SYLLABUS: IDH 3006
AESTHETICS, VALUES AND AUTHORITY:
CONSIDERING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LAW
AND THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

Section UO3   Class Nbr. 13491
Spring 2005

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Ms. Martha Barantovich,
Graduate Teaching Assistant

The faculty of the Honors College has cast the third year seminar in terms of three fundamental elements: aesthetics, values and authority. In this seminar we will build our experiences, in part, around critical questions related to the three elements that underpin the third year Honors Seminar: Aesthetics, Values and Authority.

Below are the synthesis questions that will drive our inquiry during the Spring 2005:

What is the combined result of AESTHETICS, VALUES and AUTHORITY?
What is worthwhile?

CONSIDERING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LAW
AND THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

It seems that most Americans move through their lives as if the law does not exist. That is, we tend to live in accordance with the norms dictated by our culture and so we have this general belief that we know what it is legal to do and what is probably illegal. There are time when we are surprised to learn that the law allows something that we thought was improper, or that the law does not have the power or authority to enforce what we think is a law. It is not unusual to come upon a situation where ignorance of the law has placed a good person in a bad position. Nor is it uncommon to find out that a person has acted in an unscrupulous way that is not illegal and that a good person is a victim that the law can not protect or assist..

Clearly it is to the advantage of every citizen to know, understand and appreciate as much as they can about the law of the land.

FALL 2004: DISCOVERING AMERICAN CHARACTER

The seminar began in the fall with an examination of cultural artifacts, personalities and events that have shaped the character of the people of America form the founding of the nation to the 1980"s.
The spring seminar will focus on the question of The Law in America. This topic was suggested and endorsed by seminar participants. The intent of our spring seminar is to provide participants with opportunities to consider the law in terms of American values. Participant will be encouraged to appreciate the power of the law as well as its relationship between the preception of fit between the law and American society.

Goals of the seminar are to:

- engage participants in critical thought
- create and maintain a simulating intellectual experience for all seminar participants
- advance each seminar participant’s understanding of the importance of aesthetics, values and authority in establishing and maintaining a code of law consistent with the national character.
- demonstrate the interrelationships linking aesthetics, values and authority in shaping American law.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINAR

Organization

The seminar is organized around questions rather than answers or chronology. For this reason our readings and discussion will not necessarily flow historically. Rather, we will consider various issues and questions and, at times, enjoy the benefits of hindsight.

Format

As this course is offered in the seminar format, it is expected that meetings will include regular and lively focused discussions. The seminar facilitator has the responsibility for setting the themes, making assignments and respecting the contributions of well prepared seminar participants in all discussions. The participants have the responsibility to come to meetings prepared, actively participate in discussions, act respectfully towards all seminar participants and to complete all assignments in a timely fashion. It should be understood that participants who arrive at seminar meetings unprepared are by definition disrespectful to the seminar.

Because the seminar meets for 2 hours and 45 minutes there is plenty of time for discussion. The seminar has been developed to facilitate the showing of films and accommodating guest speakers. Each meeting will conclude with a summary discussion in which all participants are expected to become involved.

Special activities

In general the seminar will meet at the regular time and place. However, participants may decide to arrange an off-campus meeting. If such a case arises it is expected that all participants will make every effort to participate fully in this activity.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a class visit to Washington, DC. As of this writing the it has been decided that the most likely dates for this trip are March 3 - 6. The seminar will now be faced with the responsibilities of developing and implementing a fund raising plan to underwrite the cost of this activity.

Requirements

Reflective papers: 30%
At intervals noted on the seminar calendar students will submit reflective papers of no more than 5 pages. These papers will consider the seminar experiences to date in relation to the general topic the formation of the American character. Although 3 reflective papers will be assigned only the 2 highest grades will be computed into for the final grade.

Group project: 20%
Participants will join a research group focused on a legal issue or principal and prepare a collective paper of no more than 8 pages examining this issue or principal. The group will make a presentation of
approximately 30 minutes in length to the seminar and entertain questions.

Take home mid-term examination: 20%
Students will respond to 2 of 3 questions on a take home examination. These questions will be drawn from the experiences of the seminar up to the point of the examination. Students will have one week to complete this task.

Final synthesis project: 20%
Each participant in the seminar will be expected to develop and present a project that synthesizes the seminar experience. Students electing to develop a paper will be limited to a 15 pages of text. Students electing to develop a non-traditional project should discuss their project with the instructor and establish guideline acceptable to both parties.

Participation: 10%
A seminar is only as good as the participants make it. Each student will receive a grade reflective of the quality of her or his participation in seminar activities. It should be understood that quality is significantly more noteworthy than quantity.

Guidelines for all written work.

- All written work should be submitted on standard paper, doubled spaced and typed using standard 10 or 12 point type.
- It is expected that all written work done outside of the seminar will be proofread and corrected thoroughly.
- Students should follow a manual of style when preparing written. Any standard style is acceptable.
- Names and student numbers as well as page numbers should appear on each page of a written assignment.
- All work should have a title page. (not counted in page limits)
- Written work should be submitted without covers -- only one staple in the upper left.
- Students may submit written work via e-mail to fains@fiu.edu.
- Students should keep a copy of all written work submitted.
- Work received after deadlines may be marked down for lateness.

- ALL STUDENT WORK IS TO BE ORIGINAL. PROPER REFERENCES ARE REQUIRED WHEN USING THE WORK OF OTHERS IN YOUR PAPERS. VIOLATORS OF THIS POLICY RECEIVE A FAILING GRADE FOR THE ASSIGNMENT AND MAY BE AWARDED A GRADE OF “F” FOR THE SEMINAR.

Submission of written work.

All student work will be submitted electronically using TURNITIN.

This semester this seminar will be participating in an experiment intended to facilitate the detection of plagiarized student work. PLEASE UNDERSTAND THIS EXPERIMENT IS NOT BEING CONDUCTED BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS ONE WHO CHEATS. Rather, this experiment is for the benefit of the faculty who are considering adopting this procedure to be applied in other classes in the future. You will receive a handout guiding you through the submission process.

Grading

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<td>BELOW 60</td>
<td>F</td>
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Criteria:

Written work and presentations will be evaluated using the following criteria:

a) responds to the assigned task
b) is well organized, free of most writing errors (no body is perfect)
c) reflective of critical thought and imagination
d) directly linked to seminar readings and/or discussions
e) offers new insights into the problem or issue

A work responds to each of the five (5) criteria noted above.
B work responds criteria a, b and c and either d or e
C work responds to criteria a, b and c.
D work responds to criteria a and b.

The participation grade will be determined using the following criteria:

a) attendance and punctuality
b) the quality (not quantity) of contributions made to the seminar
   1) connections with readings and previous discussions
   2) building on the contributions of others
   3) demonstrated respect for individuals and the group
c) accepting and meeting responsibilities for group work
d) contributing to the general effectiveness of the seminar

Since it is assumed that all participants in the seminar will meet the above criteria each student begins with a grade of A in the area of participation. However, when evidence is presented demonstrating a failure to meet the stated criteria the grade of A will be lowered accordingly.

Attendance and punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are a vital in the seminar since participants are dependent each other if the collective is to reach its potential. Therefore, attendance is expected. Should a participant miss one meeting of the seminar she/he must understand that each subsequent absence will reduce the final grade one full letter.

The seminar will begin 5 minutes after the hour. This will allow participants to be courteous to others and avoid difficulty in crowded halls, elevators and parking delays. It is expected that the seminar will begin on time and it is understood that tardiness detracts from the quality of the seminar. Therefore, participants who are late more than twice will have their grade for class participation reduced by 50%.

* the instructor will consider each submission of student work independently and determine if a plus (+) or minus (-) is warranted.

Course Design Matrix

The course design matrix is presented to assist students in understanding both the conceptualization of the course and how the structure of this seminar relates to the evaluation of student work and the awarding of final grades.
**Basic Assumptions**

**Academic Skills**
Honors students are serious students with good basis academic skills.

1. Junior level Honors College Students will demonstrate skill as writers, readers and researchers.
2. Junior level Honors College Students seek to actively engage others in academically grounded dialogues.
3. Junior level Honors College Students are disposed to be intellectually curious.

**Expectation**

1. Student papers
2. Focused interaction with seminar participants
3. The nature and appropriateness of questions raised in meetings of the seminar

**Personal Involvement**
Those choosing to enroll in The Honors College are hungry for opportunities to engage other students in serious interactive activities.

1. Seminar participants will contribute to seminar discussions by offering grounded input.
2. Seminar participants will seek opportunities to advance their colleagues as well as themselves.
3. Seminar participants will demonstrate that they are seriously engaged in critical analysis of their work reflective thinking.

**Evidence**

1. Participation in Seminar meetings
2. Participation in group projects and class tasks
3. Presentation of written work, projects and other artifacts reflective of

**Academic Engagement**
Honors College students relish the opportunity to think creatively, engage others reflectively and think “outside of the box.”

1. Seminar participants will acquire and refine their understanding of basic concepts presented in readings and class activities
2. Seminar participants will seek to go beyond the minimal course requirements in order to gain keener insight into some issues and questions raised encounters with readings, films and seminar discussions.
3. Seminar participants will synthesize elements of the seminar and develop unique personal understandings related to seminar goals.

**Evidence**

1. Reflective papers
2. Take home mid-term exam
3. Leadership in the development of the group project
4. Synthesis project

**Academic Integrity**

Students in this seminar are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Academic Integrity (below).

**CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

This Code of Academic Integrity was adopted by the Student Government Association on November 28, 2001 and reflects the values articulated in the Student Code of Standards. Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of Florida International University.
Pledge

As a student of this university:

* I will be honest in my academic endeavors.
* I will not represent someone else’s work as my own.
* I will not cheat, nor will I aid in another’s cheating.

REQUIRED TEXTS:


BACKGROUND READING:
Or refer to this website: http://www.constitution.org/cons/constitu.htm

Or refer to this website: http://www.law.emory.edu/FEDERAL/independ/declar.html

ADDITIONAL READINGS:


