

Oakland University
College of Arts and Sciences
Bachelor Arts in Liberal Studies

LBS 100: Exploration of the Arts and Sciences – Summer Session I 2012

Course: LBS 100

Course Section: #33387

Class Time: T,Th 5:30 -8:50 PM

Class Location: 266 SFH

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Office Hours: T,Th: 1:30 – 3:00

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Course Description: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the major discipline groups that traditionally comprise the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), as well as the methods of inquiry employed within the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. There will be general overviews provided by the instructor of record as well as discipline-specific sessions provided by faculty colleagues from the three areas. Class format will be lecture and discussion. Students will be able to see how diverse disciplines can relate to an overarching interdisciplinary topic.

Course Theme: The course is organized around the interdisciplinary theme of “Creativity Across the Disciplines.” The theme is used to demonstrate how a complex topic is addressed from various disciplinary perspectives and how an interdisciplinary approach compliments the disciplinary perspectives in furthering our understanding of the topic.

Learning Outcomes: Students will demonstrate:

- understanding of both traditional disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches and topics
- knowledge of the historical events and/or philosophical ideas of European or American culture
- knowledge of how Western ideas or institutions have evolved over time
- a commitment to the open attitude necessary for a creative approach to problem solving
- an ability to actively participate in discussions and communicate knowledge, opinions and beliefs to others
- an ability to find information and acquire independently new knowledge/skills
- the ability to integrate knowledge and apply it to solve new problems or arrive at new understandings

Course Content and Objectives : This is an introductory course investigating the wide range of disciplines taught in the CAS. Through the various disciplines of CAS, students are introduced to a broad range of historical, cultural, and social issues relevant to interdisciplinary learning and a diverse global community.

The semester is divided into four general areas of exploration:

- Visual and Performing Arts
- Life Science, Physical Science, Mathematics
- Humanities
- Behavioral and Social Sciences

Course Procedures:

Class meets twice weekly throughout the semester. The semester is structured around four areas of exploration, one week for each area with one class day devoted to integration. Each area has three components

- Reading: *Interdisciplinary and Creativity readings for each exploration area. Each reading must be completed prior to the relevant lecture (text packet)*
- Lecture: *Course content provided by professor and discipline content provided by invited CAS faculty*
- In-class work: *Varied disciplinary methods used for obtaining objective knowledge, as well as the interdisciplinary and global aspects of the topic*

For each exploration area, an invited CAS faculty member will give a one hour lecture reflecting the current research on the topic of interest in their discipline. The lecturer provides background reading material assigned prior to the lecture. The lecture series affords students a broad view of the world with a specific focus through the eyes and research of practitioners in various fields.

Discussions in the class will focus on understanding the different methods used for obtaining objective knowledge in various fields, and on the interdisciplinary and global aspects of the research topic.

Evaluation:

- **Exams** – During the semester, you will receive exams for each of the five topic sections covered in the course. These exams will be posted and completed on Moodle. The due date for each exam is the Wednesday or Sunday following the completion of the topic section. Each exam will consist of 15 multiple choice questions and one short answer question. Your exam average will count for **35%** of your score in the class. Exams are not cumulative.
- **Homework Assignments** – The homework assignments will give you opportunities to apply the knowledge you will be learning in the course to address issues of an interdisciplinary nature. This could include comparing and contrasting a social science perspective to a humanities perspective of a topic discussed in your readings. It could include discussing how cultural values affect a societies' tolerance for creativity. It could also involve demonstrating how to combine two of the disciplines discussed in the course to address a topic of interest to you. In this way, you will gain a deeper understanding the methods of inquiry employed within the humanities, social sciences, arts and natural sciences and how to apply an interdisciplinary perspective to generate creative insights about real world issues and problems. Your assignments will count for **35%** of your score in the class. Your grade for the homework assignment will be assessed on the following components:

- Did you address all of the homework requirements/components?
 - Good writing or execution of the assignment (e.g., evidence of proofreading and using a spell checker (when appropriate); does not appear to have been started an hour before the assignment was due).
 - Organized, clear presentation (i.e., it is clear how your assignment satisfies the homework requirements).
 - Evidence that you understand the material/course content on which the homework is based and integrated it into your assignment
 - Evidence of original thought and/or ability to make connections across course topics.
- ***In-class Exercises and Discussions*** – In-class discussions of the material and the implications and/or applications of the material are an important component of the course. As you will learn in the course, interdisciplinary research requires people from different disciplines to be able to communicate effectively with each other about specific topics. This communication depends upon the ability to understand the perspective of others and differences in ways of approaching questions within a domain. Our discussions will bring a variety of perspectives to the course material and provide you with opportunities to consider and apply alternate viewpoints relating to the central theme of the course – in this case, creativity. In order to receive discussion credit on days in which there are in-class discussions, you need to 1) demonstrate that you are prepared for the discussion and 2) participated in the discussion in a meaningful way.

Note: Being “*prepared for the discussion*” involves reading or listening to the assigned material and posting your reactions to the material in the Moodle discussion forum at least 3 hours before class (so that I can clarify any questions you had about the material before the discussion). Your reaction forum post should include your observations concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the assigned material as well as any questions/points you would like to bring up during the class discussion. Your post will be reviewed and scored and questions will be answered prior to that day’s class. At the conclusion of the class discussion/exercise, I will provide you with some time to make notes on whether the class discussion changed your opinion of the strengths/weaknesses you identified and why. You will turn in these notes at the end of class to receive credit for participating in the discussion.

Some in-class discussions will not require you to prepare for the discussion beforehand (beyond keeping up with your reading). In these cases, you will only need to make notes on the discussion and turn it in.

Note: “*Participating in the discussion in a meaningful way*” is accomplished by students listening to each other, following up on each others’ comments, and offering compelling questions and examples to the class and/or to the instructor. Bad discussions resemble a verbal tennis match between two individuals and the class or between the instructor and the class (e.g., the instructor serves, student A returns, the instructor rallies, student B returns, etc.).

Even though classroom discussions/exercises will occur in a variety of circumstances (and active participation is appreciated in all circumstances), only a subset of those

discussions will count towards your discussion grade and will be identified as such in class.

Participating in in-class discussions will count for **30%** of your score in the class.

Grading of the discussion component will be as follows:

- *0 points* for no reaction forum post and not present for discussion
- *1 point* for reaction forum post but did not participate in discussion or no reaction forum post and but present for discussion.
- *2 points* for reaction forum post and are an active participant in the discussion.
(On discussion days in which there is no advance preparation you will automatically receive 2 points for participating)

Your In-class Discussion grade will be determined by the following formula:
(Total discussion points earned during the semester) / (#discussion days * 2).

- **Assessment of GPA** – Your final grade in the class will be determined by the following formula:

$$(.35*(\text{avg. exam})) + (.35*(\text{homework})) + (.30*(\text{in-class discussion})) = \text{course grade}$$

For example: If you received a 95% average on your exams, an 85% on the homework, and a 90% on the in-class discussion, your score in the course would be:

$$(.35 * 95) + (.35 * 85) + (.30 * 90) = 33.25 + 29.75 + 27 = \mathbf{90.0\% = 3.6 GPA}$$

According to the following chart you would earn a GPA of **3.6** for the course.

4.0 = 100.00% - 98.60	2.9 = 79.59 – 78.60	1.9 = 69.59 – 68.60
3.9 = 98.59 – 96.60	2.8 = 78.59 – 77.60	1.8 = 68.59 – 67.60
3.8 = 96.59 – 94.60	2.7 = 77.59 – 76.60	1.7 = 67.59 – 66.60
3.7 = 94.59 – 92.60	2.6 = 76.59 – 75.60	1.6 = 66.59 – 65.60
3.6 = 92.59 – 89.60	2.5 = 75.59 – 74.60	1.5 = 65.59 – 64.60
3.5 = 89.59 – 88.60	2.4 = 74.59 – 73.60	1.4 = 64.59 – 63.60
3.4 = 88.59 – 86.60	2.3 = 73.59 – 72.60	1.3 = 63.59 – 62.60
3.3 = 86.59 – 84.60	2.2 = 72.59 – 71.60	1.2 = 62.59 – 61.60
3.2 = 84.59 – 82.60	2.1 = 71.59 – 70.60	1.1 = 61.59 – 60.60
3.1 = 82.59 – 80.60	2.0 = 70.59 – 69.60	1.0 = 60.59 – 59.60
3.0 = 80.59 – 79.60		

Policies:

- **Examinations and Homework** - Exams must be taken at the time indicated on the syllabus. Missed exams can only be made up if you provide documentation of a legitimate University-approved excuse (e.g., medical emergency) within **one week** of the missed exam. This also applies to homework assignments.
- **Add/Drops** - The University add/drop policy will be explicitly followed. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the University deadline dates for dropping the course.
- **Special Considerations** - Students with disabilities who may require special considerations should make an appointment with campus Disability Support Services. Students should also bring their needs to the attention of the instructor as soon as possible.
- **Independent Work** - I expect all of the independent work you submit for a grade to be your own work. Plagiarism of any kind, dual submissions (turning in an

assignment for this class you have already submitted for a grade in a different class), plagiarizing information from the internet, and cheating on exams will result in a failing grade for that assignment and (depending on the seriousness of the infraction) possible evaluation by the university academic misconduct committee.

- **Attendance** – Attendance in this course is highly recommended, but not mandatory. It is encouraged because much of the lecture material will contain information that is not present in the textbooks. Participation in class discussions is a major component of your course grade. Additionally, class participation of all enrolled in the course will substantially improve everyone's experience in the course. It will ensure that a variety of experiences and perspectives are brought to class discussions and that everyone will have the opportunity to gain from other's contributions to the class.
- **Classroom/Discussion Forum Conduct** – Active classroom participation and the free exchange of ideas is only possible in a friendly, welcoming environment. To provide such an environment, class members should follow the "golden rule" during classroom or online discussions. Specifically, treat others as you would like to be treated. Raise your hand and wait your turn to contribute to the discussion rather than interrupting others. If you disagree with something someone is saying, counter the idea and make your point without attacking the individual. Refrain from ridicule (i.e., Say "I see your point, but there are a number of problems that may arise," rather than "That is a really stupid idea"). Compliment a good point or idea or part of an idea. Stay on topic.
- **Visitors/ Visiting Speakers** – During the semester, faculty from the arts, humanities, social sciences and hard sciences will visit our class to discuss how they or people within their discipline address the central theme of the course. These visitors will provide some of your assigned readings for the course. I expect the best behavior from everyone during their visit. This includes having read the material they provided before their visit and having prepared points for discussion following their talk. When they visit the classroom I expect you to be polite and respectful of the speaker. Pay attention during their talk (no sleeping, working on homework assignments, using your laptop, or talking). Ask questions relevant to their talk and to their experiences within their field of expertise. If you enjoyed their talk or found it enlightening, be sure to share that with the speaker.

Class Materials:

- **Required Readings**
 - Ausberg, T. (2006). "Becoming Interdisciplinary: An Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies" (2nd edition). Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company. ISBN: 978-0-7575-2647
 - Various articles and book chapters posted in Moodle under "Class Readings". This semester's lectures and readings include readings about interdisciplinary studies as well as creativity research from a variety of disciplines.
- **Technologies**

- This class requires students to use a range of technologies to complete their assignments, interact with each other, and even attend lectures. The integration of these technologies into the course is deliberate. It allows you to experience multiple methods of consuming and delivering content. It allows you to explore and develop useful skills that you might have few opportunities to develop in traditional classes.
 - Support documents, training, and mentoring for many of the technologies will be provided in class. Access and to resources and training for the other technologies will also be provided (e.g., information about the resources at the student technology center)
- ***Moodle***
 - Everything on the class website will also be accessible and/or available on the class Moodle site. However, you will need to use Moodle to access class readings and media files, discussion forums, chat rooms, and your grades. Additionally, you will need to use Moodle to submit your homework assignments.

Time Schedule and Topical Outline: The class schedule, below, indicates class dates, quiz dates, specific lectures, and reading assignments. Topics are indicated in bold type. (The instructor reserves the right to make minor adjustments to this schedule.)

- 5/8 – 5/10 **Introduction to and history of interdisciplinary studies/creativity**
Lectures: “Explaining Interdisciplinary Studies”, “Creativity Across the Disciplines”
Readings: Ausberg Ch1 – 2; Repko “Defining Interdisciplinary Studies”; Sternberg “Concept of Creativity”
- 5/15 – 5/22 **Visual and Performing Arts**
Lectures: “The How and Why of Interdisciplinary Studies” “Creativity in the Arts”
Readings: Ausberg Ch 6; Repko “Drivers of Interdisciplinarity”; Morris “Creativity and Dance – A Call for Balance”
Guest speaker(s):
 5/15 Thayer Jonutz and Ali Woerner (Modern Dance)
 5/22 Jenine Brown (Music Composition)
Homework 1 Due – 5/20
- 5/24 – 5/31 **Life Science, Physical Science, Mathematics**
Lectures: “Contrasting Disciplinary and Disciplinary Perspectives”
 “Creativity in the Sciences: Politics, Power and People”
Readings: Ausberg Ch 7; Repko “Introducing the Disciplines”; Saunders & Thagard “Creativity in Computer Science”
Guest speaker(s):
 5/31 Fay Hansen (Organic Urban Farming)
 6/5 Visit i3Detroit Hackerspace
Homework 2 Due – 5/30
- 6/5 – 6/12 **Humanities**
Lectures: “Understanding Through Integration: Theories and Tools”
 “Creativity and Flow”, “Digital Media, Web 2.0 and Creativity”
Readings: Ausberg Ch 3; Perry “Flow and the Art of Fiction”
Guest speaker(s):
 6/7 Hunter Vaughn (Environment and Film)
 6/12 Ben Bennett-Carpenter (Creativity in the Humanities)
Homework 3 Due – 6/10
- 6/14 – 6/21 **Behavioral and Social Sciences**
Lectures: “The Interdisciplinary Workplace” “Culture and Creativity”
Readings: Ausberg Ch 4 and Reading 14, 15; “Japan Ink,”
Guest speaker(s):
 6/21 John Sifonis (The Value of Your Social Network)
 6/21 George Saunders (Creative Funerals)
Homework 4 Due – 6/21
- 6/26 **Portfolio and Personal Autobiography Presentation 6:30 – 9:30**