

LS 101US – Ways of Knowing

Courses with University Seminar (US) core designation are primarily intended for first-year students throughout all curricula to provide a platform for collegiate level discourse. Activities that hone written and oral communication skills are universally incorporated, but the themes represented in individual US core courses vary considerably to reflect the department or program from which the course originates. All US core courses are small in size and rely heavily on seminar-style teaching where course content is delivered by discussion and interaction rather than by lecture. This learning environment promotes vibrant interactions between first-year students, a faculty member, and in many courses, a more experienced student fellow. US core courses provide a venue where students can enjoy rigorous academic discussions that promote critical thinking, learning, and understanding in a supportive and truly collegiate manner.

Through completion of the US Core students will –

- Analyze main ideas and supporting evidence presented in written texts and oral presentations
- Evaluate diverse points of view when forming and supporting their own ideas
- Prepare and deliver an effective oral presentation
- Demonstrate critical and creative thinking in written communication

LS 101US – Ways of Knowing is open to all students; however, it cannot be repeated. Liberal Studies does not use a common syllabus for LS 101US; instead, instructors select their own course themes and develop their own curricula.

LS 101US - Creating Intercultural Competency for a Globalizing World

Lori Lawson

This specific University Seminar is designed around the concept of “intercultural competency.” In addition to the general goals listed above, students will improve their ability to work effectively with cultural difference. The potential benefits of increasing intercultural competence are many, and range from the prosaic: increasing career success - to the profound: contributing to the creation of a more peaceful and harmonious world. We will explore the differing definitions of culture, both from a macro and micro perspective, taking time to identify what is typically thought of as the US-American Dominant Culture model and comparing that to the reality of our multi-cultural nation.

Course materials include various articles, TED talks and excerpts from books, including: *The Rational Optimist* by Matt Ridley, *The Social Animal* by David Brooks, *Ancient Futures* by Helena Norberg-Hodge, *Cultures & Organizations: Software of the Mind (3rd Edition)* Hofstede & Minkov, *Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcom Gladwell, *Figuring Foreigners Out: A Practical Guide*, by Craig Storti, *Riding the Waves of Culture* by Fons Trompenaars & Charles Hampden-Turner.

LS101US - Critical Thinking...Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

Charlie Pinkava

In this section of Ways of Knowing, students are presented with the opportunity to discover, evaluate and apply critical thinking to their academic experience, as well as to life outside of the university.

This course is taught using both face to face (in the classroom) instruction, concurrently with D2L (MSU’s electronic on-line learning platform) instruction. All discussions and activities are to be completed and posted on D2L and will then be discussed in class. The course is arranged into a weekly schedule with each week beginning on Monday @ 12:01 AM and ending at 11:59PM (MDT) on Sunday of that week. Various Dropbox Assignments, Discussion Questions (related to the text), In-class

discussions, Journal Entries and Class Activities will be due throughout the week. Specific due dates will be posted in the *Weekly Overviews* for each week of the course posted on D2L.

Required texts: *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, Robert M. Pirsig, Edition 2006 and the *Guidebook to Understanding Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, DeSanto & Steele, William Morrow 1990. *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts & Tools*, *The Miniature Guide to The Art of Asking Essential Questions*, and *The Miniature Guide to The Art of Socratic Questioning*, all by Linda Elder and Richard Paul.

LS 101US – Globalization, Poverty, and Human Rights

Teresa Greenwood

Students in this section of LS 101 consider ideas and texts from many disciplines to explore various ways of reading, analyzing, interpreting, and making sense of our culture and environment. This fall, we will explore some of the myths, realities, issues, problems and opportunities of globalization, poverty and human rights in an interdisciplinary manner using nonfiction, documentary films, and TED talks.

This course is reading and writing intensive and focused on answering the following central course questions: Can our deeply interconnected world deliver prosperity to everyone? Should we be concerned about inequality? Should we be concerned about poverty? Upon what values should our decisions, our policies, be based?

Students are assigned 800 pages of reading and a minimum of 20 pages of writing over the course of the semester. Readings for fall include William Cronon's essay "Only Connect"; chapters from Rhoda Howard-Hassmann's book *Can Globalization Promote Human Rights?*; Katherine Boo's tome *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*; Muhammad Yunus's plan for *Creating a World Without Poverty*; and Roger Thurow and Scott Kilman's page-turner *Enough: Why the World's Poor Starve in an Age of Plenty*.