

Humanities 214

Course Guidelines

Readings

All students will be assigned the core readings, which change from semester to semester and are chosen in consultation with the faculty. Other readings may be added by each instructor.

Exams

There will be at least 3 exam opportunities for students, including the final exam (which should contain a comprehensive essay component). Some faculty break up the exams into quizzes, take home exams, etc.

Exams should be mainly essay/short answer, as opposed to multiple choice, matching, etc. Students should be accountable on exams for information from the large-group lecture. There should be some instruction in how to prepare for and write an essay exam.

Some provision should be made to encourage students to prepare regularly—whether quizzes, frequent short response papers, or a web forum.

Writing

At least 12-15 pages of out-of-class writing should be assigned, including one essay that involves research using secondary sources. Instructors should provide some guidance in the selection of topic, the formation of a thesis, and the critical use of secondary sources, including incorporating opposing points of view in an academic essay.

Other forms of writing should be assigned at the instructor's discretion (essays on readings or cultural events, take-home exams, etc). Some writing should involve analysis of period texts or art.

Discussion

In discussion, students should be encouraged to support opinions with evidence. There should be opportunity for each student to share prepared remarks. Instructors are encouraged to make active participation a significant part of the students' final grade.

Outside learning experience

Students will be required to attend at least three cultural events or a service learning assignment during the semester and provide a written response to the instructor. We encourage use of on-campus events for the cultural events requirement.

Syllabus

Each course syllabus should include a copy of the Humanities program objectives, which you can find on the Humanities website. In addition, include a statement on course policies (basis of grade, required participation, make-up exams, missed deadlines, attendance, plagiarism, and a statement that students with a recognized disability should make their condition known and negotiate any needed accommodation).

Include office hours and contact information.

Program Skills Objectives

Skills in analysis are fostered by the HUM courses' attention to thought processes, individual as well as cultural, of the authors studied, of instructors' presentations, and of the students themselves in their spoken and written responses.

- * Critical listening skills are fostered by exposing the students to, and guiding them to learn from, large-group weekly lectures; lectures and textual clarification given by their individual instructors in the small-class setting; and classmates' comments made in open discussions in class.
- * Students are taught to contextualize the individual issues, ideas, and practices about which they learn, in order to properly weigh the significance of these.
- * Writing skills are fostered by requiring students to compose their thoughts in a variety of written forms (e.g., response notebooks; essay tests; quizzes; textual analyses; formal research papers). Humanities tests are mainly essay, and students write one, usually two, papers per course.
- * Speaking skills are fostered by encouraging students' participation in class discussion and presentations. Because the development of speaking skills requires the opportunity to participate actively and frequently in class, class size is kept small (max. 22).
- * Reading skills are fostered by the program's focus on understanding and contextualizing primary-source texts.

Skills Objectives for Hum 214

Listening, note-taking and study: Students will receive instruction in how to study for essay examinations and in how to write an essay exam answer.

Reading: Instructors should reinforce good practices for alert critical reading of primary source texts. Students should gain experience in dealing with secondary source material in a critical way, that is, in realizing that different secondary sources will differ in methodology and point of view toward a common subject.

Writing: Some of the writing experience should continue to develop the student's ability to form and develop a thesis. As part of the course writing assignments, students will write a short or medium-length research essay. Normally it is useful if instructors guide the writing process through stages including formation of a thesis and evaluation of secondary sources. Students also need to understand how to incorporate opposing points of view into an academic essay.

Discussion: In open class discussion, students should practice supporting their opinions with evidence. Students will also share prepared remarks with the whole class. These might be the results of small group discussions or of assignments to lead a brief discussion of a text or topic.