Freshman Foundation Course 100, Section 02             Fall 2012

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. This course combines an economic inquiry into the human propensity to exchange with the cultural interpretation of the human condition in the HBO television show *The Wire*. The instructional methods include Socratic roundtable discussions of the texts, laboratory experiments, journaling, focused free writes, and five expository papers.

(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.

As an FFC course, students will:

6. Frame critical questions about ideas, readings, visual materials, and other cultural texts in discussions and written work.
7. Critically reflect on their own thought traditions.
8. Understand that disciplines and intellectual traditions have histories.
9. Participate in academic exchanges, collaborative work, and/or co-curricular activities.
Required Texts (and Bibliography):

Students are expected to bring the McCloskey and Ridley books and their journals to each discussion.

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, and five expository papers.

Evaluation:

1. Participation in class discussions (15%)
2. Laboratory experiments (5%)
3. Questions (15%)
4. Journal (15%)
5. Expository papers (35%)
6. 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 2012-2013, “Academic Policies and Procedures”). 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 Office of Disability Services. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or (www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services) if you have questions regarding this procedure, or for information and to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. 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.

Prepared by: Jan Osborn & Bart J. Wilson, Fall Term, 2010
Last revised by: Bart J. Wilson, Fall Term, 2012

Tentative Course Schedule

Monday, 8/27
Organization & Exhortation

Wednesday, 8/29
Ridley, Prologue and Chapter 1

Monday, 9/3
Labor Day Holiday

Wednesday, 9/5
The Wire, Season 1, Episodes 1-7

Monday, 9/10
Experiment (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall, 1st Floor Main Hallway)

Wednesday, 9/12
Ridley, Chapters 2 & 3

Monday, 9/17
Library Orientation, Library, Room 305

Wednesday, 9/19
The Wire, Season 1, Episodes 8-10

Monday, 9/24
McCloskey, Apology

Wednesday, 9/26
The Wire, Season 1, Episodes 11-13
Expository Paper #1 Due

Monday, 10/1
McCloskey, Chapters 1-3, 26, 28, 31

Wednesday, 10/3
The Wire, Season 2, Episodes 1-3
Monday, 10/8
Experiment (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall, 1st Floor Main Hallway)

Wednesday, 10/10
McCloskey, Chapters 4, 7-9

Monday, 10/15
Expository Paper #2 Due
The Wire, Season 2, Episodes 4-6

Wednesday, 10/17
McCloskey, Chapters 10-12, 15

Monday, 10/22
The Wire, Season 2, Episodes 7-9

Wednesday, 10/24
McCloskey, Chapters 16-18, 20

Monday, 10/29
The Wire, Season 2, Episodes 10-12

Wednesday, 10/31
McCloskey, Chapter 24-25
Expository Paper #3 Due

Monday, 11/5
The Wire, Season 3, Episodes 1-3

Wednesday, 11/7
McCloskey, Chapter 43-45

Monday, 11/12
The Wire, Season 3, Episodes 4-6

Wednesday, 11/14
McCloskey, Chapter 46-48
Expository Paper #4 Due

Monday, 11/19
The Wire, Season 3, Episodes 7-9
Final Exam Dates Set

Wednesday, 11/21
Thanksgiving Holiday
Monday, 11/26
   *The Wire*, Season 3, Episodes 10-12

Wednesday, 11/28
   Read, “Stringer Bell’s Lament: Violence and Legitimacy in Contemporary Capitalism”

Monday, 12/3
   Experiment (Economic Science Institute, Wilkinson Hall, 1st Floor Main Hallway)

Wednesday, 12/5
   Synthesize ideas for final examination

**FINAL EXAMINATION**
The final examination will be conducted orally, each student responding to questions from the professor in a ten-minute block of time. *Your final expository paper #5 is due at your final examination.*

   Friday, December 7, 9 – 11:00 a.m.
   Saturday, December 8, 9 – 11:00 a.m.
   Thursday, December 13, 10:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.
1. Participation in Class Discussions [15%]
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 [5%]
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. Why is there a clash? Or the question can probe an apparent conflict between the themes in The Wire and the claims made by Ridley and later McCloskey. Or the question can take McCloskey’s model of the virtues and apply it to characters in The Wire.

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

4. Journal [15%]
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.

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 [35%]

In preparation for each essay, you should be writing and rewriting at least 300-400 words each week to prime your essay’s thesis. If you have any questions regarding the grade of an essay, I will ask for copies of this preparatory work.

Paper 1: Due Wednesday, September 26

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 The Wire 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 Monday, October 15

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 or McCloskey and The Wire 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

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.

~Wittgenstein

Remaining Papers: Due October 31, November 14, and your final exam.
6. Final Examination [15%]
Students will consider the course objectives for Humanomics: Exchange and the Human Condition and respond to questions posed by the professor in an individual oral examination.

Course Objectives
1. Understand how people create both material and immaterial wealth.
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4. Ask cogent, thought-provoking questions based upon critical reading of texts.
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Nothing is so difficult as not deceiving oneself. ~Wittgenstein