

**First Year Seminar**  
**Race, Science, Nature, Socialism, Feminism, and the Human Condition: The History of Ideas that**  
**We Still Ponder**  
**Denny 203, MWF 12:30-1:20?**

Denny Hall, Office 201 <b>Office Hours:</b> MF 1:30-3:30	<b>Malinda Triller</b> Library Liaison <a href="mailto:trillerm@dickinson.edu">trillerm@dickinson.edu</a> 717.245.1462 Office: Archives and Special Collections (Library, Lower Level)
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*Nothing new, no time-saving devices, -- simply old time-glorified methods of delving for Truth, and searching out the hidden beauties of life, and learning the good of living.... The true college will ever have one goal, -- not to earn meat, but to know the end and aim of that life which meat nourishes.*  
--W.E.B. Du Bois (1903:51)

p<sup>6</sup>

**Course Description and Learning Goals:**

The First-Year Seminar (FYS) introduces students to Dickinson as a “community of inquiry” by developing habits of mind essential to liberal learning. Through the analysis of some foundational texts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, students will:

- Critically analyze information and ideas,
- Examine issues from multiple perspectives,
- Discuss, debate, and defend ideas, including one’s own views, with clarity and reason,
- Develop discernment, facility, and ethical responsibility in using information,
- Create clear academic writing.
- What is your personal goal(s)?

In this seminar, we examine the ways in which WEB Du Bois, Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, Mary Shelley, Sigmund Freud, and Emmeline Pankhurst, identified and expanded fields of intellectual study (race, capitalism and exploitation, evolution and genetics, technology and ethics, psychology and psychoanalysis, and feminism) and new ways of thinking about scientific and social issues. The works of these thinkers had – and in many ways continue to have – tremendous influence on the ways in which societies have been organized and understood. While our primary focus will be on the ideas that these writers examined and the historical context in which they arose, we will also concern ourselves with the ways in which 20th- and 21st-century societies grapple with their complexities.

**Goals of Dialogue Across Difference**

- The Dialogue Across Difference element of our course is about dialogue, not debate. We are not trying to change another’s opinion but rather help them understand our perspective.
- We will create a community agreement together early in the semester and hold each other accountable to it.
- You will have the option of answering prompts, passing for now, or just passing. The last should be used rarely and only under exceptional circumstances because we are here to share and learn together.

- We are aiming to create a brave space together. We want to aim for being comfortable being uncomfortable as we grow toward mutual understanding and move beyond binary, uncomplicated positions. We want to lean into the gray areas and realize that although we may disagree, we may also share much in common.
- We will hopefully learn to be vulnerable with each other and share our experiences that have defined us as the people we are. This will take respect, trust, and confidentiality from all of us. Like *Fight Club*, the number one rule (and number two) is to not talk about our FYS outside of FYS.

### **Required Texts:**

- Du Bois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Dover, 2016. 978-0486280417
- Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010. 978-0393304510
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. New York: Dover, 1994. 978-0486-282114
- Rosenwasser, D. and J. Stephen. *Writing Analytically*. Boston: Wadsworth, 2012. (optional, on reserve)

\*\*\*Additional readings from Darwin, Freud, and several feminists will be posted to the class [Moodle](#) page.

### **What Is Required of You:**

#### Readings/Preparation

You should complete all readings in advance of the class in which they will be discussed. You should also complete the tasks from the Course Schedule that are listed “due” in the column labeled “Assignments/Objectives.” You will want to reference this column every day so that you know what is expected of you at each class.

In order for our meetings to be successful, it will be important for you to do the following (taken largely from the book, *Peer Instruction for Astronomy*, by Paul J. Green, p. 29):

1. READ. Come to class prepared to discuss the material.
2. RISK. Be open with your views and your questions. Listen to and encourage everyone’s ideas so they can take risks too.
3. RELAX. Don’t take criticism of your own ideas personally. Change your mind when the evidence shows that you should.
4. RESPECT. Act toward your peers as you would have them act towards you. Be civil. Be charitable. This also means that you will treat what is said in our classroom with confidentiality. If someone in the class shares private information in the context of a class discussion, it is NOT to be shared with people who are not members of the class. If someone in the class says something that you consider “stupid” or “ignorant,” it is NOT to be shared with people who are not members of the class. We all make mistakes, and we all need to be educated, constantly.
5. REASON. Play the skeptic, but be critical of reasoning, ideas, and data -- not of people.
6. RESTATE. Try to paraphrase another’s explanation in a way that makes sense. Focus on coming to the best possible answer.

### **Daily Schedule**

\* As with research and writing, teaching is a constant work in progress, so expect changes to the syllabus throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with any changes that might occur.

Date	Topic/Readings	Assignments/Objectives
29 Aug	Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" (Moodle) Introduction to the class and each other <b>10:15-11:30, Denny 204</b>	End of class free write: How, when, and why did a liberal arts college become <i>the</i> option for you?
30 Aug	You have orientation all day	
31 Aug	Du Bois, chs 1-2 What is <u>Modernity</u> ? and Rosenwasser, ch. 1 (optional). How to succeed in college <b>9:00-10:15, Denny 204</b>	"Notice and Focus" exercise 2.1 (p. 26) in class.  <b>Due Monday: resources reflections. Find some background information on Du Bois</b>
<b>Week One</b>		
2 Sep	Du Bois, chs. 3-8. <b>@ our regular 12:30 slot and in Denny 203</b>	"Notice and Focus" on Du Bois
4 Sep	Du Bois, chs. 9-end; Rosenwasser, ch. 2 (optional)	"The Method" exercise
6 Sep	On the importance of historical context and using the ACLAIM method for analyzing sources.	"So What" exercise. Add/Drop ends
<b>Week Two</b>		
9 Sep	Marx, <i>For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing</i> (Moodle)	<b>Du Bois Paper Due</b>
11 Sep	Shelley to p. 60	Thesis writing
13 Sep	The Historical Context of the Early-Nineteenth Century	"Paraphrase x 3" exercise <b>Interview with a professor due</b>
<b>Week Three</b>		
16 Sep	Shelley, pp. 61-107	Academic Integrity Tutorial <b>due</b>
18 Sep	Shelley, pp. 108-end	
20 Sep	Dialogue Day	
<b>Week Four</b>		
23 Sep	Succeeding in College. How's It Going So Far Begin to brainstorm about final paper and projects.	<b>"Situating" exercise</b> (Rosenwasser, 111-114)
25 Sep	<b>Malinda Triller on library skills. Meet in Archives, ground floor of the library. Bring a laptop if you have one. No food or drink.</b>	<b>Bring Library Pre-Homework to Class. Shelley Paper Due</b>
27 Sep	Darwin ch. 1-2, Variation Under Domestication and Variation Under Nature	<b>Library assignment due</b>
<b>Week Five</b>		
30 Sep <b>3:00</b>	College Farm Visit. Meet in the Kauffman parking lot for a 3:00 departure. We should return to campus by 5:00-5:15. Only students who have a scheduled course will be excused from the farm visit.	
2 Oct	<b>Do shop and assignment at Farmers' Market</b> <u>Market open 3-6pm</u> Darwin, chs. 3-4, and Struggle for Existence and Natural Selection	<b>Observation exercise,</b> Rosenwasser, p. 149
4 Oct	Dialogue Day	
<b>Week Six</b>		

7 Oct	Conversation about proposals How to Prepare for Midterms and Good Peer Review Skills	<b>Bring your food for picnic Farmers Market report <b>Due</b></b>
9 Oct	<a href="#">Time Capsule 1: Marxism</a> Browse a <a href="#">timeline</a> of Marx's life and work	<b>Final Paper proposal peer reviews this week. Darwin Paper <b>Due</b></b>
11 Oct	Marx, pp. 53-92 ( <a href="#">Rent of Land</a> , <a href="#">Estranged Labor</a> , <a href="#">Antithesis of Capital and Labor</a> )	In class reading of Steinbeck.
<b>Week Seven</b>		
14 Oct	Marx, pp. 115-140 ( <a href="#">Meaning of Human Requirements...</a> ; <a href="#">Power of Money in Bourgeoisie Society</a> )	
16 Oct	Sharing of ideas for the final paper and discussion of what skills have you improved?	<b>Paper Proposal <b>Due</b></b>
18 Oct	Marx, pp. 171-202 (Engels, <a href="#">Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy</a> )	Over the weekend submit a narrative summary evaluation of each classmate.
<b>Week Eight</b>		
21 Oct	<b>Fall Pause</b>	No class.
23 Oct	Marx, pp. 203-end (you can skip 231-241) <a href="#">Manifesto of the Communist Party</a> .	
25 Oct	Dialogue Day	
<b>Week Nine</b>		
28 Oct	Freud, <i>Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego</i> , Chapters 1 and 4 (Moodle) <a href="#">Time Capsule 5: Interwar Science and Art</a>	Course request period next week. You need to make an advising appointment with me this week.
30 Oct	Freud, <i>Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego</i> , Chapters 5, 9, and 11 (Moodle)	<b>One-on-One brainstorming sessions this week and next to set writing goals for final paper.</b>
1 Nov	Advice from seniors (panel)	<b>Marx Paper <b>Due</b></b>
<b>Week Ten</b>		
4 Nov	Dialogue Day	<b>Write <u>YOUR</u> definition of happiness or pleasure prior to reading for next class</b>
6 Nov	Freud, <i>Civilization and Its Discontents</i> , chs. 1-3 Review PPTs on Introductions and Conclusions and Moodle and bring questions to class	
8 Nov	Freud, <i>Civilization and Its Discontents</i> , chs. 4-6	
<b>Week Eleven</b>		
11 Nov	Freud, <i>Civilization</i> , chs 7-8.	
13 Nov	In-class discussion of your Freud assignments	<b>Freud Assignment <b>Due</b></b>
15 Nov	<b>I'll be away at a conference in Chicago. No Class.</b>	
<b>Week Twelve</b>		

18 Nov	Wollstonecraft, "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" (intro on Moodle); <a href="#">Manifesto of the Futurist Woman</a>	
20 Nov	Pankhurst, "My Own Story" (excerpt), "Why We are Militant," "Speech from the Docks" (all on Moodle)	
22 Nov	Betty Freidan, "The Sexual Sell" (Moodle)	
<b>Week Thirteen</b>		
25 Nov	How to make a professional presentation; Final questions about college writing	<b>Feminism Paper Due</b> Peer review of final paper "chunks" this week and next
27 Nov	Thanksgiving Break. No Class	
29 Nov	Thanksgiving Break. No Class	
<b>Week Fourteen</b>		
2 Dec	Presentations (5 minutes, max)	
4 Dec	Presentations (5 minutes, max)	
6 Dec	Course evaluations and wrap up.	<b>Final Paper and course reflection Due</b>

**Assignment Due dates (mark your calendar):** Change all assignments and dates if order of readings changes

29 Aug	Resources assignment
5 Sep	Du Bois
9 Sep	Professor interview
19 Sep	Shelley and Library pre-assignment
23 Sep	Library Assignment
30 Sep	Farmers Market report
3 Oct	Darwin
12 Oct	Final Paper Proposal
28 Oct	Marx
9 Nov	Freud
21 Nov	Feminism
6 Dec	Final paper

**The Writing Center**

Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback to develop their ideas and grow as writers. If you would like additional help in this course, Dickinson's trained peer 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, and more. You can schedule an appointment online at this link:

[http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing\\_program/677/appointments](http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing_program/677/appointments)

For more information about hours and policies: <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. Malinda Triller 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, most reference librarians have offices are on the parallel wall. The reference librarian on duty has a little red flag hanging from the top of the door. Malinda Triller can be found in the Archives and Special Collections room on the lower level of the library.

**Evaluation Policies for Writing Assignments:**

In general, I will evaluate your writing by considering how well you have achieved the following goals (developed by the Writing Program):

1. The author crafts an introduction that identifies a question, frames the question, and states a thesis.
2. The author organizes the writing, demonstrates a progression of ideas, and maintains a consistent focus or thread.
3. The author contextualizes the question and supports it with evidence.
4. The author sustains analytical inquiry throughout the assignment.
5. The author effectively incorporates relevant outside information.
6. The author engages the intended audience with a consistent, distinctive voice appropriate to the task.
7. The author adheres to appropriate standards for language use.
8. The author conforms to appropriate formats for citation of source material.

### **Attendance:**

Regular attendance and conscientious preparation for class are assumed and expected. Preparation, attendance, and participation are crucial to this course and your success in it. Your participation will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- You come to class every day having done the day’s reading and having thought deeply about it. Merely taking notes based on what other students or the professor say in class, and not on your own reading, is akin to cheating. It is stealing other people’s reading work. I expect you to add our classroom conversations to your own notes, but you may not rely solely on others to do your work.
- Ours is a seminar, so there is no way to “make up” the work. Thus, you should be in class every day unless you are sick and contagious. You need to notify me in advance if you are unwell and cannot be in class. You must also come to class on time. When students arrive late, they disrupt the normal class interaction, and that is not fair or respectful to the rest of us. Arriving late or not at all will reduce your final grade.
- You prompt discussion and/or respond to your peers.
- You enter the conversation without dominating or silencing others.
- You offer more than just personal opinion or anecdote – that is, you root your comments in the text we are discussing. (In other words, people who try to comment on things they have not read will lose credibility).
- You attend peer review sessions with a complete rough draft.
- You work collaboratively with people to achieve learning goals when you are placed in a small group.
- You are present and engaged in every class. Therefore, you take care of your needs before you come to class. You should not excuse yourself in the middle of class unless it is an emergency.
- You are respectful to others in your comments and demeanor
- **COVID:** We all have masks now and know how to use them. You MUST bring one mask to class each day. My expectation is that if you have a minor cough or sniffles that you wear a mask in class because we will all be a bit anxious this semester. If it is more than a minor case, stay away from class, get notes from a classmate, and talk to me if you have questions. I reserve the right to remove anyone from class who poses a distraction. I may mandate the wearing of masks at any time. Small group discussions will likely require masks. Anyone who is not vaccinated I expect to take additional precautions because those of us who are fully vaccinated can still contract and transmit the virus to and we will likely be asymptomatic and not know we are infected. If you are not able to be vaccinated because of a medical condition, it is in your best interest to tell me (although I cannot ask you) so that I can adjust our classroom setting, if possible. Because of the size of my office, I will have office hours for unvaccinated students via Zoom for their safety; all others will be in my office. All classroom protocols are subject to change as the urgency of the pandemic(s) changes.

### **Final Course Grade:**

See the “Ungrading” document on Moodle. Students may choose not to write a paper for one of the following authors: Darwin, Shelly, Freud.

### **Cell Phones:**

Your cell phone must be turned OFF (not just vibrate) and stowed away before class begins. Allowing your cell phone to ring during class is rude. Don’t do it. After a first warning, each time we see or hear your phone you will be removed from the class until you apologize to all of us. Our classroom has a clock, and I will dismiss class on time. There is no need to check your phone to find out the time. Keep your phone in your pocket or in your backpack at all times. The same applies to all smartwatches. Please stow them away so you, and we, are not distracted by notifications.

### **Laptops and Other Electronic Devices:**

Such devices are not to be used in class without consultation with the professor. Recent research finds that students learn better without such devices. All the research shows that multitasking is a fallacy. Equally importantly, other students in a classroom setting are often distracted by classmates using such devices. I will indicate when we may use our laptops or tablets. If a classmate is using a device, it may be because I have approved its use for a particular purpose. That does not automatically extend permission to other members of the class.

### **Requirements**

Please focus on creating theses and arguments, using evidence, and crafting readable prose. I have numerous resources on Moodle to help you strengthen your writing. Take time to find the precise combination of words that will allow you to communicate your thoughts to your readers most effectively. I am passionate about creating better writers and thinkers! All assignments are due at the beginning of class, and no late submissions will be accepted for full credit once class has started. If any assignment is not submitted, it will result in a failing grade for the course. Although this sounds harsh and unyielding, it allows me to evaluate all students' work equally. Even a minute more editing gives the late student an unfair advantage over the students who submit their work on time. Get started on writing assignments early, revise (not just edit), and use me, classmates, the Writing Center, and librarians as resources. If something truly extraordinary occurs, be in touch with me as early as possible.

### **Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.**

Consistent with Dickinson College's Student Code of Conduct, cheating of any kind may lead to disciplinary action, which often includes failing the course. Submission of someone else's written work or using sources without proper credit is unacceptable. 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](http://lis.dickinson.edu/library/documents/Academic_Integrity_Info.pdf)

### **Communication**

For questions that ask for more than a "yes" or "no" or short answer, please find a time to speak with me rather than email. If the answer is clear on the syllabus or other written documents, I will not respond. It is your responsibility to look for the easy answers first. Email should only be used for yes or no questions or to draw my attention to a problem in the course such as broken hyperlinks or missing assignments. I typically check email only once each day, so responses may take 24-48 hours. When emailing anyone, use formal forms of address and salutations (e.g. "Dear Professor X"... not "Hey" or "Yo, prof", etc.) until directed otherwise, and good-byes (e.g. "Regards," "Thank you for your attention," etc.), as well as proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation. You see me three times per week in class, so use the minutes before and after class to ask clarification questions or come see me in [my office hours](#).

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and for Religious Holidays**

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 impairment – 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 Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to [www.dickinson.edu/ADS](http://www.dickinson.edu/ADS), email [access@dickinson.edu](mailto: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](http://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 for the relevant professor. If test proctoring will be needed from ADS, remember that we will need to complete your Access Plan in time to give them at least one week's advance notice.

My office and our classroom are located on the second floor of Denny Hall, which has an elevator, located in the basement accessed from the north entrance. If you require the use of an elevator to access the second floor, please let me know. If there is ever a malfunction with the elevator and you cannot gain entrance, we will meet individually. All students without mobility restrictions should use the stairs.

If you have already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can meet soon to review your Accommodation Letter. If you will need test proctoring from ADS, remember that you will need to provide them with at least one week's notice.

As per college policy: “Students must make arrangements with their faculty members in advance when an exam (including quizzes), papers, and other work are due on major religious holidays. A student will not be penalized for missing class or not handing in work on a holiday due to religious observance. However, students must notify faculty, in writing, reasonably in advance of the holiday if they will be absent from class for religious observance.” I expect all notification no later than week 2 of the semester. Consult your calendar.

Audio or video recording of any class session in this course other than for accommodations required by the Office of Disability Services is strictly prohibited and may be a violation of Pennsylvania’s Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance law (18 Pa. C.S. Section 5701 et seq.).



## **Addenda of assignments that will be posted to Moodle**

What: Pre-semester check-in

Why: For you to begin learning our approach and for me to assess writing and thinking

When: Do before the start of our first class period

Grading: For completion and thoughtfulness

### **Why do you think that?**

This semester we will be reading and discussing seminal ideas, mostly from the nineteenth century, that are still relevant today. We will also pause periodically to have structured conversations about differences, what we call “Dialogue Across Difference.” This task is designed for you to begin to practice this privately before we do it as a class.

For this assignment, I want you to choose a controversial topic of your choice (e.g. abortion, gun control, trans therapy for children, etc.) The topic is yours, but it needs to be something about which there is a robust and oftentimes nasty public debate. Once you have come up with your idea you must:

1. State clearly the topic and illustrate how it is controversial.
2. Clearly state YOUR position, for or against. No waffling. This needs to be something about which you have a firm opinion.
3. Provide your REASONING for your position. This is the most important part of this assignment so far. The aim is not to provide a reasoning to convince someone that you are right but rather to explain why you hold the position you do.
4. Finally, if you did not do so in #3, spend some time thinking about how you came about your position. Is this something you learned from family, faith, friends, school, or did you have a personal experience that contributed to your view?

This is not a long assignment and need not be more than about 2 pages, but it is one that you should spend several days thinking about before you start writing. The goal here is to have you investigate your personal views and how you have arrived at your value system. This will be shared only with me, although I may ask if any students want to verbally share their assignment in class. So, please, do the soul searching to really investigate yourself. If everyone does this thoroughly, it will help us to have respectful and open conversations about race, class, feminism, science and ethics, any more during the semester.

Prompts developing from our readings (**these would be posted to Moodle prior to class to give students some time to think and then discussed in class**).

#### **Race (Du Bois)**

**Q:** The recent Supreme Court decision to ban race as a consideration in college admissions is just and equitable.

- Show of hands: agree/disagree
- Share a moment in your life in which you were discriminated against because you were in a majority or minority classification and how that informs your perspective on our question
- For next class: what did you learn about your classmates’ perspectives and experiences that

allow you to understand, if not agree with, their position on the question

### **Group Think and Freud's Herd**

**Q:** Think of a time you knew something was wrong, yet you didn't do anything to improve the situation.

- One-minute presentation of issue and feelings/emotions at the time
- 2 minutes: Cause for inaction and where/how learned, from whom/what
- Larger reflection for next class to share with the class

### **Science and Ethics: ChatGPT, environment**

**Q:** ChatGPT (or gene editing) presents an existential challenge for humanity.

- One-minute presentation your perspective on the issue, for or against its use
- 2 minutes: explore with the class why you feel the way you do and base your response in your personal experience, not the science
- Larger reflection for next class to share with the class

### **Alternate prompts**

- What do you value that you fear science will destroy?
- What is beauty? Bring an example to class

**Identities (consider limiting this just to class to develop from Marx readings. Have students guess each other's class before we share and write a short bullet-point rationale for each):**

**Assignment:** Consider the various identities to which you ascribe (e.g. race, class, gender, sexuality, politics, religion, etc.). For next class, bring in an image of a stereotype for one of those identities that do not fit you. Be prepared to explain your feeling about the stereotype and why/how it does not fit you.