INQUIRY: INTRODUCTION TO A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION
INQ 111/Fall 2018
Course Syllabus

Course: INQ 111, Inquiry: Introduction to a Liberal Arts Education
Instructor: Dr. Randy Richardson  richarr@westminster.edu
Office: 406 Thompson-Clark  Office phone: 724 946-7348
Office Hours: 10:30-11:30 AM MWF; 2:00-3:00 PM MW; 10:00-11:30 AM T,TH and by appointment
Class Hours: 3:10-4:10 MWF  Classroom: PH 205

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Inquiry 111 introduces students to the philosophy and practice of a liberal arts education. Students investigate classic and emerging questions which arise out of current social and intellectual concerns and exchange ideas within a supportive learning community. In the first part of the course, students evaluate traditional and contemporary discussions of liberal education and examine the ways liberal education is practiced at Westminster College. In the second part of the course, students apply the methods of a liberal education by investigating issues from multiple disciplinary and cultural perspectives. Instruction in information literacy and technology supports student research.

OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Articulate and practice the values and methods of liberal arts education.
To accomplish outcome #1, the course provides students with the opportunity to:
   a) Study liberal arts practices and theories.
   b) Recognize the greater expectations associated with college-level work and develop appropriate critical thinking and information literacy skills.
   c) Consider moral and ethical responsibilities they have to various communities as a result of their education.

2. Engage, experience and explain different ways of knowing.
To accomplish outcome #2, the course provides students with the opportunity to:
   a) Examine and compare each of the Intellectual Perspectives as ways of knowing.
   b) Recognize and respect different world views.
   c) Challenge personal assumptions to promote inquiry and intellectual growth.

3. Pursue interdisciplinary study and discussion of important issues.
To accomplish outcome #3, the course provides students with the opportunity to:
   a) Investigate and discuss significant or controversial issues from multiple cultural and intellectual perspectives.
   b) Engage diverse views of common readings and issues.
   c) Participate in an active learning community sharing a first-year experience.

“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.”
John Dewey
CLASS RULES

Class will be conducted in an environment of mutual respect. Do not enter the room while classmates are giving speeches. Attention should be given to student speakers at all times. Participation in class discussion is expected. There will be moments, perhaps entire class periods where it will be beneficial to be connected to the worldwide web. At other times, this class will be a sacred space free from all outside influence and interference. Assume the latter. I’ll announce the former.

Attendance: Be here on time. A three-absence rule will be enforced. Every absence beyond three will incur a 10% deduction from your final grade. If you are traveling with a team or representing the school in other official capacities, be sure to clear your absence with your professor ahead of time. Also, if you know you’ll be missing class for these reasons, then make every effort not to have any unexcused absences. Work will not be accepted late. DO NOT MISS CLASS ON A DAY ON WHICH YOU ARE SCHEDULED TO SPEAK OR TAKE AN EXAM. Speeches cannot be made up. In-class quizzes cannot be made up.

EVALUATION

Final grades will be based on the following assignments:

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<td>Co-curricular Reports, #1,#2,#3</td>
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<td>Class Part./In-class Quizzes</td>
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TOTAL 1000 points

SCALE
900 – 1000 A / 800 – 899 B / 700 – 799 C / 600 – 699 D / Below 600: Have you considered a life of crime?

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela
ASSIGNMENTS

(Please note that further instruction will be provided for each of these assignments. These brief descriptions are designed to give you a general idea of the make-up of the course.)

**Introductory Speech Presentation**  A 2-4 minute introductory speech in which students will introduce themselves as “people of the book.” 25 pts possible. All students who deliver this speech will get the maximum, 25 points. (It’s the only one like this!)

**Book Response Essay**  A 1-2 page essay in which students will address three areas of analysis in relation to Brooks’ *People of the Book*. The first paragraph should express the student’s view of the book’s central thesis or theme. The second paragraph will address the relevance of that theme to today’s world. Finally, the third paragraph will demonstrate how the student will use this idea in their life as a student here at Westminster.  (50 pts)

**Film Response Essay #1, Life is Beautiful**  Before viewing the film, students will be provided a handout which will focus attention on the most salient points of analysis. Students will be choose one of three essays (2-3 pgs) to be developed in response to the film. (75 pts)

**Film Response Essay #2, Babette’s Feast**  Before viewing the film, students will be provided a handout which will focus attention on the most salient points of analysis. Students will be choose one of three essays (2-3 pgs) to be developed in response to the film. (75 pts)

**Library Essay**  A 3-5 page paper crafted in response to prompts offered in the library workshop week. Staff librarians will assist in the development of this assignment. (100 pts)

**Argumentative Essay**  A 3-5 page essay developing an argument in response to a question or prompt (provided later in the syllabus) chosen from a wide array of academic disciplines. In building their argument, students will need to consult at least five outside sources related to the topic. The student’s essay will be accompanied by a bibliography of consulted sources. (200 pts)

**Mid-term Exam**  An examination covering lecture materials, discussion points, films and readings in the first half of the semester. The exam will include true-false questions, matching, multiple choice, short answer, fill-in and an essay question. (100 pts)

**Final Group Presentation**  Students will be divided into four groups whose task it is to describe and analyze a contemporary social or political problem and offer possible plausible solutions. Each group will be expected to choose their own topic. The presentation will be 15-20 minutes in length. (100 pts)

> “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”
>  
> *William Butler Yeats*
KIVA Assignment  Students will be divided into four groups in order to complete the KIVA assignment described in class. KIVA group work will be performed in class and will culminate in a group presentation on Friday of KIVA week. (25 pts.)

Co-curricular Activity Reports  Students will be responsible for attending a co-curricular activity in each month of the semester (September, October, November) and writing a 1-2 page analysis of the event. Reports must be turned in by midnight on the last day of the 3 months. Students must turn in reports to the appropriate drop boxes located on MyWestminster. Reports are worth 25 pts each, for a total of 75 points.

Final Exam  (100 pts) An essay requiring students to apply liberal arts concepts learned during the semester. The exam will take place during the final exam period,  **Monday, December 10, 11:30-2:00.**

Class Participation/In-class Quizzes  A total of 75 points will be derived from the instructor’s judgment of class participation as well as quizzes given throughout the semester.

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY TOPICS
Essay Topics by Genre

Art
- Has the commercialization of art destroyed its humanistic value?
- Should graffiti be considered art?
- Compare and contrast Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze’s 1851 painting, *Washington Crossing the Delaware* with Pablo Picasso’s 1937 work, *Guernica*. Which vision is more relevant today?

Business
- Is most contemporary business practice and philosophy directly opposed to liberal arts education?
- How can the entrepreneurial spirit be reconciled with “the educated person”?
- Compare and contrast the leadership styles of Bill Gates and Donald Trump. Which is having a more profound impact on the world today?

Communication
- Did the Ancients (Greeks/Romans) value the study of communication?
- Is Google making us stupid?
- Compare and contrast the interpersonal communication portrayed in the film, *When Harry Met Sally* (1989) and *Her* (2013). In light of current trends in interpersonal communication, is the contrast more reassuring than unsettling?

Drama
- From a liberal arts perspective, which is the more valuable genre to study: theater or film?
- What is the cultural value of reality television?
- Compare and contrast the film *Casablanca* (1942) and *Wag the Dog* (1997). What does your analysis suggest about the intervening five and a half decades in American life?

“**Learning is a result of listening, which in turn leads to even better listening and attentiveness to the other person. In other words, to learn from the child, we must have empathy, and empathy grows as we learn.**”

  Alice Miller
Health
- Should healthcare be considered a human right?
- What can be done to improve rural healthcare in the US?
- How have health care providers and pharmaceutical companies contributed to the nation’s opioid crisis?

History
- The observation that “those who are ignorant of history are destined to repeat it” is often countered by historians who claim that “those who believe that history is repeating are not examining it closely enough.” Which truism is more true?
- Did Spielberg’s Lincoln do more to debunk the Lincoln myth or perpetuate it?
- Compare and contrast Woody Allen’s nostalgic vision of 1920’s Paris in the film, Midnight in Paris with the typical nostalgic view of 1950’s America offered by early television sitcoms and perpetuated by many contemporary politicians. What can be concluded about nostalgic vision?

Literature
- What is lost and gained if the computer destroys the book?
- Why is reading Harry Potter so much better than watching the films?
- Compare and contrast the Atticus Finch of To Kill A Mockingbird with the Atticus Finch of Go Set A Watchman. Assuming that Harper Lee actually wrote the sequel, what was her message to contemporary readers?

Math and Computer Science
- Which skill is more valuable for elementary school students to learn: coding or multiplication tables?
- What serious lessons can be drawn from the music of humorist/math teacher, Professor Tom Lehrer?
- Compare and contrast the psychological and sociological insights offered by the 2001 film, A Beautiful Mind with the psychological and sociological insights found in the 2014 film, The Imitation Game. What conclusions can be drawn regarding mathematical innovation and humanistic values?

Music
- Is music more a “way of feeling” than a “way of knowing”?
- What can and/or cannot be learned from Hamilton?
- Compare and contrast Toby Keith’s musical response to 9/11 with Bruce Springsteen’s. Which is better for America?

Philosophy/Religion
- Should religion be studied in the academy?
- Is postmodern thought destroying faith?
- Compare and contrast the faith journeys of characters in two 1986 films, Rodrigo Mendoza (played by Robert DeNiro) in The Mission, and Mickey (played by Woody Allen) in Hannah and Her Sisters. Which journey is more compelling?

“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”

Martin Luther King Jr.
Poetry
- Is poetry dead?
- Is slam poetry a legitimate form of poetry?
- Compare and contrast the poetry of William Shakespeare and Billy Collins. Which is more relevant today?

Politics
- What does the current presidential drama suggest about the need for liberal arts education in America?
- Explain the benefits and drawbacks of political polarization in contemporary American politics. Which weigh heavier?
- Compare and contrast the fictitious senatorial campaigns of Bill Mckay, (Robert Redford's character in the 1972 film, The Candidate) with Bob Roberts (Tim Robbins character in the 1992 mockumentary, Bob Roberts). Which is more relevant to a discussion of political campaigning in America today?

Science and Technology
- Has the scientific promise of the Industrial Revolution been realized?
- After reading Berthold Brecht's play, Galileo, explain the role of science in the humanities.
- Compare and contrast the impact of technology in “established” nations with its impact in “developing” nations. What conclusions can be drawn?

Sports
- How is athletic competition a legitimate concern for liberal arts studies?
- Should professional sports (mainly football, baseball and NASCAR) persist in promoting militaristic patriotism?
- Contrast the reasons offered by NFL players for “taking a knee” with those attached to them by critics. From a liberal arts perspective, which is more legitimate?

Women’s Studies
- Is a “great books” approach to liberal arts study inherently biased against women?
- How are female political candidates scrutinized differently than male candidates?
- Compare and contrast “First Wave” feminism with modern day feminism. Is slacktivism helping or hurting women’s rights?

“A liberal education is at the heart of a civil society, and at the heart of a liberal education is the act of teaching.”
A. Bartlett Giamatti
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Central to the purpose and pursuit of any academic community is academic integrity. All members of the Westminster community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity, in keeping with the philosophy and mission of the College. The College’s expectation for strong integrity applies to all academic work, including work on campus, online, and at other locations where Westminster courses are offered. Academic dishonesty is a profound violation of this code of behavior. Outlined below are examples of and specific consequences for academic dishonesty at Westminster. The list of examples is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to provide an overview of the community’s common concerns. Students who are unsure as to whether specific behavior not listed here will constitute academic dishonesty should consult with their individual course instructors.

Violations

Violations of the Westminster College Academic Integrity Policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

Cheating
1. Copying answers from another student during a quiz, test, or examination.
2. Divulging answers or information to another student during a quiz, test, or examination, or accepting such aid.
3. Using unauthorized aids (e.g., notes, books, or electronic devices) during a quiz, test, or examination.
4. Collaborating improperly with another student on an open-book, take-home or online quiz, test, or examination.
5. Exceeding the time limit, when one exists, on an open-book, take-home or online quiz, test, or examination.
6. Aiding another student improperly on in- or out-of-class assignments.
7. Leaving a physical or digital testing area to obtain answers or aid.
8. Handing in another’s work or ideas as one’s own.
9. Acting as or using a substitute online to submit work that is not your own.
10. Taking a quiz, test, or examination with prior knowledge of its contents, when that knowledge has not been authorized or consented to by the instructor.
11. Engaging in any activity which may give an unfair advantage to oneself or another.

Misconduct
1. Engaging, during a class or testing session, in conduct that is so disruptive as to infringe upon the rights of the instructor or fellow students.
2. Submitting the same work, including oral presentations, for different courses without the explicit consent of the instructors.
3. Stealing or intentionally damaging or destroying notes, research data, laboratory projects, library materials, computer software (including the intentional passing of a computer virus), or any other work of another member of the Westminster community.
4. Acting as or using a substitute in any academic evaluation procedures.
5. Depriving others of necessary academic resources.
6. Sabotaging the work of another member of the Westminster community.
7. Unethically obtaining answers or other information about a quiz, test, or examination before it is administered, even if not a member of the class in which the quiz, test, or examination is given.
8. Violating copyright restrictions, i.e., stealing the intellectual property of another.

“If I can’t dance, I don’t want to be a part of your Revolution.”

Emma Goldman
Plagiarism “Derived from the Latin word for kidnapping, plagiarism is the theft of someone else’s ‘brainchild’—that person’s language, ideas, or research—and the origin of the word conveys the seriousness of such offenses in the view of college teachers and administrators. The reason is that words, ideas, and research are the main forms of currency in academic life.” — Keith Hjortshoj, The Transition to College Writing (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2001), 172.

1. Quoting or paraphrasing, without proper citation and acknowledgment, the published words, ideas, or work of another (including anonymous publications and online publications).
2. Submitting, as one’s own work, a paper, an oral presentation, or a visual presentation authored wholly or partially by someone else (including commercial services).
3. Borrowing and appropriating, without proper citation, facts that are not matters of general knowledge, including all statistics and translations, and/or the general idea or logic of another’s argument.

Providing False Information

1. Furnishing false information to the College for the purpose of obtaining special consideration or privilege.
2. Misrepresenting source material or information or participating in the falsification or misrepresentation of citations.
3. Falsifying laboratory data, notes, or results, or research data of any type, and presenting it as one’s work.
4. Providing false identification in an online course or using someone else’s account and password to access course or College materials.

Process and Consequences

If a course instructor suspects that a student has violated this policy, the instructor will speak with the student, review appropriate materials, and reach a conclusion. If the instructor determines that a violation has occurred, the following process will apply:

1. The instructor will inform the student that he or she has violated the AIP and that the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA) will be notified. In the event that a violation occurs in graduate courses, the director of the graduate program (DGP) will be notified.
2. The instructor will impose an academic penalty at his or her discretion (e.g., 0 for the assignment without possibility of revisions, failing grade for the course, or other appropriate academic sanctions).

In this class, the minimum penalty will be a “0” given on the assignment, with a maximum of an “F” for the course. Please see the College Catalog for further details on Academic Integrity and process for petition.

ACCOMMODATION

Westminster College is committed to providing services and resources to remove unnecessary barriers for students with disabilities, as consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students with disabilities who are seeking options to address any potential physical and programmatic barriers, which includes academic accommodations, should contact the director of Disability Resources for further information. The director will meet with the student to discuss his or her demonstrated concerns, Westminster’s related requirements, relevant resources, and potential options to appropriately address the issue(s). You can contact the Office of Disability Resources by calling 724 946-7192.

“To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society,”

Theodore Roosevelt
DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE

(Subject to change at the discretion of your professor.)

**Week One: Commencement** or “Introductions to Introductions of Introductions…”
M 8/27  Introduction to Liberal Arts Studies, Inquiry, and old stinky books
W 8/29  Discussion of the Discussion- People of the Brooks
F 8/31  Introductory Presentations Given (We are people of the book!)

**Week Two: Defining the Liberal Arts** or “Greek Week”
M 9/3  Isocrates and Company Meet “People of the Book”
W 9/5  Inquiring Procedures RDGs 1.1/ 1.2/ 1.3/1.7
F 9/7  Plato’s Cave **Book Response Essay Due, RDG 1.9**

**Week Three: Liberal Arts and Living Life** or “Life is Beautiful?”
M 9/10  Life Lessons in the Liberal Arts RDGs 1.10
W 9/12  Film, **Life is Beautiful**
F 9/14  Choosing More RDG 1.13/1.14

**Week Four: Ways of Knowing** or “Philosophy (big picture) Week”
M 9/17  Science and Religion **Film Response Essay #1 Due, RDG 2.2**
W 9/19  Evolution As Fact and Theory RDG 2.12
F 9/21  Discussion: **Life is Beautiful** or not? **Film Response Essay #1 Due**

**Week Five: Ways of Knowing** or “Arts Week”
M 9/24  Literature Day RDGs 2.7/2.8
W 9/26  Music Day RDG 2.4
F 9/28  Art Day RDG 2.9

“He who opens a school door, closes a prison.”
Victor Hugo
INQ 111 p.10

**Week Six:** *Ways of Growing* or “Practical Writing”

M 10/1 The Medium is the Message and other “McLuhanacy”

W 10/3 Essay Writing Workshop- Discussion Upcoming Essays

F 10/5 “Essay it isn’t so…” **LIBRARY DAY ONE**

**Week Seven:** *Ways of Growing* or “Reading, Writing, Speaking and Research!”

M 10/8 The Joys of Reading and Research: Wanting to Know

W 10/10 The Pain of Public Speech

F 10/12 **LIBRARY DAY TWO**

**Week Eight:** *Ways of Growing* or “Articulating Excellence”

M 10/15 Midterm Review

W 10/17 Film #2, *Babette’s Feast*

F 10/19 **LIBRARY DAY THREE**

**Week Nine:** *Ways of Showing* or “Exam and Essay Week!”

M 10/22 Mid-term Exam

W 10/24 Discussion: Babette- Feast or Famine?

F 10/26 **Library Essay Due**

**Week Ten:** *Beyond Slacktivism* or “KIVA Week!”

W 10/31 Intro KIVA, **RDG 3.12**

F 11/2 The Good Samaritan/ KIVA work **RDG 3.4, Film Response Essay #2 Due**

“I’m a huge fan of the liberal arts approach of teaching you to think, analyze and communicate, then sending you out in the world to cause trouble.”

*Hilary Mason*
Week Eleven: Liberal Arts in Action or Inaction

M 11/5  A World in Need RDGs 3.1/3.2/3.6

W 11/7  “Othered” in America RDGs Handouts

F 11/9  The Discipline of Articulation Rdgs 3.8/3.9

Week Twelve: Liberal Arts and Contemporary Social Issues

M 11/12  Environmental Values RDG 3.11

W 11/14  Genderalizations and “Me Too” RDGs Handouts

F 11/16  Immigration Nation RDGs Handouts

Week Thirteen: Liberal Arts in Action or “Giving Thanks/Thanksgiving”

M 11/19  The First Thanksgiving

W 11/21  THANKSGIVING BREAK!!!

Week Fourteen: Liberal Arts Issues or “Digging In”

M 11/26  Contemporary Issue Work: Problems

W 11/28  Contemporary Issue Work: Causes

F 11/30  Contemporary Issue Work: Solutions

Week Fifteen: Liberal Arts Arguments in Action or “Yes, we can!”

M 12/3  Group Presentation A

W 12/5  Group Presentation B

F 12/7  Group Presentation C  Argumentative Essays Due

Final Exam: Monday, December 10, 11:30 AM- 2:00 PM

“Note too that a faithful study of the liberal arts humanizes character and permits it not to be cruel.”

Ovid