It is not so very important for a person to learn facts. For that he does not really need a college. He can learn them from books. The value of an education in a liberal arts college is not the learning of many facts but the training of the mind to think something that cannot be learned from textbooks. (Albert Einstein, 1921, in response to Thomas Edison’s opinion that a college education is useless)

The growing precision of our understanding should enhance, and not diminish our sense of wonder. (Alfred Brendel)

In much wisdom is much vexation, and those who increase knowledge increase in sorrow. (Ecclesiastes 1.18)

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire. (William Butler Yeats)

You must unlearn what you have learned. (Yoda, Star Wars V: Empire Strikes Back)

The unexamined life is not worth living. (Socrates [Plato, Apology, 38a])

ΕΝ ΟΙΔΑ ΟΥΔΕΝ ΟΙΔΑ. (=Ἐν οἴδα ὅτι οὐδὲν οἶδα. — Socrates)

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ. (=Γνῶθι σεαυτόν. — Temple of Apollo at Delphi)

Welcome to Westminster College and to Inquiry 111. The course title describes our general objective, which is to inquire and learn how to learn, especially by learning how to formulate and refine questions.

Read the “Introduction to the First-Year Program” in the Inquiry textbook (also online: First-Year Program) for details of Inquiry 111, including course outcomes and objectives.

As we pursue the goals of Inquiry 111, and as we cultivate the appreciation of reading, writing, and exploring different ideas, you can expect this course to be full of challenging, enlightening, exciting, frustrating, and rewarding experiences.

Requirements and evaluation for the course

• evaluation

For my criteria for evaluation go to my Evaluation page and read the information carefully.

• If you have any questions about any assignment, ask in class or make an appointment to see me.
• If you have any questions about any evaluation or how you are doing in the course, make an appointment to see me.
• If you miss an assignment or exam, call or make an appointment to discuss any makeup work.

Due dates for submitting assignments are on D2L (click on the “Dropbox”).

• assigned readings

Assigned readings should be completed before the class for which they are assigned—use your best judgment to divide the readings evenly for each week. The primary focus of the course will be on discussing the bolded assigned readings in class (see schedule below). Keeping notes on the readings is highly recommended—I would encourage you to use this form for every reading assignment (also on D2L). You are expected to prepare for every class by (1) being ready to summarize and identify the major issues or themes in the assigned readings and (2) bringing at least 2 written questions or comments for each of the assigned readings:
• You are expected to have read the text(s) carefully and be able to share the penetrating questions or issues in the assigned texts that you discern in your reading, preparation, or even further research (which is always encouraged). Include or suggest challenges, discoveries, insights, questions, etc. for class discussion. The more connections you make with other course materials, the more impressive the Qs and Cs will be. You do not have to understand everything before class, but you should demonstrate that you prepared and are familiar with the major issues in the text(s). Remember: questions are more valuable than answers.

• Cultivate the ability to ask informed questions about the readings based on the knowledge you gain along the way (e.g., previous readings and class discussions).

• You may be asked to read and expound your written Qs or Cs.

• Your written Qs or Cs, the demonstration of your ability to formulate questions, the way you present them, and the way you respond to others’ Qs and Cs will constitute a significant part of the final participation grade.

Not all assigned readings may be covered in class or on exams, but they are assigned for your edification in achieving the goals of the course. The more you refer to the assigned readings in class and in your work, the better your mastery of the readings will be. Your use of them in class discussion and in your work will affect the evaluation of your semester grade.

Occasionally, I may assign additional readings, but these will ordinarily be short.

In the schedule below is a link for a variety of recommended “readings” (e.g., articles, movies). Although they are not required, you may find them helpful, humorous, stimulating, useful, etc.

**presentation**

You will present a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation of:

• the main idea(s) or point(s) of the reading assignment(s)—see the course schedule below for the texts to be presented

• your critique or response to (any part of) the reading assignment (including references to previous readings)—this should be the focus and main portion of the presentation

• Include within your presentation critical questions, challenges, discoveries, insights, etc. for the class discussion that will follow your 10-minute presentation.

Everyone is expected to do the preparatory work described above, not just the presenters.

Submit your PowerPoint presentation on D2L before coming to class to present (file name = “your last name presentation”).

See my Evaluation page under Presentations for evaluation criteria (do not be concerned about the “Communication Skills” section of the presentation evaluation page).

All students will fill out an evaluation sheet, which will be (1) used to offer peer critique to the presenter and (2) collected by me to review students’ critical ability and participation.

**library assignment**

You will submit a bibliography after the week we spend in the library for information literacy instruction. It should include at least 10 secondary sources you found to be promising for your research paper, including at least 5 academic journal articles—articles in newspapers or magazines are acceptable if appropriate for your paper. As you find scholarly resources during or after library week, write annotations for, i.e., your review of, at least 3 of the sources in your bibliography.

• Electronic sources count only if you provide evidence that they are scholarly sources.

• Use the *Chicago Manual of Style* for bibliography.

**co-curricular activities**

You will attend or participate in at least 3 co-curricular activities (you are encouraged to attend as many and as often as you can). They can be plays, lectures, service projects, athletic events, etc.—even movies.

• One must be a performance art (e.g., visual, musical, theatrical, oral).

• You may choose from among the various activities available throughout the semester. If you are not sure something qualifies as a co-curricular activity, ask me before you write the paper.

• A co-curricular activity that is offered in your major or minor—e.g., a biology major attending a special lecture by a guest biologist—would be acceptable only if it is not required by any professor or course.

For 3 co-curricular activities of your choosing, you must submit a reflection paper (450–900 words) on D2L (file name = “your last name co-cur 1”). The substantial portion of the reflection paper should articulate your critical reflection on the co-curricular activity—i.e., not mere description or summary of the activity—and how it relates to liberal arts education and to Inquiry themes, including:
• at least one of the readings thus far in the semester and
• the summer reading

Include in a footnote information about the co-curricular activity, e.g., title of the event, kind of activity, place, date, time, duration, attendees.

Use the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes (or endnotes). No bibliography or works cited.

Follow the guidelines for Written assignments.

As soon as you submit your paper, make an appointment to review your graded paper with me.

• research paper

You will write a research paper (1,500–2,000 words) on a topic of your choice. Make an appointment as soon as possible to discuss your topic with me before the library week. Whatever your topic and thesis, make sure that connections with Inquiry themes and materials, including the summer reading, are evident in your final work. You are expected to learn the discipline of continual research, writing, and editing throughout the semester. You may find the Tips for writing papers helpful.

• You must submit (in one file on D2L) a paper proposal that includes:
  • a thoughtful and clear articulation of your research interest—the more detailed, narrower, and specific the research interest, the better (try to formulate a thesis)
  • a preliminary bibliography that includes at least 10 secondary sources (besides course textbooks and reference books) you found to be promising for your paper, including 5 academic journal articles (articles in newspapers or magazines are acceptable if appropriate for your paper)
  • Electronic sources count only if you provide evidence that they are scholarly sources. Use the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes (or endnotes) and the bibliography.
  • Submit your proposal as early as possible in the semester, so that it can be approved for you to begin work. Make an appointment as early as you can to bring a printed copy of your proposal for discussion and approval.
• You are strongly encouraged to make further appointments for feedback on your progress.
  • The paper should represent original work (i.e., your own thoughts), not a mere digest of other people’s opinions. Your own reading and re-reading of the relevant texts, as well as review of other materials, are fundamental to the task. I want to know what you discover in your engagement with the text(s)—a “text” can be written works, art works, music, plays, movies, interview, research results, poll data etc.—whether or not you agree with the authors or the opinions presented in class, including mine.
  • Focus on honing your ability (1) to argue for your opinions and conclusions persuasively and (2) to support them with evidence from texts (especially primary sources) and other relevant sources.
  • Your final bibliography (N.B. not works cited) must contain at least 8 sources used in your paper, including at least 4 academic journal articles (articles in newspapers or magazines are acceptable if appropriate for your paper).
  • Electronic sources count only if you provide evidence that they are scholarly sources.
  • Use the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes (or endnotes) and the bibliography. Learn the automatic footnote (and endnote) function of your word processor.
  • Follow all the instructions given on my Evaluation page under Written assignments.

• terms

Throughout the semester, you will be responsible for learning significant terms used in our texts or in class (see the “terms” file on D2L). You will be responsible for the definitions. Your knowledge of significant terms may constitute a part of a quiz or exam.

• exams

There will be 2 quizzes (ca. 30 minutes) and a midterm exam (ca. 45 minutes). They will cover the materials in the course you will have learned by the time of the tests. There may be pop quizzes, the results of which will affect the evaluation of your participation. See my Evaluation page under Quizzes and examinations.

• grades

Grades will be determined as fairly as possible. See my Evaluation page under Grades for more information. The final grade for the course will consist of the following:

• research paper — 30%
• participation (including pop quizzes & library assignment) — 10%
• presentation — 10%
• 3 co-curricular reflection papers — 30%

Participation is a significant part of this course. See my Evaluation page under Participation for more information and instructions.
• midterm — 10%
• quiz #1 & 3 — 10%

**extra credit**

You may earn extra credit any time during the semester.

- Submit a paper consisting of 700–1,000 words relating something from popular culture (e.g., movie, play, TV show, book, any performance) to a particular course topic (consult the instructor).
- The paper should be mostly critique (not mere description or summary).

The instructor reserves the right to make the final determination concerning any extra credit. You can earn a maximum of 5% toward the final grade. You may write more than one, if you wish, but you will not receive more than 5% total in extra credit.

**Required books**


**Recommended books** (* = highly recommended)


**Resources to consider**

**Student’s Guide** to *Freakonomics*

My [Resources](#) page.

Course materials on [D2L](#); online resources, e.g., study guides

[The Sarajevo Haggadah (PBS, 11 April 11 2014)](#)

[Geraldine Brooks’s essay on the actual Sarajevo Haggadah](#)

**Keeping in touch**

During the semester check your e-mail regularly for messages regarding course matters (e.g., changes in the syllabus). Visit and reload (refresh) this page for updates to the syllabus; see also my [home page](#) for other information and resources related to the course. Please feel free to make an [appointment](#) any time about any course matters.

**Tips from former students**

For some practical advice from former students, see the [tips](#) page.
Regardless of how demanding all of this is, I promise to be as fair as possible. I recognize that you will be very busy this semester pursuing various obligations and passions. I understand. I have my passions too, e.g., my family, music, philosophy, nature, mountain biking, fixing things, food. But I am also very passionate about education, both yours and mine—I mean not just the business of acquiring knowledge but more importantly the total development of honorable human beings. I do not require you to share my excitement about all the things we will cover, but I do expect you to do your best to complete the requirements for the course. To help you do that, I will make myself available outside the class time and the office hours. I will be glad to help you when you are struggling with an assignment. Or if you have any questions, concerns, complaints, and even compliments, I will do my best to take the time to listen and offer my response. Keep in mind that I am here to help you learn. So again, welcome to Westminster and to Inquiry 111.

Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Aug 27 M, 29, 31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General orientation</strong>: introduction to Inquiry 111 &amp; liberal arts education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course syllabus (including Evaluation link; review requirements, expectations, and criteria for grading—ask Qs, if you have any)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster College: Mission statement (also <a href="#">online</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Westminster Plan (also <a href="#">online</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster College: Academic Integrity Policy (also <a href="#">online</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is Liberal Education? (cf. <a href="#">online</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement on Liberal Learning (<a href="#">online</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher: “Effective Learning Begins With the Right Attitudes” (<a href="#">online</a>, p. 6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Chicago: <em>letter to the class of 2020</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilroy: “Interrogating Texts: 6 Reading Habits to Develop in Your First Year at [Westminster]” (<a href="#">online</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit your summer reading essay in the appropriate drop-box of your course page on D2L—without making any changes to it.</td>
<td>Yes updated 27 Sep 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about research paper topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember: bring your written Qs &amp; Cs to each class (see Participation).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy all relevant Web pages and resources to your hard disk or flash drive, etc. for easy access. Keep the copies updated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>Sep 3 M, 5, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intro to Inquiry 111 &amp; liberal arts education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Newman</strong>: <em>The Idea of a University</em> (excerpts); complete text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shapiro</strong>: Liberal Education, Moral Education (also <a href="#">here</a>; <a href="#">reading guide</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finkelmeyer: <a href="#">Grades</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josefson: Learning Is Not Fun (also <a href="#">online</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andersen: The Emperor’s New Clothes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiamengo: “The Unteachables: A Generation that Cannot Learn”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 Sep 28: Geraldine Brooks’s <a href="#">lecture</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="#">Recommended reading</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to think? (a self-exam)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we think we know: the (hi)story of the thumb.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>Sep 10 M, 12, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemology</strong>: What’s worth knowing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• multitude of perspectives (Can a physicist &amp; a mystic see together? Can biology majors &amp; English majors talk? Seeing is believing?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plato: Allegory of the Cave (take notes showing analysis of the allegory): draw the cave described in the allegory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parable of the Blind Men and the Elephant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calandra: Angels on a Pin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact or opinion? (a self-exam) <a href="#">Here</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Matrix</em> (highly recommended movie for comparison with Plato; can be borrowed from the library)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Week 4  Sep 17, 19, 21

**The purpose of (liberal arts) education:** seeing through—despite—veils

*Sep/Oct ???: movie night at the Nas’ 7:46 PM-ish*

Feel free to bring DVDs of movies you think your classmates should see. For directions click here.

- **Csikszentmihalyi:** Veils of Maya
- **Plato:** Allegory of the Cave (take notes showing analysis of the allegory) [updated 12 Sep 2021]
- **Newman:** *The Idea of a University* (excerpts)
- Westminster College Mission Statement (also online)
- **Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask** (helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)

### Week 5  Sep 24, 26, 28

**Self-knowledge:** growing pains, growing gains

*Sep 24:* Quiz 1

- **Maslow:** *Defense and Growth*
- **Plato:** Allegory of the Cave (take notes showing analysis of the allegory) [updated 12 Sep 2021]
- University of Chicago: *letter to the class of 2020*
- **Csikszentmihalyi:** Veils of Maya
- **Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask:** (N.B.: helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)
- > Fact or opinion? (a self-exam) [updated 14 Sep 2021]

*Sep 24: 추석 (Choo-su-hk; harvest festival in Korea)*

### Week 6  Oct 1, 3, 5

**Oct 5:** Information literacy instruction in McGill

See library materials in D2L before class; bring your own laptop, if you have one.

**The human condition:** the Genesis of the human condition

- **Words and world(s):** epistemology and language • the art of thinking & the art of questioning
  - **Genesis:** *The Tree of Knowledge*; also read my brief commentary on Genesis 3.1–6 (cf. what I sent the editor)
  - Click here for other translations and versions.
  - **Gioia:** Words (also [here](#))
- > Calendar matters

### Week 7  Oct 8, 10, 12

**Oct 10:** midterm (see D2L for review file) [updated 1 Oct 2021]

**Oct 12:** Information literacy instruction in McGill

See library materials in D2L before class.

**The human condition:** the Genesis of the human condition

- **Words and world(s):** epistemology and language • the art of thinking & the art of questioning
  - **Genesis:** *The Tree of Knowledge*; also read my brief commentary on Genesis 3.1–6 (cf. what I sent the editor)
  - **Gioia:** Words (also [here](#))
  - a helpful reminder (cf. the first week)

### Week 8  Oct 15, 17, 19

**Oct 15:** midterm (see D2L for review file) [updated 1 Oct 2021]

**Oct 19:** Information literacy instruction in McGill

See library materials in D2L before class.

**Cross-cultural (mis)understanding:** hermeneutical circles and contexts

**Oct 17 Presentation** (Levitt & Dubner): Wright:

- [Read Dr. Perkins’s story “Conceptual Art and Galvanizing”](#) in the Inquiry reader and see his [video](#) before attending his talk in Witherspoon-Lakeview; bring at least 2 questions to ask the author (esp. about writing).
- Review:
  - Course syllabus (including Evaluation link; review requirements, expectations, and criteria for grading—ask Qs, if you have any)
  - The Westminster Plan (also [online](#))
What is Liberal Education? (cf. online)
Statement on Liberal Learning (also online)
Fisher: “Effective Learning Begins With the Right Attitudes” (also online, p. 6)
Csikszentmihalyi: Veils of Maya
Rachels: The Challenge of Cultural Relativism; text with Qs
Bohannan: Shakespeare in the Bush
Menkiti: Person and Community in African Traditional Thought (pp. 19–22; reading guide)
Miner: “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema” (also here)
Herskovits: “Cultural Relativism and Cultural Values” vs. Pojman: “Ethical Relativism: Who’s to Judge What’s Right and Wrong?”

**Week 9**

Oct 22 Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Westcott
Oct 24 Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Vercammen; Bateman
Oct 26 Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Stewart; Gagliordi

- Winthrop: A Model of Christian Charity
- Mill: Representative Government, ch. 3
  - also read Cotton Patch: Lk 10.25–37
- Levitt & Dubner: ch. 1: schoolteachers & sumo wrestlers
- Presentation evaluation: be ready to offer each presenter good critique (focus is not on summary but on the critical response evident in the presentations)
- Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask (N.B.: helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)
  - The Cotton Patch NT
  - “The Parable of the Good Samaritan” with a humorous twist
  - Hughes: Let America Be America Again
  - Kennedy: Inaugural address
  - Recommended readings

**Week 10**

Oct 31 Presentation (Copland): Sherman; Hodil
Nov 2 Presentation (Copland OR Levitt & Dubner): MacMurdo; Jenkins
Nov 5 Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Lucas; Lima

- Levitt & Dubner: ch 2: Ku Klux Klan & real estate agents; “Why Vote” (pp. 238–42)
- Copland: What to Listen for in Music
- Scudder: Learning to See
- Strategies for Looking (cf. context & perspective)
- Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask (N.B.: helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)

**Week 11**

Nov 7 Presentation (King): Lapson; Rosa
Nov 9 Presentation (George): Kelly; Sieczkowski
Nov 12 Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Hubauer; Simmer

- Levitt & Dubner: ch. 3: drug dealers
- Letter from clergy
- King: Letter from Birmingham Jail
- George: “Natural Law and Civil Rights” (also read this introduction)
- Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask (N.B.: helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)
- Mill: Representative Government, ch. 3: also here
- Recommended readings

**Frog leap test** (for fun & challenge)
### Week 12

**Nov 14**: no class (keep working on the assignments, esp. the research paper)

**Nov 16**: "Does Morality Depend on One’s Culture?" (take notes on video in class; cf. Rachels, Menkiti, Bohannan, Blind Men and the Elephant, Mine)

**Nov 19**: Quiz 3 (covering weeks 8–12)

- Course syllabus (including Evaluation link; review requirements, expectations, and criteria for grading—ask Qs, if you have any)
- **Levitt & Dubner**: ch. 4: criminals
- Charles Seife’s *Proofiness: The Dark Arts of Mathematical Deception*
  - John D. Mueller, “Dismal Science” (click on "view as PDF" for the print version)
  - John J. Donohue III and Steven D. Levitt, "The Impact of Legalized Abortion on Crime" (cf. "Further Evidence that Legalized Abortion Lowered Crime: A Reply to Joyce" & Freakonomics, chap. 4: "Where Have All the Criminals Gone")
- **Einstein**: Science and Religion (N.B. Einstein’s claim: “No amount of experimentation can ever prove me right; a single experiment can at any time prove me wrong.”)
  - See also this or this. And this. Cf. this article (and book) re Einstein’s argument re the concept of a personal God
- **Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask** (N.B.: helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)
  - Dawkins: “Science, Delusion and the Appetite for Wonder”
  - Dawkins-McGrath debate (23 Mar 2007): part 1; part 2 (also 7-part video)
  - McGrath-Atkins debate (27 Mar 2007; 1hr 19min)
  - Recommended readings
  - Debate (?)

### Week 13

**Nov 26** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Hoon; Smith

**Nov 28** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Eckes; Snarey

**Nov 30** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Diehl; Spozarski

- **Levitt & Dubner**: ch. 5: parent
- **Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask** (N.B.: helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)
  - Recommended readings
  - Debate (?)

### Week 14

**Dec 3** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Davis; Vuich

**Dec 5** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Cunningham; Weaver

**Dec 7** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Carnes; Williams

- **Levitt & Dubner**: ch. 6: parent, pt. 2; Epilogue
- **Propaganda Alert & Questions to Ask** (N.B.: helpful for reading texts & writing research papers)
  - Behind names
  - illegal names
  - Debate (?)

**Dec 11** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Bottcher

**Dec 12** Presentation (Levitt & Dubner): Woods

**Final thoughts** (Or: Anything and everything you wanted to ask Prof. Na but were too afraid or busy to ask)

- The art of thinking & the art of questioning • Quo vadis?

- Bring an anonymous, printed list of the following to hand in:
  1) the most influential readings
  2) the least significant readings
  3) the most challenging experiences during the semester
  4) what you really want(ed) to ask Prof. Na

- What is this?
Without education we are in a horrible and deadly danger of taking educated people seriously. (G. K. Chesterton)

Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die. (Anonymous)

**Oct 7:** last date for the proposal

**Oct 18:** meet in Witherspoon-Lakeview to ask Dr. Perkins questions about his short story

**Oct 20:** midterm (see D2L for review file)

**Oct 25:** Faculty Scholarship Panels (co-cur options throughout the day)