

Semester 2 Syllabus Addendum

Introduction

Humanities for semester 2 will consist of two parts: a course of study focusing on Society, Technology, and Solitude, and the research, writing, and presentation of your Senior Thesis.

Part 1: Society, Technology, and Solitude

Through STS, we will be exploring the effects technology in general, and social media in particular, has on our societal well-being as well as the role it plays in our individual lives. We will explore the relationship between being alone and being lonely. We will examine the ways in which solitude and nature can affect our well-being and the merits and limitations of individualism and nonconformity.

We will start by studying various contemporary responses to the role of technology in our lives before going back in time to Transcendentalists like Thoreau and Emerson and trace their impact on Chris McCandless, a young man from a well-to-do family who, in April 1992, hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley.

We will end by experiencing solitude for ourselves through walking meditations, journaling in nature and responding, in some sort of creative fashion, to various artists, poets and guest speakers who may have some wisdom to offer us on this idea of *solitude*.

Course of Study Introduction:

Review essential questions, focus of the weeks.

1. Week 1: Technology, social media, and connection
2. Week 2: Solitude
3. Week 3 and 4: Experience and Creativity

Assessment

The work for the month of January will account for 20% of your Humanities grade for this semester.

There are no weighted grading categories for this month—assignments will vary in points according to their importance and level of difficulty.

Part 2: Senior Thesis and TED Talk

For your Senior Thesis (the paper), you will need to produce 2 things:

1. A 10-20 page formal academic research paper on your chosen topic.
 - a. All sources must be cited (MLA) in a full bibliography
2. TED Talk in 2 parts
 - a. The talk: An informative/inspirational lecture (12-20 minutes)
 - b. The defense: An intensive Q&A where you will orally defend your research and conclusions for the panel (20 minutes)

Senior Thesis Assessment

Your senior thesis will be assessed through your ability to produce quality products by the allotted deadline. There are many steps to complete a task of this scope, and you will have to meet a number of interim deadlines (some determined by me, some determined by you in concert with your advisor) to ensure that you are on track and producing quality work.

Deadlines and benchmarks will include tasks such as...

1. Developing a focused research question
2. Procuring a topic adviser
3. Developing an annotated bibliography
4. Regular and directed meetings with your adviser
5. Various outlines, drafts, and critiques
6. The final draft

Grading Scale:

1. Final Paper: 50% of your semester grade
2. TED Talk/Defense: 15% of your semester grade
3. Interim Deadlines and Assignments: 15% of your semester grade

These assignments all together will count for 80% of your Humanities grade for Semester 2.

**PLEASE NOTE...regardless of what it does to your grade,
you MUST PASS both the Senior Thesis and the TED
Talk/Defense in order to graduate.**

But wait...what about my Senior PROJECT?

So, your Senior Project will not be a part of your Humanities grade for Semester 2. Your Senior Project is a graduation requirement, and is pass/fail. It will NOT be a part of any grade for your classes. The idea is that your Senior Project should not be driven by a grade—it should be driven by your interests and your passion for the topic and work you are doing. The pass/fail is there for a quality and completion check.

More to come on this later in the semester!