

HONORS 101: Quest for Meaning
Block 4
November 14 to
December 12, 2011

Instructor: Dr. Tom Harlow

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Class Times: Monday-Friday 12:30-3:30

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00-11:00 (other times by appointment)

Classroom: Niswonger 401

Course Description: An interdisciplinary exploration of the question of meaning through close analysis of literary, philosophical, artistic and religious materials. Particular attention will be given to the development of effective writing and critical thinking skills. This course fulfills the Commons Humanities requirement (except for education majors). Learning outcome: Public Speaking.

Required Materials:

Camus, A. (1993). *The Stranger*. (M. Ward Trans). New York, NY: Everyman's Library a division of Alfred A. Knopf. (Original work published 1942).

Frankl, V. E. (2006). *Man's search for meaning*. (I. Lasch Trans.). Boston, MA: Beacon Press. (Original work published 1946).

Tarnas, R. (1993). *The passion of the western mind: Understanding the ideas that have shaped our worldview*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Mase, Y. (Producer), & Takita, Y. (Director). (2008). *Departures*. [DVD]. Japan: Shochiku Studio.

Baggini, J. (2007). *What's it all about?* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Camus, A. (1991). *The Myth of Sisyphus: And other essays*. (J. O'Brien Trans.). New York, NY: Vintage International. (Original work published 1942).

Freeman, D. (2009, August 14). Reprint: Jean-paul Sartre on Camus' The Myth of Sisyphus. MyApotheosis: Enduring My Delusions of Grandeur. (Original work published 1943). Retrieved from <http://myapotheosis.com/?p=77>

Course Goals and Objectives: Socrates once noted that the unexamined life is not worth living. In this course we will explore the larger question of meaning. Through a variety of texts and film, we will consider the significance of people's "will to meaning" and grapple with the

complexities of finding meaning in life. We will survey the development of Western philosophical thought beginning with Pre-Socratic Greece concluding with post-modernism. We will examine how particular philosophical perspectives address the meaning of life. In addition to examining literary and historical philosophical issues, students will devote time to developing an aspect of their personal beliefs. Through reading, writing, discussion, and presentations students will develop their ability to think critically and to effectively communicate.

Teaching Philosophy: As a social psychologist, I view learning as a social process and that we are adapted to we learn best from each other and by teaching one another. Learning involves change through experience. We learn through communication and by doing things ourselves. By challenging, yet supporting each other, I believe we are capable of achieving far more than we can alone. I see my role in the classroom as that of a facilitator. I will set the stage by identifying worthwhile content, sharing my knowledge, and by introducing activities and assignments to help you develop and apply your knowledge of the course material. I ask of you to participate by being prepared and joining in the conversation. Together we will learn a lot and have fun in the process.

Course Policies:

Policy regarding missed exams: Except under extreme circumstances, which are left to the discretion of the instructor, no make up exams will be given. A total of 2 exams will be given throughout the course. Exams will emphasize recently covered material. If a student is unable to attend class on an exam day or chooses to miss an exam, that exam will be scored as a zero.

Course Operation:

Class attendance and academic misconduct policies as stated in the 2012-2013 Student Handbook will be followed. Any student missing more than three class meetings, including a combination of late arrivals and early leaves, will fail the course (any combination of two late arrivals and/or early-leaves will constitute one absence). Instances of class disruption, suspected cheating, or plagiarism will be handled by the instructor in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.

To create and preserve a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, all participants share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. The instructor is authorized to take such steps as are necessary when behavior of the student disrupts the normal classroom procedure. Instructors may remove a student for the single class session in which such disruptive behavior becomes continuous and/or serious and may initiate disciplinary proceedings (see the Code of Student Conduct or Associate Dean of Students). Violations of the disciplinary code may result in serious sanctions such as probation, academic reassignment, institutional suspension or dismissal. In addition, instructors have the right to limit classroom discussion in order to meet the educational objectives of the class session. Any continued disruption of class will result in a report to the Associate Dean of Students for a conduct code infraction.

Examples of disruptive classroom behavior include the following:

Monopolizing class discussion

Rude, disrespectful, contemptuous, or offensive language, posturing, or gestures

Aggressive, hostile, or confrontational language, posturing, or gestures

Sleeping

Chattering

Excessive or disruptive lateness

Engaging in unrelated tasks

Interruptions caused by cell phones, pager/beepers, and other electronic devices

Unexcused exiting, or premature preparing to exit class

Academic Resource Center:

Please contact the Academic Resource Center for any disability-related services or inquiries.

You may also access additional academic support through the Academic Resource Center. For

either service, please contact Jill Jones at 423-636-7300 or 1-800-729-0256 ext.5683. You may

also email directly at jjones@tusculum.edu. The Academic Resource Center is located on the

first floor of Annie Hogan Byrd (rm. 100). The mailing address is: Tusculum College Academic Resource Center, Box 5065, Greeneville, TN 37743.

Daily Preparation and Participation (15%)

Your class participation grade will be based on your ability to answer and ask questions that reflect familiarity with the readings and material to be covered in class. As part of daily preparation students will generate two short answer questions (at a level above Bloom's Knowledge level) from each reading assignment to be submitted before class. In place of one question for each day, you may link a work of art germane to the day's material (along with a caption explicating the connection to course content). Notes over each reading are to be kept in a notebook and brought to class as part of preparation credit. All are expected to contribute to class discussion. Additional assignments, such as drafts and peer review of written material will be assessed as part of Preparation and Participation.

Quizzes 15%

Daily short answer quizzes over the day's reading assignment will precede each day's discussion.

Exams 30%

There will be two exams, a midterm and final covering material preceding each. The format will include short answer questions and essays to be written in class (drawn from a set of questions distributed in advance). The short answer questions will be selected from quizzes and adaptations student generated questions submitted as daily preparation. Each exam will be weighted 15% of the total grade.

Group Presentation 10%

Interdisciplinary teams of students 3 to 4 students (majoring within different schools or divisions of the college Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities, Mathematics & Natural Sciences, and Business) will investigate how faculty representing their different disciplines characterize the

pursuit of meaning in their respective fields and identify significant works or historical figures noted in Tarnas’s timeline. Each member will be responsible of presenting a segment summarizing their interview and expanding upon the significant work or figure. The entire group presentation should be 15 minutes. Presentations are expected to be well practiced and will be evaluated with the college’s Public Speaking Rubric. Therefore, timing will be important.

This I Believe Paper and Presentation 15%

You will be asked to write a 350 to 500 word “[This I Believe Essay](#)” and deliver it as a three to minute presentation before the class. As with the group presentation it is expected to be well practiced and will be evaluated with the Public Speaking Rubric. In addition to overall writing quality, the essay will be evaluated in terms of meeting the guidelines for submission “This I Believe” with a chance to be played on the Bob Edwards Show. Note, extra credit of 2 points will be awarded to the mid-terms and finals of those submitting their essays to his I Believe, Inc.

Term Paper on *The Stranger* 15%

The final paper for the course will be a ten to twelve page integrative paper on Camus’ *The Stranger* that coherently incorporates all of the sources listed in the required materials and a minimum of two additional sources. This paper is to apply APA style conventions of New Times Roman 12-point font with one inch margins and use APA style citation and referencing of all sources. This paper will be evaluated with the college’s Writing Rubric.

GRADING SCALE:

- 100-94—A
- 93-90—A-
- 89-86—B+
- 85-83—B
- 82-80—B-
- 79-76—C+
- 75-73—C
- 72-70—C-
- 69-66—D+
- 65-60—D
- <60—F

Tentative Course Schedule *

<p>Day 1 Wednesday, 11/14</p>	<p>In-class: Introductions and course overview. Homework: Reading 3-52 in <i>Man’s search for meaning</i>, 2 questions above Bloom’s knowledge level on reading, and notes. Begin initial reading of <i>The Stranger</i> at own pace.</p>
<p>Day 2 Thursday, 11/15</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, and discuss reading.</p>

	<p>Homework: Reading 53-97 in <i>Man's search for meaning</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, notes and This I believe Student listening Exercise (see link on notes page).</p>
<p>Day 3 Friday, 11/16</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, and discuss reading.</p> <p>Homework: Reading 1-72 in <i>The passion of the western mind</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes. Note, break this one up across the weekend.</p>
<p>Day 4 Monday, 11/19</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, and discuss reading.</p> <p>Homework: Reading 73-137 in <i>The passion of the western mind</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes.</p>
<p>Day 5 Tuesday, 11/20</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, and discuss reading. Public Speaking activity with Marilyn DuBrisk in Behan</p> <p>Homework: Reading 138-222 in <i>The passion of the western mind</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes.</p>
<p>Thanksgiving Break Wednesday</p>	<p>Holiday (11/21)</p> <p>Do some reading each day (like 28 pages)</p>
<p>Thanksgiving Break Thursday Thanksgiving</p>	<p>Holiday (11/22)</p> <p>Do some reading each and every day</p>
<p>Thanksgiving Break Friday</p>	<p>Holiday (11/23)</p> <p>Do some reading each and every single day (don't put it off until Sunday)</p>

<p>Day 6 Monday, 11/26</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, compare This I believe listening assignments, and discuss reading.</p> <p>Homework: Reading 223-281 in <i>The passion of the western mind</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes.</p>
<p>Day 7 Tuesday, 11/27</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, and discuss reading.</p> <p>Homework: Reading 282-340 in <i>The passion of the western mind</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes. Group PowerPoints due 11:55PM</p>
<p>Day 8 Wednesday 11/28</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, and discuss reading. Group Presentations.</p> <p>Homework: Reading 341-394 in <i>The passion of the western mind</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes.</p>
<p>Day 9 Thursday, 11/29</p>	<p>In-class: Quiz, and discuss reading. Group Presentations.</p> <p>Homework: Reading 394-445 in <i>The passion of the western mind</i>, 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes.</p>
<p>Day 10 Friday, 11/30</p>	<p>Finish Tarnas; Homework Essay Questions. Group Presentations.</p>
<p>Day 11 Monday , 12/3</p>	<p>In-class: Midterm afterwards watch Film <i>Departures</i></p> <p>Homework: Reading 1-58 in <i>What's it all about?</i> 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge</p>

	level on reading, and notes.
Day 12 Tuesday, 12/4	In-class: Quiz and discuss reading. Homework: Reading 59-123 in <i>What's it all about?</i> 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes.
Day 13 Wednesday, 12/5	In-class: Quiz and discuss reading. Homework: Reading 124-188 in <i>What's it all about?</i> 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes. Initial draft of TIB papers and peer review
Day 14 Thursday, 12/6	In-class: Quiz and discuss reading. Homework: Read Absurd Reasoning (3-65) And Myth of Sisyphus (pp 119-123) in <i>The Myth of Sisyphus: And other essays</i> . 2 questions above Bloom's knowledge level on reading, and notes.
Day 15 Friday, 12/7	In-class: Quiz and discuss reading. “This I Believe” speeches. Homework: Your second reading of Part 1 of <i>The Stranger</i> In-class: Quiz and discuss reading. This I Believe papers due Sunday 11:55PM
Day 16 Monday, 12/10	In-class: Quiz and discuss reading. “This I Believe” speeches.

	Homework: Second reading of Part 2 of <i>The Stranger</i>
Day 17 Tuesday, 12/11	In-class: Quiz and discuss reading. “This I Believe” speeches. Peer Review Drafts of Term Paper.
Day 18 Wednesday, 12/12	In-Class: Final Term Paper due by Noon Thursday via Moodle

*As a tentative schedule, the instructor reserves the right to make modifications to the schedule of readings and assignments.