



HUM 2020: Encountering the Humanities

Department of Philosophy
College of Arts and Humanities, University of Central Florida

Instructor:	Dr. Jeffrey Nall	Term:	Summer B 2016
Office Hours:	By appointment via Skype	Course Number:	61776
		Section Number:	

About the Professor

Dr. Jeffrey Nall is a Visiting Lecturer in Philosophy. He earned a Ph.D. in Comparative Studies from Florida Atlantic University (FAU). He has a Master of Liberal Studies from Rollins College and a Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies from FAU. Dr. Nall has taught a range of courses in philosophy, humanities, and women, gender, and sexuality studies.

University Course Catalog Description

Examination of the range of ideas, research methods and approaches to scholarship, critical reflection, and creative work in the humanities. (3 credits)

Course Overview

Encountering the Humanities introduces students to the meaning and purview of the humanities. The course will offer a multifaceted exploration of themes that are of interest and concern to the interwoven fields that comprise the discipline. The topics to be explored will include education, the meaning of life, happiness, the sacred, love, and Dignity and Ethics. This study will be accompanied by an examination of salient concepts and scholarly methods of critical and creative examination within the humanities. One of the goals of the course is to demonstrate the relevance of the humanities to students' contemporary lives. Course assignments will also provide students with the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and communication skills.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of "Encountering the Humanities," students will have:

1. Identified the basic components of critical thinking.
2. Accurately identified and expressed the basic meaning and scope of the humanities.
3. Thoughtfully articulated their perspective on key questions within the humanities.
4. Examined and reflected upon the works of distinguished individuals within the humanities.
5. Encountered and considered the merits of diverse representations and theories of the human condition.
6. Authored several one-page critical reflections upon the value and relevance of salient works within the humanities to the present and the future.
7. Engaged their peers in considerate, open-minded discussion of key questions within the humanities.

FINANCIAL AID ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENT

All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the short syllabus quiz available via the webcourse site. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Texts and Materials

Required Texts

1. Eagleton, Terry. *The Meaning of Life: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. (ISBN-13: 9780199532179)
2. Bok, Sissela. *Exploring Happiness: From Aristotle to Brain Science*. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2010. (ISBN: 9780300178104)
3. Sousa, Ronald. *Love: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. (ISBN-13: 9780199663842)
4. *Don Jon*. Dir. Joseph Gordon-Levitt. Relativity Media, 2013. DVD. (The film is widely available and may be streaming on Netflix, Hulu, etc. (Available to be streamed [here](#))
5. *Seeking a Friend for the End of the World*. Dir. Lorene Scafaria (2012) (Available to be streamed [here](#))

Optional Text

1. Benton, Janetta Rebold, and Robert DiYanni. *Handbook for the Humanities*. Boston: Pearson, 2014. (ISBN-10: 0205949789 • ISBN-13: 9780205949786)

Webcourse-Site

- The Webcourse site contains links to readings, the most recent version of the syllabus and schedule, and additional announcements. Students should check the Webcourse site frequently to be well informed about any changes or additional material relevant to the course.

Course Delivery Mode

This is a fully online course accessible only through Webcourses. The course is organized into units with dates provided for each.

Technical Support

When technical issues do occur, students can contact Online@UCF Support to troubleshoot problems with Webcourses@UCF. They can be reached at 407-823-0407 or onlinesupport@ucf.edu.

Basis for Final Grade

Final grades will be calculated on the basis of successful completion of the following assessments:

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Humanities Journal	30 points/ 15%
Discussion Board Participation	20 points/ 10%
Midterm Exam	50 points/ 25%
Self-Examination Paper	50 points/ 25%
Final Exam	50 points/ 25%
	200 points/ 100%

- **Midterm and Final Exams**

The midterm exam will test students' knowledge of all material covered through the first half of the semester. The final exam will test students' knowledge of all material covered throughout the course from start to finish.

- **Self-Examination Paper**

Author an examination of your present values, beliefs, commitments and/or actions in the light of course readings in topic areas such as the Humanities, Education, Meaning of Life, Love, Happiness, The Sacred, Dignity and Ethics, and The Arts, Popular Culture, and Our Humanity. Students are encouraged to concentrate on a specific topic area, but are free to draw on readings from more than one area of interest. The paper must be a minimum of 1,300 words but should not exceed 2,000.

The paper need not be a cut-and-dry argument driven paper, but it must have discernable purpose and direction. Furthermore, the paper should feature consideration of ideas that challenge as well as confirm the author's own thinking. Be sure to thoughtfully organize and develop the paper.

The purpose of this paper is to engage ideas and works presented in course materials to foster critical-creative and hopefully illuminating introspection.

Since this is a "self-examination" paper, you are encouraged to write from a personal point of view. However, it is important that you use proper form and adhere to basic academic standards (see MLA or Chicago style writing guidelines).

Keys to a successful paper:

- Identify and articulate the key questions your paper is considering and seeking to answer or at least clarify.
- Draw on and implement a variety of ideas and thinkers from course materials to critically examine the features of your life and beliefs.
- Use good form: introduction, body paragraphs complete with engaging and informative topic sentences, a conclusion; adhere to MLA or Chicago writing style; use in-text citations and provide a work's cited page.
- Do not be afraid of acknowledging ambiguity or uncertainty.
- Avoid making sweeping and unsubstantiated statements. If you think that violent media desensitizes people, for example, be sure to discuss reasons that support such a contention (from your personal experience, related studies found in course materials, etc.)
- As this is a self-examination paper, personal experiences and perspectives are expected and looked forward to.
- Support your claims with relevant reasons. You may draw on personal experience, research, and of course relevant course materials.
- Be sure that you do not simply "drop" a quote into your work; that does not count as sufficient engagement with course materials. Instead, enter into dialogue with key readings and authors; or perhaps bring them in to support your own insights.

- **Humanities Journal**

Throughout the term students will author a variety of reflections related to key course materials. These reflections will be integral to developing understanding of key course concepts and aiding students for the midterm and final essay exams.

Self-evaluation cover page

Upon completion of the final entry, students are to read over all journal entries and to write a 250 to 500-word evaluation of their overall journal: Have you developed new insights about yourself? Has your thinking developed or changed in any particular way? Have you developed new insights or broadened

your perspective? Did you discover anything about yourself, or perhaps simply clarify something? This self-evaluation page will be the cover page for the assignment. On this first page, in addition to the above evaluation, students should include: 1) total number of entries and 2) word-count. Finally, students are to identify one entry they believe is the most important of the semester to be placed directly after the self-assessment page. This entry, regardless of its chronological order, will be the “first” entry in the journal.

Journal Grading

- ✓ Students are to compile all journal entries in one Microsoft word document to be turned in via Webcourses at the end of the semester.
- ✓ Each student’s collection of journal entries will be graded as one assignment (just as an exam comprised of 50 questions is given a single grade).
- ✓ Unless otherwise noted, no reflection should be under 200-words: You know you’re not finished when the question is longer than your entry!
- ✓ Points will be earned for thoughtful completion of each journal entry.
- ✓ *Do not include the question* in the final collection of journal entries; only include the heading and your entry
- ✓ Only include headings for prompts/questions you have actually answered
- ✓ Deductions will be made for
 - Missing entries
 - Superficial entries
 - Late turn-ins
 - Failure to clearly label each journal entry
 - Listing reflection prompts that you have not authored replies to

Formatting of Journal Entries

- ✓ Title of entry should be in bold
- ✓ Number each entry (the particular order of the entries is not of particular concern so long as entries are clearly labeled)
- ✓ All typed entries must be single-spaced

Humanities Journal Rubric

There are 12 journal assignments, each worth 2.25 point (90%). The self-evaluation cover page and adherence to specified format are worth 3 points (10%).

Criteria	Scoring
Content and depth	30 Points (15%) Completed entries respond to prompt with appropriate depth and meet minimum word-count expectations of 200-words. (200-word minimum, unless otherwise noted).

• **Discussion Board Participation**

Students will complete discussion board posts and two replies for each major unit. Posts must be a minimum of 250-words, provide sufficient detail, engage relevant course materials, and posted in a timely manner. Replies to fellow students must be substantive and at least 60-words. A substantive response adds value to the discussion by bringing new ideas, research, evidence, etc. to the conversation. “I agree,” “Ditto” and the like are not acceptable replies. Rules of Netiquette are followed. Replies are not texts with your friends. Full sentences and proper spelling are expected.

Discussion Board Rubric

There are 5 Discussion Forums, each worth 4 points.

Criteria	Scoring per discussion board assignment
Post	2 Points Original post meets the minimum posting requirement of one original post. Thoughtfully addresses question or topic and engages relevant course reading and/or other materials (lecture, film, etc.). Full sentences and proper spelling are expected. Utilize spell check prior to posting.
Replies	2 Points Two substantive responses to classmates' posts. A substantive response adds value to the discussion by bringing new ideas, research, evidence, etc. to the conversation. "I agree," "Ditto" and the like are not acceptable replies. Rules of Netiquette are followed. Thoughtful questions are welcome components but should not comprise the entirety of a reply. No fewer than 60-words for each reply. Full sentences and proper spelling are expected. Utilize spell check prior to posting.

Grading Scale

Grading Scale (%)	
90-100	A
87-89	B+
80-86	B
77-79	C+
70-76	C
67-69	D+
60-66	D
0 - 59	F

Incompletes and Withdrawals

Incompletes and Instructor Withdrawals are given solely at the instructor's discretion. Only on rare occasions will the professor give a student an "incomplete." Students who have not attended the majority of courses or not completed the vast majority of coursework will not be considered for an "incomplete." Instructor withdrawals are reserved for very unique circumstances. Under no circumstances will students be granted such withdrawals at or near the end of the semester because they do not like the final grade they are on course to earn.

Examination Make-up Policy

Students are encouraged to take exams when they are assigned. Exam make-ups are done at the discretion of the instructor. Exams not taken will be given a failing grade.

Late Assignment Policy

Assignments are due at the specified due-date. Students are not entitled to have late assignments graded unless they have a reasonable excuse for the late assignment turn in. All late assignments, if they are graded, will receive a 5% penalty for each day they are late. Thus an assignment turned in three days after the due date will automatically receive a 15% deduction.

Academic Paper Format

Students' grade will be substantially based on academic writing assignments. These papers must be written in MLA

format ([Purdue's MLA formatting and style guide](#)) or Chicago Style Author-Date (Parenthetical) System (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/ues/guides/citing-chicago-ad>). This means that papers must be double-spaced and must include citations among other features. Students are urged to take their papers to the University Writing Center (see below) prior to submission.

University Writing Center:

The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu>, stop by MOD 608, or call 407.823.2197.

Student Accessibility Services (Disability Services)

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Accessibility Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor. Students who would like more information on these services are encouraged to visit the [Student Accessibility Services](#) page.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty (see above) wherein one presents another individual's words, images, music, and more generally, ideas as one's own. Students are expected to turn in their own work for given assignments. Students are also required to cite (give credit to) the sources they utilize for all of their assignments. Sources include books, articles, websites, interviews, illustrations and images, art, conversations and email, class lectures, class notes, student papers, student assignments, and one's own work done for previous classes. You must provide your readers with the information needed to retrieve the source for their use. The penalty for plagiarism is a *minimum* of a 0 for the given assignment with no opportunity to resubmit a new attempt. All clear cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct as a form of "[Academic Misconduct](#)."

Examples of plagiarism include: borrowing a friend's paper, buying a paper, citing without quotation marks, cutting and pasting from the internet or other sources (email, other papers), paraphrasing without attribution, reusing papers or assignments without attribution and/or significant alteration.

Cultural Competency and Classroom Etiquette

This course will frequently consider controversial issues that may evoke strong feelings and vigorous debate. At one time or another, course concepts are likely to challenge ideas and beliefs that students hold. While it is



understood that at times you may feel discomfort, it is expected that you will be able to address these issues in a humane, respectful, and academic manner. Students are entitled to their opinion, and the articulation of diverse perspectives is strongly encouraged. Students within the classroom, however, are also entitled to a healthy classroom environment free from hostility, ridicule, embarrassment. This does not mean that we will shy away from challenging issues and questions. Instead we will approach these matters in a manner that will enhance students' cultural competency, by striving to respectfully include and listen to diverse social perspectives. (For more information on UCF's efforts to support cultural competency through honoring diversity through inclusion go to [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#))

UCF Support Services

Students in need of assistance with issues such as safety and wellbeing, sexual violence, and mental health are encouraged to contact [UCF Cares](#)

"UCF Cares is an umbrella of care-related programs and resources dedicated to fostering a caring community of Knights. However, it takes all of us from students to staff, from faculty to friends, to show that we care about one another. The goal of the UCF CARES initiative is to build a culture of care one KNIGHT at a time. We are all UCF and need to do our part in connecting any fellow knights in distress to appropriate resources."

Students who have knowledge of sexual misconduct should contact [UCF Shield](#):

"Together, we can work toward eliminating sexual misconduct in the UCF community. We've provided this comprehensive source for information about identifying, preventing, and responding to sexual misconduct including sexual assault and sexual harassment affecting members of the UCF community. We are committed to providing a safe educational, working, and living environment."

[Victim Services](#) is another key resource for UCF students

"We offer support, crisis intervention, options, information, referrals, practical assistance, and educational programs. We inform our clients of their options and potential outcomes and empower them to make the best decision for themselves. Although reporting to law enforcement or university administrative offices is presented as an option, we will never force a client to report."

"Advocates are available 24 hours a day to assist clients by phone or respond to the scene of a crime. To contact an advocate anytime day or night, call (407) 823-1200. We provide crisis counseling and emotional support in the aftermath of victimization."

This [web-page](#) features a variety of UCF resources for students.