particular academic subject areas. Computer-assisted writing/language tutorial programs are also available,” as well as individual tutors, workshops and tutors.

To obtain more information about the ACE and the SLC, please visit Old Gym, Room 205 or http://www.lehman.edu/academics/instructional-support-services/humanities-tutoring.php or call ACE at 718-960-8175, and SLC at 718-960-7707.

Regular tutoring hours for fall & spring semesters are: M—T 10 a.m.-7 p.m., and Sat. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Library Tutors are also available in the Library. These tutors offer help with Library resources and computers.

**Blackboard & Email:**

You must be familiar with Lehman College’s Blackboard system and have regular access to the official email address assigned to you by Lehman College. I will use the Blackboard system to regularly update class assignments, readings, and other scheduling issues. I will also post some handouts and other materials on Blackboard as it becomes necessary. Each week you need to check Blackboard for announcements or other posts.
Syllabus

In all cases where in this syllabus it says, “discuss...” it means that you will have completed that entire reading assignment and you are ready to discuss it in class in an informed manner.

This will be a very interactive classroom where your voices will feature prominently, and you are expected to take a proactive approach to your work and overall learning experience.

Feb. 1: Introduction to course

Assignment for next week: Read: Lysistrata by Aristophanes and
“Ancient Greece’s Legacy for Liberty: Aristophanes’ Flirtation with Feminism” by R. T. Long

Feb. 8: Discuss Lysistrata and R. T. Long article

Assignment for Feb. 22: Write a 1,500 wd paper on “What is the Renaissance?” Base your paper on independent research. (No need to search for scholarly sources for this, Googling will do.)

Feb. 15: No Class: Follow Monday Schedule

Feb. 22: What is the Renaissance? (Discussion: Individual presentations based on the assigned papers.)

March 1: Discuss Leonardo’s Universe Pp. 12 – 143. Focus on developments in the arts.

Assignment for March 8: 1,500 wd paper on “What is Universal Humanism?” based on independent research. Focus on the concepts of Reason and Subjectivity in your paper.

March 8: Presentation of your papers on “Universal Humanism”, Reason and Subjectivity

March 15: Discuss Hamlet (Shakespeare) and “Revisiting Shakespeare: A Study of Human Nature In Hamlet and Macbeth” by Firouzjaee and Pourkalhor

March 22: Discussion of article by Ejelonu on “Darwinism vs. Creationism”

Written work due today: Summary of the article

March 29: In-class viewing of “Inherit the Wind” (1960, dir. Stanley Kramer)

April 5: Discussion of “Inherit the Wind”

Written work due today: a film review with focus on the central controversy and how it is handled in the film.

April 12: No Class-Spring Recess

April 19: In-class viewing of Blade Runner (1982, dir. Ridley Scott)

Read article: “Blade Runner, the subversion and redefinition of categories” by Russo Bullaro

April 26: Discuss film and article
May 3: Discuss *Personal Connections in the Digital Age* by Baym

**Research Paper Due Today**

May 10: Discuss *Beyond Wikileaks* by Hintz

May 17: Last Day of Class—Student presentations of excerpt from final paper