

First Year Seminar

Banned Books

Professor Susan Perabo

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East College 308

Office Hours: Tuesdays: 8:30-10:30, Fridays 10-11:30, and by appt

Required Texts

Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury

The Bluest Eye, Toni Morrison

All American Boys, Jason Reynolds

Flamer, Mike Curato

Writing Analytically, David Rosenwasser

Course Description

The issue of book banning is an artistic one, a political one, a cultural one, a spiritual one, and a personal one. No wonder it's so fraught... it touches on all the things that define us as individuals and as groups. Increasingly over the last several years, very difficult – and very public -- discussions about book banning are happening in classrooms, libraries, churches, and government offices.

This class will explore the past, present, and future of book banning in the United States. Through our close reading and conversations about four frequently banned books, and responses to these books, we'll explore the causes and effects of challenging and banning books... from the local level to the national. We'll talk to experts – teachers, librarians, administrators, and school board members – who must navigate complex, and sometimes hostile, conversations about book challenges, and then deal with the consequences of their professional and personal decisions.

Throughout the semester, we'll also be dealing with critical questions about how to best approach discussions and disagreements surrounding the issue of book banning. How can we have productive dialogues when so many of us hold strong beliefs in our positions? How can we remain civil when there are such intense differences of opinion? Is there a

way to talk about challenged books without immediately taking sides, digging in, and getting stuck?

This course relies on your willingness to fully engage, to be honest, to be vulnerable, and to be open to new perspectives. You can only do these things if you are prepared, focused, and attentive. Bring your A game to the classroom every day.

Primary Course Goals

Students will develop an understanding of the causes and consequences of challenging and banning books in US schools and libraries.

Students will develop college-level skills in reading, writing, discussion, and information literacy.

Students will develop techniques for having productive and civil conversations about difficult, complex, highly-charged topics.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. If you miss more than three classes, your final grade will be impacted. If you know you are going to be absent, please let me know in advance. If you miss class, it's your responsibility to make up the work you missed, and to be prepared for the next class. There is some in-class work that simply will not be able to be made up.

There are no excused absences, so do not bring me doctor's notes. My attendance policy is not intended as a reward or punishment, but rather as a reflection of your class participation. If you have a long-term illness during the semester, or other serious issue, please be in frequent communication with me about the situation.

Grading

Writing Exercises	20%
Essay 1	10%
Essay 2	20%
Essay 3	20%
Research Project	30%

The Writing Associate

Your Writing Associate, **Lyss Ricciardi**, will support you as you make your transition to college writing. He will facilitate peer review, offer feedback to you on drafts, and attend several classes to assist with writing instruction. He will report to me about your progress. His purpose is to help you develop the good writing habits of effective writers, which will then serve as a strong foundation for your entire academic experience.

The Writing Center

Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback in order to develop their ideas and grow as writers. In our course, we have a dedicated Writing Associate who is able to provide this kind of feedback. However, for other courses, or if you would like additional help in this course, Dickinson's trained writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, figure out your professor's preferred documentation style, understand and respond to professor feedback, edit your writing – among other things. You can walk in, or call and make an appointment at (717) 245-1620. (For foreign language writing, you can schedule an appointment online at

http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing_program/796/mwc_online_appointments)

For more information about hours and procedures, visit the web:

<http://www.dickinson.edu/academics/resources/writing-program/content/Writing-Center/>

Reference Librarians

The library employs several reference librarians, trained professionals who help library users find information. Whether it be for this course or any other over the next four years, you need never become frustrated by your research. Instead, you can ask a reference librarian to help you find sources related to your topic. They can help you find information (books, articles and more), choose the most relevant databases, improve your research strategy, critically evaluate information, and cite sources properly. **Jessica Howard** is the liaison librarian for our course, and there are reference librarians who can work with every major in the college. If you start at the Writing Center, their offices are on the parallel wall. The reference librarian on duty has a little red flag hanging from the top of the door.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is copying the words and/or ideas of another person (published or not) and submitting them as your own. When you plagiarize, you do not comprehend the course material, and you do not learn. If you are accused of plagiarism, there will be an academic conduct hearing, and potential consequences include an F for the assignment, required withdrawal from the course with a penalty grade of F, stayed suspension, suspension from the college, expulsion, or revocation and withholding of diploma. Cheating includes re-purposing a paper that you wrote for another course or turning in one paper for two courses without the permission of both professors. If you are confused about the complicated rules regarding documenting research, please ask me. I can help. Enrollment at Dickinson represents a commitment to abide by the College's principles of academic integrity. Please read Dickinson's plagiarism and academic integrity policy, available at:

http://lis.dickinson.edu/library/documents/Academic_Integrity_Info.pdf

All incoming Dickinson students are required to complete the **Academic Integrity Tutorial** posted on Moodle by INSERT DATE. As per college policy, students who do not complete this tutorial will not be able to request spring classes during the registration period in October. All questions must be completed to get credit for the tutorial.

Students receive credit only after completing the entire tutorial, answering all questions, and clicking the "Finish attempt" button, followed by "Submit all and

finish”. *The “Submit all and Finish” button must be clicked at the end of the tutorial in order for students to receive credit for completing the tutorial.*

AI

Your use of LLM AI (including chatgpt, Bard, etc.) is prohibited on any assignment in this class. Use of LLM AI in this course will be considered academic dishonesty. (Please note that other Dickinson courses may not consider LLM AI to be academic dishonesty, and it may be even appropriate for your scholarly work in other parts of the curriculum.) Please let me know of any questions

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded equitable access to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical condition– that would hinder your access to learning or demonstrating knowledge in this class, please contact Access and Disability Services (ADS). They will confidentially explain the accommodation request process and the type of documentation that Dean and Executive Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/ADS, email access@dickinson.edu, call (717)245-1734, or go to the ADS office in Room 005 of Old West, Lower Level (aka "the OWLL").

If you’ve already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please follow the guidance at www.dickinson.edu/AccessPlan for disclosing the accommodations for which you are eligible and scheduling a meeting with me as soon as possible so that we can discuss your accommodations and finalize your Access Plan. If you will be using any test-taking accommodations in this class, be sure to enter all test dates into your Access Plan in advance of our meeting. ADS will be happy to provide any assistance you may need.

Physical Access to Our Classroom and My Office

This class meets on the 4th floor of East College, which has an elevator, located to the left of the main entrance, in the Classics Department. If you require the use of an elevator to access the floor, please let me know, and be sure that ADS (access@dickinson.edu) knows as well. If there is ever a malfunction with the elevator, we will be notified by email, and I will consult with ADS to identify our options for that day.

My office is located on the 3rd floor of East College. If there is ever a malfunction with the elevator, I will gladly arrange to meet you at an alternative location, either in the building, nearby, or by video conference.

Learning Outcomes

The First-Year Seminar (FYS) introduces students to Dickinson as a “community of inquiry” by developing habits of mind essential to liberal learning. Students will:

- critically analyze information and ideas in the texts we discuss;
- examine issues from multiple perspectives;
- discuss, debate and defend ideas, including one’s own views, with clarity and reason;
- learn to find, evaluate, and correctly incorporate outside sources so as to avoid plagiarism;
- create clear academic writing.