

IS 1001 – First Year Seminar – Fall 2003

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The Story of Diversity and Social Justice

Description: Many authors have used fiction as a means to address social problems in our society. Students will read novels that address a variety of social issues and diverse populations. The course will focus on discussion of the stories students are reading and relating the themes of each story to the student's understanding of both community and their role in "community". Students will learn about the broad concept of social justice and explore how social justice applies to their undergraduate studies in all academic areas. A variety of active learning experiences will result in students improving their skills in writing, group discussion and presentation. Through out the course discussion and writing assignments will be used to foster and hone critical thinking skills including the ability to assess the quality of information. Course content will also enhance students' awareness of the lenses through which we all perceive the world around us.

Course Format: This course will feature mostly seminar style discussion where students actively engage one another in discussion of topics. The instructor will initially present materials to introduce the course topic but will increasingly rely on students to discuss topic with one another. Students will be asked to work individually, in groups and as a large team. Students will be given an opportunity to participate in a Habitat for Humanity building project during the semester. Given the nature of the class, preparation and quality participation are an important part of this course.

Scholastic Dishonesty: The Student Conduct Code defines a series of disciplinary offenses, including cheating on examinations and assignments and plagiarizing, as acts of scholastic dishonesty. Anyone who plagiarizes will not receive credit for the assignment in question and will be reported to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.

Accommodations and Accessibility: Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with physical, sensory, learning and psychiatric disabilities. Please contact me to work out the details of accommodations. Course materials have been designed to be accessible to everyone and to afford flexibility in presentation and use.

Texts:

Kingsolver, B. (1988). *The Bean Trees*. Harper Collins: New York.
Kingsolver, B. (1990). *Animal Dreams*. Harper Collins: New York.
E-Reserve available through Briggs Library web site.

Note: To facilitate in-class discussions and for you to fully participate in class discussion, it is necessary that you do readings when assigned and *before* class.

PRE-REQUISITES FOR THIS COURSE: Willingness to work hard, to spend at least 4 hours weekly outside of class time on this course, to think analytically & critically, and to participate in constructive discussions.

Course policies:

This is primarily a discussion course!! I am very interested in your thoughts, reactions and analysis of the material we examine in class. While there may be an occasional short lecture to provide necessary background on a topic, I am not planning to talk “at you” very often. In order for discussions to be a successful learning experience, I am counting on you to come to class **PREPARED**. This means that you must do more than keep up with the reading and other assignments. You must also ponder what you’ve encountered and come prepared to talk about it **AND** to listen to and respond thoughtfully to the ideas of others.

In addition to our discussions, we will work to hone our library-literacy and writing skills. There will be specific class time devoted to learning how to efficiently use our library resources. As you work on class assignments, you will have a chance to employ these new skills. You will also complete a number of writing assignments in which you will have a chance to develop your written communication skills.

A short practical note: This is a two-credit class, which means that on average, you will be expected to put in about four hours of out-of-class work each week. Some weeks will be lighter; some undoubtedly will require more of your time. I will strive to spread the work out in a reasonable manner. You should avoid procrastination, which invariably leads to the impression that all your work comes at once.

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class. Late assignments (received after they are collected in class) will receive a 10% penalty for each class period they are late, up to a 50% maximum penalty (even if it is really late, you should still complete an assignment and receive credit for your work). Illness is only an excuse if I am notified before class.

University Grading Policy

University Policy Requires that this information be provided on each course syllabus:

- A achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- C achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
- D achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

S achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.
F (or N) Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (see also I) Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course.
I (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

Evaluation and Grading:

Small written assignments: 15%
Association Projects (2): 20%
Community Involvement reflections (12): 15%
Jamboree attendance and participation: 10%
Jamboree Project: 20%
Class participation: 20%

Course Outline and Readings:

Aug. 25 Readings for Convocation – Holm and Dangel (handed out on 8-22)
Aug. 27 discussion on Convocation;
written response to convocation due
Sept. 3 Locke, Garrison and Winship, Ch. 2, p. 24-28 “Social Justice” (e-reserve)
continue to discuss and define social justice
Sept. 8 Library Tour
Sept. 10 Diversity and SJ – MacIntosh – White Privilege: “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (e-reserve)
Library assignment due
Sept. 15 Assimilation vs Pluralism - “Melting Pot or Mosaic” (e-reserve)
Sept. 17 web assignment – search for different definitions of social justice; locate social justice concepts in Christian, Muslim, Jewish faith traditions
Summary of web searching due, including full citation of web sites (author, site title, address, date and time retrieved)
Sept. 22 Library
Sept. 24 continued discussion of social justice in diverse faiths
Library assignment due (1. summary of US role in Guatemala or Nicaragua in 1980’s or reasons for refugees from Guatemala or Nicaragua in 1980’s or summary of why teachers were political targets in Guatemala or Nicaragua in 1980’s – must use library resources and cite journal, newspaper, etc using APA format; 2. Identify and explain 2 examples of social injustice)
Sept. 29 Fuller Ch. 1,2 &3 (e-reserve)
Oct. 1 Discussion of Community Events
Oct. 6 Bean Trees, Ch. 1-3

Library Rewrites due

- Oct. 8 Bean Trees, Ch. 4-8; U.S. role in other cultures/countries
- Oct. 13 No class – Fall Break
- Oct. 15 Human Rights <http://www.unhcr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm>; Fuller Appendix 1 (e-reserve)
- Oct. 20 Bean Trees – finish; discussion and reflection
- Oct. 22 *due – association project on Bean Trees*; sharing of ideas and projects
- Oct. 27 Duerr Berrick’s “Ana”; Fuller Ch. 6 & 11 (e-reserve) – Social Justice and poverty
- Oct. 29 Fuller Ch. 12 & 14 (e-reserve)
- Nov. 3 Animal Dreams Ch. 1-9
- Nov. 5 Animal Dreams Ch. 10-14
- Nov. 10 Animal Dreams Ch. 15-20
- Nov. 12 Animal Dreams Ch. 21-24
- Nov. 17 Plan for Jamboree
- Nov. 19 Plan for Jamboree
- Nov. 20 Jamboree
- Nov. 24 Animal Dreams Ch. 25-end
- Nov. 26 No Class
- Dec. 1 *due – association project on Animal Dreams*; sharing of ideas and projects
- Dec. 3 Course evaluations
- Dec. 8 Summary and review
- Dec. 10 Wrap up and review

Involvement in the UMM Community – Participation and Reflection Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to assist you in gaining exposure to many different aspects of life at UMM and to “encourage” your participation in this community.

Assignment: Attend a total of 12 events at UMM

- You must attend a minimum of 3 events each month (don’t procrastinate!);
- At least 3 reflections (2 pages, typed/double spaced, are due no later than the last class day of each month (though may be turned in at any time).
Reflections should:
 - briefly summarize the event
 - reflect on how this event may impact the campus,
 - reflect how it impacted you and
 - reflect your thoughts on how this event relates to developing a sense of community at UMM
- Events should include a minimum:
 - 4 “fine arts” (UMM theatre, Performing Arts, UMM performance groups, etc) events,
 - 4 “lectures” or scholarly presentations and
 - 2 UMM sporting events.
 - The remaining 2 events are your choice between these 3 categories. If you are not sure if something is applicable or in what category it falls, please ask.
- I will be offering a couple of trips to Habitat for Humanity building sites. Participation in one of these trips will count as two “events” (one “fine arts” and one “lectures”). You may count up to 2 trips as 4 events.

The following is a sample list of schedule “lectures or scholarly presentations” that have been scheduled. There will be MANY more events scheduled as the semester progresses.
Sept. 9

Hispanic Awareness Month Keynote
Bobby Gonzalez: "Red, Black & Brown, The Native American/African/Latin American Connection." Edson; 7:30pm

Sept. 29

CAC Convocation
Fred Francis
"Did we win the war in Iraq and are we winning the peace in the Middle East?"
Edson Auditorium 7:30pm

Oct. 4

Women's Resource Center Conference
Oyate; 10am-4pm (only specific parts apply, get approval first)

Oct. 7

Driggs Lecture

Oct. 6-10

Coming Out Week – special events may apply – get approval first

Oct. 23

MPIRG & Women's Task Force Assault Awareness/Take back the Night
Oyate 7pm

Oct. 27

CAC Convocation
Coleen Rowley, FBI whistle blower "Doing the Right Thing at all Cost - Ethical Decision Making" Edson Auditorium 7:30pm

Association Projects

Associate: To join in a relationship; To connect or join together; To connect in the mind (American Heritage Dictionary)

The purpose of these two projects is for you to find ways to connect with the two books we are reading. You are to find a way to demonstrate this connection through word, print, or other form of expression. This can be a creative project, allowing your creative mind to find an outlet to connect with the intellectual mind. As you are reading each book, think about how the story is effecting you. Think about ways the story and its characters help you to understand another dimension of social justice and another aspect of diversity. This project is intended to show 3 things – your understanding of the story, your understanding of yourself and your understanding of how the story impacted you (put another way, the project should clearly show details of the story, details of you and how you and the story intersect or associate).

Assignment:

- Option 1 – write a 4-5 page essay describing how the story impacted you, what you took from the story and how the story impacted your understanding of the concepts of social justice and diversity. There should be many details and quotes from the story to illustrate your thesis, as well as plenty of “first person” writing to show how the story impacted YOU.
- Option 2 – design a creative piece to demonstrate what you took from the story and how the story impacted your understanding of the concepts of social justice and diversity. This could be a poem, drawing, mosaic, etc. Accompanying the creative piece should be a 1-2 page essay explaining your creative piece, discussing what the piece means and how it fits with this assignment of demonstrating your association to and with the story.

Grading – Grading will be based on completion of all details of the assignment and the extent to which you demonstrate your association with the story and demonstrate the integration between the story, class concepts and yourself. You will NOT be graded on time spent on the project or on creative ability (in other words, you will not receive extra points for “but I spent so much time on this project” nor will you be penalized for “but I am not creative”). The project should be personal, but also should be able to be shared with the class.