

US 121 Fall 2013 Syllabus

This class advances the argument: We are living in one of the most momentous times of change in human history. We have changed. Now we need to name the paradigm that has already shifted. This class will be testing that argument in a myriad of ways. We will be thinking together about how we know the world, how we judge others and ourselves, how we communicate, how we educate, and most importantly how we think—as individuals, in groups, as a culture, as subculture, in a historical moment—as mediated by and through technology.

This course will take advantage of the virtual world and be conducted completely through technology. We will meet only online, mostly asynchronous, and collaborate in a field beyond the face-to-face. There will only be one occasion that we will interact in real time and even that will be through the medium of technology. This is not done for mere convenience (although doing your coursework in your PJs at 3 am is certainly convenient).

This course is designed to be student led. That is not to say that as Instructor I relinquish all determination over the class to students. I will still be judging you on your performance and ability to complete the assignments. However, there is great freedom in this class to take push the topic and ideas to your conclusions. There is also great responsibility. I will not come over to your house (at 3 am or any other time) to read the assignment to you or make you participate in discussions. You must take the initiative to read and understand all of the assignments, to gather all of the materials, and to interact with your collaborators to achieve common goals.

This course is conceived as a cross-disciplinary exploration in which we will consider the deep structure of thought, ideas of culture, concepts of justice, and challenge beliefs of community in the digital age. We will learn from expressive books and articles ranging from philosophy to fiction to science. Some will be easy reads others will be more challenging. We will also learn from engaged collaboration with others. Every student will have several opportunities to work with partners or in groups in the class and learning to be conscious and conscientious about that interactive, collaborative process is one of the learning methods of this course.

Assignments	Possible Points	Date Due
Engaged Participation and Discussion Postings	150 (10/week)	Tuesday each week
Leading Discussion	60	As assigned
Life of Pi Essay	30	September 15
Philosopher Kings Paper	50	September 29
A Time for War Presentation	60	October 27
Final Research Project	150	December 1-10
Total Points	500	

Due dates and assignments are subject to change. Please watch D2L for updates and changes. There will also be emailed announcements for changes in schedule.

A	465-500	B+	435-449	C+	385-399	D+	335-349
A-	450-464	B	415-434	C	365-384	D	315-334
		B-	400-414	C-	350-364	D-	300-314
						F	0-299

Grades below a "C-" do not satisfy the Core 2.0 Seminar requirement. Some programs require students to earn a grade higher than a "C-." There is no extra credit available in this course. This course cannot be repeated.

It is the student's responsibility to read and adhere to all policies described in the syllabus and course packet. Within the packet you will see information and guidelines for class participation, leading discussion, academic writing, and submitting assignments. This class has a heavy emphasis on reading and writing, please consider this before agreeing to take this course. Please review this packet carefully and ask your instructor for clarification as needed.

Required Texts

Abrams, *Fobbit*

Martel, *Life of Pi*

O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

Plato, *The Last Days of Socrates*

All other readings will be posted in D2L.

Please see Content for detailed schedule of readings and assignments.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodation(s), please contact your instructor and the Office of Disability, Re-Entry and Veteran Services, which is located in room 180 of the Strand Union. Tel: (406) 994-2824, TTY: (406) 994-6701, Fax: (406) 994-3943. Mailing address: P.O. Box 173960, Bozeman, MT 59717-3960.

Earning Core Credit

Students must complete Core courses with a minimum grade of 'C-' to earn Core credit. Some degree programs require grades higher than a 'C-'. If you withdraw from this course, or if you do not earn a sufficient grade for your major, you will need to take another University Seminar to fulfill the Core requirement. **This course cannot be repeated.**

US 121US and the University Seminar Core Requirement

US 121US fulfills the University Seminar Core requirement and is accountable to the University Seminar core mission and learning outcomes. These outcomes guide our course goals of fostering connections while engaging students in inquiry and the practices of critical thinking, reading, writing, and academic discourse.

University Seminar Core Mission and Learning Outcomes

Courses with University Seminar (US) core designation are primarily intended for students throughout all curricula to provide a platform for collegiate level discourse. Activities that hone written and oral communication skills are universally incorporated, but 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 or peer leader. 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

- Demonstrate critical thinking abilities
- Prepare and deliver an effective oral presentation
- Demonstrate analytical, critical, and creative thinking in written communication

ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGED PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

See complete requirements in Content of D2L for detailed attendance and participation requirements and guidelines.

Attendance

Attendance is required and is a minimum expectation in US 121US. In discussion-based seminars much of the learning takes place during daily discussions and cannot be made-up. If you are not in class, you are denying yourself and your classmates of collaborative learning opportunities. Instructors may excuse student absences for extraordinary reasons: significant illness, injury, family or personal emergency. Students must provide instructors with written documentation when requesting to have absences excused. However, providing documentation does not guarantee that your absence will be excused.

Engaged Participation

Students earn participation grades commensurate with the preparation, engagement, and meaningful participation demonstrated in D2L. In US 121US, engaged participation is demonstrated when students actively engage, ask meaningful questions, and show a willingness to push themselves and their own thinking.

ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES and OVERVIEW

- There is no extra credit available in this course.
- All assignments are due by midnight on the due date specified in the syllabus. The DropBox will not accept late assignments.
- Assignments are described fully in the course packet. Over the duration of the semester, students are expected to:
 - Read 30-300 pages per text.
 - Produce 15-30 pages of writing over the course of the term.
 - Conduct academic research.
 - Lead at least one class discussion.
 - Create and deliver original presentations.
- Montana State University has a license agreement with Turnitin, a web-based service that verifies the originality of student work by comparing a submitted paper to information available on the internet, databases of journal articles, and millions of student papers previously submitted to Turnitin. In seminar you will be asked to submit some or all of your work to Turnitin. All materials submitted to Turnitin will be retained by Turnitin in its database to be

used solely for the purpose of verifying the originality of papers subsequently submitted to Turnitin. (Information About Plagiarism and TurnItIn).

- If you do not wish a paper submitted to Turnitin to be identifiable as yours, please work with your instructor to ensure that all personal information (e.g. name, GID, SSN) is removed from the paper before it is submitted to Turnitin (Information About Plagiarism and TurnItIn).

COURSE CONDUCT POLICIES

Academic Honesty

Students should refer to the MSU Student Conduct Code, as they are accountable to all policies described therein. As a student and member of the MSU academic community, it is your responsibility to be aware of and adhere to the Student Conduct Code. Our examples provided here are not exhaustive. Students can access the complete Conduct Code via the Dean of Students website:

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwds/>

Academic Misconduct

Possible sanctions for academic misconduct range from an oral reprimand to expulsion from the university. Section 410.00 of the Student Conduct Code describes academic misconduct as including but not limited to “cheating, plagiarism, forgery, falsification, facilitation or aiding academic dishonesty; multiple submission, theft of instructional materials or tests; unauthorized access to, manipulation of or tampering with laboratory equipment, experiments, computer programs, or animals without proper authorization; alteration of grades or files; misuse of research data in reporting results; use of personal relationships to gain grades or favors, or otherwise attempting to obtain grades or credit through fraudulent means” (Student Conduct Code 2012-2014).

Plagiarism

If you have questions or are unsure how to use and cite sources, please ask for assistance. Paraphrasing or quoting another’s work without citing the source, whether in an oral presentation or a written assignment, is a form of academic misconduct. Inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another’s work (relying heavily on sources without citing them) is considered plagiarism and will be treated as such.

Collaboration

Each student is expected to create his or her own original work. This includes research, presentations, essays, etc. While we encourage you to discuss your ideas and questions with classmates and friends, the work you submit should reflect your original ideas and work. University policy states that, unless otherwise specified, students may not collaborate on graded material. Exceptions to this policy will be stated explicitly for individual assignments. If you have any questions about the limits of collaboration, you are expected to ask for clarification.

Consequences of Misconduct

Students found guilty of any form of academic misconduct, even if the misconduct is unintentional, will—at a minimum—fail the corresponding assignment(s). Some cases of academic misconduct might receive more severe sanctions depending upon the instance(s) of misconduct. All instances of academic misconduct will be referred to the Provost's Office for further review and sanctioning.

Student Conduct

Student conduct that disrupts, invades, or violates the personal and property rights of others (especially within MSU classrooms) is prohibited and subject to disciplinary action. Please refer to the MSU Student Conduct Code, which delineates the standards of the MSU community. We will not tolerate disruptive behavior in US 101US. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave the class and may be referred to the Dean of Students office.

All student conduct and academic misconduct policies referenced here have been informed by the MSU Conduct Code.