

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

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COURSE SYLLABUS

Freshman Foundation Course 100, Section 16

Fall 2011

Humanomics: Exchange and the Human Condition

Catalog Description:

Prerequisites: Disposition to inquire and be challenged.

What makes a rich nation rich? What makes a good person good? And what do these questions have to do with one another? While exploring these and other questions about markets and ethics, students will challenge the perception of economics as distinct from the humanities. Co-taught by professors from the Economic Science Institute and the English Department, this course combines the laboratory method of inquiry into the human propensity to exchange with the cultural interpretation of the human condition in novels, poems, and film.

(Offered fall semester.) 3 credits.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand how people create both material and immaterial wealth.
2. Challenge and deconstruct the perceived tension between economics and the humanities.
3. Articulate a coherent explanation for the evolution of human prosperity and flourishing.
4. Ask cogent, thought-provoking questions based upon critical reading of texts.
5. Present, explain, and evaluate economic- and humanity-based arguments orally and in essay format.

Required Texts:

McCloskey, Deirdre N. *The Bourgeois Virtues: Ethics for an Age of Commerce*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Ridley, Matt. *The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves*. New York: Harper, 2010.

Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1939/2006.

(Must be this edition published by Penguin Classics in 2006)

Students are expected to bring the McCloskey, Ridley and Steinbeck books, journals, and any other of the day's readings with them to each discussion. Several required texts will be made available on the Leatherby Libraries e-reserves.

Essential Facility:

Access to computer lab; seminar setting.

Instructional Methods:

This course uses a combination of hands-on learning in Socratic roundtable discussions of readings, laboratory experiments, journaling, focused free writes, model writes, and two expository papers. The students will use the experiential opportunities to process ideas for a final paper.

Evaluation:

1. Participation in class discussions (10%)
2. Laboratory experiments (10%)
3. Questions (15%)
4. Journal (10%)
5. Expository papers (20%)
6. Final paper (20%)
7. Oral final examination (15%)

Because of the interactive nature of the class, attendance is an essential component. Excessive tardies constitute absences; six absences may result in failure (Undergraduate Catalog 2010-2011, 47). Please keep this in mind. Missed in-class work cannot be made up.

Students with Disabilities

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. The Disability Services Office will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to provide the accommodations for a student based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy

Chapman University is a community of scholars, which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university.

Bibliography:

- Auden, W. H. "The Unknown Citizen." *The Collected Poetry of W.H. Auden*. New York: Random House, 1945, 142-143. Print.
- Blomkamp, Neill (Director). *District 9*. Wingnut Films, 2009. Film.
- Frost, Robert. "The Death of the Hired Man." *The Poetry of Robert Frost*. Ed. Edward C. Lathem. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969, 34-40. Print.
- Hayek, F.A. *The Fatal Conceit*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. Print.

- Irving, Washington. "The Devil and Tom Walker." *The Complete Tales of Washington Irving*. Ed. Charles Neider. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1824/1975, 437-448. Print.
- Mandeville, Bernard. *The Fable of the Bees and Other Writings*. E. Hundert, editor. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1997.
- Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1949/1998. Print.
- Stevens, George (Director). *Shane*. Paramount Pictures, 1953. Film.
- Stone, Oliver (Director). *Wall Street*. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1987. Film.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. Ed. Owen Thomas. New York: W.W. Norton, 1854/1966, 1-13, 33-36, 61-66. Print.
- Wordsworth, William. "The World is Too Much with Us." *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*. Ed. Michael Meyer. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999, 880. Print.

Prepared by: Jan Osborn & Bart J. Wilson, Fall Term, 2010

Last revised by: Jan Osborn & Bart J. Wilson, Fall Term, 2011

Tentative Course Schedule and Outline

Monday, 8/29

Organization & Exhortation

Wednesday, 8/31

Ridley, Prologue and Chapter 1

Monday, 9/5

Labor Day Holiday

Wednesday, 9/7

Experiment (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall, 1st Floor Main Hallway)

Monday, 9/12

Ridley, Chapters 2 & 3

Wednesday, 9/14

Irving, "The Devil and Tom Walker"

Wordsworth, "The World is Too Much with Us"

Thoreau, from *Walden*

Monday, 9/19

Steinbeck, Chapters 1-5

Wednesday, 9/21

Ridley, Chapter 4

Sunday, 9/25, 6:00 p.m. (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall 116)

Movie: *Wall Street* (1987)

Post-screening discussion (10 students)

Monday, 9/26

Steinbeck, Chapters 6-9

(Bring to class a hard copy of Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees and Other Writings*)

Wednesday, 9/28

Ridley, Chapter 5

Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees and Other Writings*

Monday, 10/3

Steinbeck, Chapters 10-15

Frost, "The Death of the Hired Man"

Expository Paper #1 Due, Submit 2 copies

Wednesday, 10/5

Library Orientation, Library, Room 305
Overview Final Paper

Monday, 10/10

Ridley, Chapters 6 & 7

Wednesday, 10/12

Experiment (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall, 1st Floor Main Hallway)

Monday, 10/17

Steinbeck, Chapters 16-19

Monday, 10/17, 7:00 p.m. (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall 116)

Movie: *District 9* (2009)

Post-screening discussion (10 students)

Wednesday, 10/19

Experiment (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall, 1st Floor Main Hallway)

Monday, 10/24

Steinbeck, Chapters 20-25

Wednesday, 10/26

Ridley, Chapter 8

Monday, 10/31

Steinbeck, Chapters 26-30

Wednesday, 11/2

Expository Paper 2 Draft Due

Final Paper Topic and Plan Approved

Monday, 11/7

Expository Paper #2 Due, Submit 2 copies

McCloskey, Apology

Wednesday, 11/9

Experiment (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall, 1st Floor Main Hallway)

Sunday, 11/13, 6:00 p.m. (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall 116)

Movie: *Shane* (1953)

Post-screening discussion (10 students)

Monday, 11/14

McCloskey, Chapters 1-3, 8

Wednesday, 11/16

McCloskey, Chapters 16, 18, 26, 31

Monday, 11/21

Miller, from *Death of a Salesman*

Auden, "The Unknown Citizen"

Submit 2 copies of outline/draft of final paper

Wednesday, 11/23

Thanksgiving Holiday

Monday, 11/28

Movie: TBD

Final Exam Dates Set

Continue work on final paper

Wednesday, 11/30

Movie: TBD

Continue work on final paper

Monday, 12/5

Hayek, Chapter 6 (The Mysterious World of Trade and Money)

Wednesday, 12/7

Submit 2 copies of final paper

Synthesize ideas for final examination

FINAL EXAMINATION

The final examination will be conducted orally, each student responding to questions from the professors in a ten-minute block of time. Examination appointments will be designated following participation in the experiments.

Friday, December 9, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, December 10, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, December 14, 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.

I write entirely to find out what I'm thinking, what I'm looking at, what I see and what it means.
~ Joan Didion

1. Participation in Class Discussions [10%]

Class discussion provides an opportunity for students to explore questions about exchange and the human condition, challenging the common perception of economics as distinct from the humanities. Through this shared inquiry, students gain experience reading for meaning and communicating complex ideas; thinking reflectively about an interpretive problem; and supporting and testing thoughts through dialogue with peers. Class discussion fosters the flexibility of mind to consider problems from multiple perspectives and the ability to analyze ideas critically. Students must enter the discussion with specific questions generated by texts as well as a desire to probe and reevaluate ideas. It is essential that students bring texts, journal, and questions to each class session.

Don't for heaven's sake, be afraid of talking nonsense! But you must pay attention to your nonsense.
~Wittgenstein

2. Laboratory Experiments [10%]

Part of the experiential learning in this class involves participating in a laboratory exercise involving concepts that we will discuss in a future class. All you need to do is show up on time and make the decisions you deem to be the best for the situation presented to you.

The insidious thing about the causal point of view is that it leads us to say: "Of course, it had to happen like that." Whereas we ought to think: it may have happened like that – and also in many other ways.
~Wittgenstein

3. Questions [15%]

Shared inquiry is a process for exploring the central ideas of the course. This means students must read for meaning, identifying possible interpretative problems they would like to address in discussion. For each class period with a reading assignment, students will type up in advance two questions to be handed in before class starts. Asking a good question is harder than providing a good answer. The student's task is to delve into a claim that doesn't appear correct or consistent with the human condition. Explore with your question why the claim is surprising, unexpected, just plain unsettling. Or the question can probe an apparent conflict between the themes in the humanities readings and the claims made by Ridley and later McCloskey. Why is there a clash?

One keeps forgetting to go right down to the foundations. One doesn't put the question marks deep enough down. ~Wittgenstein

4. Journal [10%]

The Humanomics journal is a space for students to reflect on class ideas, to capture text references, thoughts, questions, areas for further inquiry—their thinking about exchange and the human condition. This is not a place to take notes per se; rather, it is a place to work through ideas, to generate questions for class discussion and connections that will serve in writing the

expository papers. Students will select a journal (bound) and bring it to each class session. While it is personal writing, it is not private writing; the journal will be shared and/or collected at times throughout the semester; it is important that it be current. For example, fieldnotes for the final paper will be a required component of the journal.

You cannot write anything about yourself that is more truthful than you yourself are. That is the difference between writing about yourself and writing about external objects. You write about yourself from your own height. You don't stand on stilts or on a ladder but on your bare feet. ~ Wittgenstein

5. Expository Papers [20%]

Paper 1: Due Monday, October 3

Writing Situation:

You have read chapters 1 – 5 in Ridley's *The Rational Optimist*, chapters 1 – 9 in Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, Irving's short story "The Devil and Tom Walker," Wordsworth's poem "The World is Too Much with Us," and excerpts from Thoreau's *Walden*. In addition, you have participated in an experiment and class discussion.

Writing Purpose:

Consider how in your meaning-making process you are making sense of these texts in dialogue with one another and with the experiential component of the course. Possibly consider in what ways you are struggling with connections, what larger questions you are generating. Write an expository essay in which you discuss a connection that you have made or are attempting to make in exploring exchange and the human condition. Develop this connection with references to Ridley and at least one of the literary texts included in the course in a paper of approximately 750 words. Specific guidelines will be discussed in class.

When you are philosophizing you have to descend into primeval chaos and feel at home there. ~Wittgenstein

Paper 2: Due Wednesday, November 2

Writing Situation:

Your reading now includes chapters 6 – 8 in Ridley's *The Rational Optimist*, chapters 10 – 30 in Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, Frost's poem "The Death of the Hired Man," and watched two movies, *Wall Street* and *District 9*. In addition, you have participated in two experiments and class discussion.

Writing Purpose:

Consider what new ideas you are negotiating or ideas you are deepening as you work with the relationships between the economic and the literary texts. Be cognizant of the tensions generated and/or of the connections or clarifications the texts in dialogue manifest. Write an expository essay in which you discuss these tensions or connections as you explore exchange and the human condition. Develop this connection with specific references to Ridley and at least two of the literary texts included in the course in a paper of approximately 750 words. Specific guidelines will be discussed in class.

The edifice of your pride has to be dismantled. And that is terribly hard work. ~Wittgenstein

6. Final Paper [20%]

For the final project students will work in self-organized teams to write an investigatory human interest story on the exchanges made possible by the “middlemen” of Grand Central Market, the Flower District, or the Fashion District in downtown Los Angeles. The students’ task is to find an example of a wholesale product (e.g., plums, peppers, pinto beans, petunias, paisley cloth) or class of products and trace the exchanges from the origin of the product to a particular middleman and finally to the profile of the middleman’s customers. All information must be documented; interviews are one source of documentation. Additionally, your task is to embed the exchange process in the true, compelling story of a specific middleman.

The strict guidelines for the paper include double spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font, and 1" margins on all sides. The minimum length of the paper (ℓ) depends on the size of the group working on it (n), specifically, $\ell = 2n + 4$ for $2 \leq n \leq 5$. Every student on the project earns the same grade on the paper.

<p><i>Don't apologize for anything, don't leave anything out; look and say what it's really like – but you must see something that throws new light on the facts.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">~Wittgenstein</p>

7. Final Examination [15%]

Students will consider the course objectives for Humanomics: Exchange and the Human Condition and respond to questions posed by the professors in an individual oral examination.

Course Objectives

6. Understand how people create both material and immaterial wealth.
7. Challenge and deconstruct the perceived tension between economics and the humanities.
8. Articulate a coherent explanation for the evolution of human prosperity and flourishing.
9. Ask cogent, thought-provoking questions based upon critical reading of texts.
10. Present, explain, and evaluate economic- and humanity-based arguments orally and in essay format.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Nothing is so difficult as not deceiving oneself.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">~Wittgenstein</p>
