205-02 Literature and the Moral Imagination: Leadership and Community/Crosstown Connections

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Context:
ENGL 205 is a required part of the Ethics/Religion and Society Focus in Xavier’s core curriculum. This course was created for the E/RS Focus to help students reflect on issues in these three related areas and develop their own positions by analyzing and responding to some important ways literature has dealt with them.

This section of 205 counts as an elective for the Peace Studies Minor. Thus, we will explore how principles of conflict resolution and social justice are related to leadership in a good community or society and how all these issues are connected to individuals’ moral choices.

This section of 205 also counts as an elective for the Gender and Diversity Studies Minor and fulfills three hours of the new diversity requirement in the core curriculum. Thus we will explore how gender and diversity issues are related to leadership and building a good community or society and how and why all these issues are connected to individuals’ moral choices.

Crosstown Connections:
This section of ENGL 205 involves community building with UC students. Accordingly we will have three joint meetings with a UC class on three Monday nights throughout the semester. Dates and times will be announced. We will not meet for our regular class on the day of the night classes, but I will be in my office for optional individual conferences then. In addition each of you will be part of a team that will include an equal number of UC students. Each team will make a video, a Power Point, or a storyboard presentation to be shared at our final joint meeting in April. More information about this collaborative project will follow.

Desired Outcomes:
Students will demonstrate in writing and class discussion:

- an understanding of the basic argument of the readings from *Habits of the Heart* and the ability to use its terminology;
- an understanding of and the ability to apply basic concepts of leadership developed by James MacGregor Burns;
- the ability to read challenging literary texts in various genres with understanding and develop their own interpretations of them;
- the ability to reflect intelligently on aesthetic and ethical issues raised by the readings;
- the ability to synthesize readings and discussion in this course with material from PHIL 100 and THEO 111.
Students will demonstrate the ability to write clear, well organized and well developed essays of various lengths. These essays should show original insight into the texts and issues in the course, provide textual support for those insights, and be sound in grammar, punctuation, and style.

As a key course in the ER/S Focus, the “core of the core curriculum,” ENGL 205 contributes to the fulfillment of all goals of the core curriculum (except as they refer specifically to mathematics, science, and foreign language) and shares their student learning outcomes. For a list of these goals and outcomes, ask the instructor.

**Topic:**
The particular focus of this section of 205 is on leadership and community. Accordingly we will consider the following questions:

- What are the best kinds and styles of leadership?
- Are different kinds of leaders needed for different situations or eras?
- What are the most important qualities of a good leader?
- Should a leader be more of a creator or a resolver of conflicts?
- Should leaders see their primary responsibility as reflecting or shaping the views of those they lead?
- Are leaders the same as heroes? As role models? Do we need either of these?

- Can there be a good community or society? If so, what are its defining qualities?
- How does a good community resolve tensions between apparently competing values such as these:
  - individual freedom and social responsibility;
  - openness to change and respect for tradition;
  - diversity and commonality in beliefs, ideas, and experiences?
- Which institutions are most important to a good community? What should their characteristics be?
- Must a good community or society be just, procedurally, distributively, and substantively?
- What are the best structures or strategies for a community to use in resolving conflicts?
- In the U.S. today do we live in communities or in isolation; and, if we live in communities, are they good ones?
- How, if at all, can/should we be part of the process of improving our communities?
- How does a good community respond to immigrants?
- How does it respond to its own members who are less powerful for whatever reason?
- To what extent is a global community possible or even desirable?
- How can leaders, role models, and heroes best help our communities improve?

All these questions are difficult and complex. We won’t find simple answers or necessarily consensus as we discuss them; but by sharing responses from our various perspectives, we
should be able to deepen our understanding and at least move toward more reflective and responsible action. The sociological analysis in *Habits of the Heart* and the ideas of James MacGregor Burns will provide a framework. All but one of our literary readings will be works written in the past fifty years, and all these selections will provide a variety of perspectives on our topic.

Because this course is designed to encourage thought and dialogue about the readings and our own values, classes will usually follow a discussion format, sometimes involving group work. The more you participate, the more you’ll get out of the course.

**Assignments:**
Besides the first reflection paper, each student will participate in one panel presentation. Grades for both will be factored into the grade for class participation.

During the semester each student will be part of a team of four to six students (half from UC) producing a five-minute video, Power Point, or storyboard presentation to be shared at our last joint meeting. Details will be announced.

On an assigned date in March each student will submit a critical essay on an assigned topic connecting *Warriors Don’t Cry* and *A Gathering of Old Men*. Topics will be announced.

During the final exam period each student will present a final synthesis project in oral and written form. See additional sheet for information about this assignment.

**Tests:**
Five tests, usually partly factual-interpretive and partly essay, will be given throughout the semester. Quizzes may be given at any time.

**Office Hours:**
240 Hinkle Hall
M 12:30-4:00 and 6:00-7:00 pm, W 12:00-4:00, and other times by appointment
Office phone: 745-3627.
Email address: getz@xavier.edu.

**Grading:**
Five tests total 50%
Critical essay counts 10%
Team project counts 10%
Written final project counts 15%
Class work counts 15%
The grade for class work will be based on quizzes if any are given, the reflection paper, the panel presentation, and the quality and consistency of daily participation. Either individually or in small groups students will sometimes be required to prepare answers to questions either during class or for the next class. Asking good questions is also a valuable way to contribute. I
reserve the right to call on students even if they don’t volunteer. Coming to class without doing the reading or without bringing the textbook for the day will hurt your grade for classwork. So will texting, sleeping, and other behavior in class that undermines the class community.

NOTE: Although class participation demands more than physical presence, it assumes promptness and faithful attendance. Any unexcused absence and/or frequent lateness can lower your grade for class work. I don’t expect you to come to class if you’re sick or have a legitimate emergency, but keep me informed and be ready to provide documentation. Quizzes and tests missed because of unexcused absence may not be made up and will receive the grade of zero.

Prerequisite:
The prerequisite for this course is either ENGL 101 English Composition or ENGL 115 Rhetoric. Papers and essays on tests must meet the standards of English composition. Grades will be based on quality of writing as well as content.

It is recommended that students fulfill their literature requirement by taking ENGL 124 Studies in Fiction or some other genre before ENGL 205. The Studies courses teach skills of literary interpretation.

Suggestion:
If possible, buy or rent all your books now because the bookstore may send them back before we get to them.

**WORKING SCHEDULE** (subject to change if necessary)

Select the interviewee who is closest to your values and the one who is furthest from them, and be ready to explain why.


Wed., Jan. 22:  Same assignment in *Habits of the Heart*, but bring to class a working thesis and notes or outline for reflection paper on leadership and community. See instructions on separate sheet.

Fri., Jan. 24:  *Reflection paper due* in polished form for discussion and submission.


Fri., Jan. 31:  *1 Henry IV*, Act III
Mon., Feb. 3:  
*1 Henry IV, Act IV*

Wed., Feb. 5:  
*1 Henry IV, Act V*  
Panels on *1 Henry IV*

Fri., Feb. 7:  
Test on *1 Henry IV*

Mon., Feb. 10:  
Likely date of first evening meeting with UC students, location and time  
TBA

Wed., Feb. 12:  

Fri., Feb. 14:  
*Warriors Don’t Cry*

Mon., Feb. 17:  
*Warriors Don’t Cry*

Wed., Feb. 19:  
*Warriors Don’t Cry*

Fri., Feb. 21:  
Panels on *Warriors Don’t Cry*

Mon., Feb. 24:  
Test on *Warriors Don’t Cry*

Wed., Feb. 26:  

Fri., Feb. 28:  
*A Gathering of Old Men*

Mon., Mar. 10:  
Likely date of second meeting with UC students

Wed., Mar. 12:  
*A Gathering of Old Men*

Fri., Mar. 14:  
*A Gathering of Old Men*

Mon., Mar. 17:  
*A Gathering of Old Men*

Wed., Mar. 19:  
Panels on *A Gathering of Old Men*

Fri., Mar. 21:  
Test on *A Gathering of Old Men*

Mon., Mar. 24:  
Critical essay due  

Wed., Mar. 26:  
*Animal Dreams*

Fri., Mar. 28:  
*Animal Dreams*
Mon., Mar. 31:     *Animal Dreams*

Wed., Apr. 2:     *Animal Dreams*

Fri., Apr. 4:     **Panels on Animal Dreams**

Mon., Apr. 7:     **Test on Animal Dreams**


Fri., Apr. 11:    *Crow Call*

Mon., Apr. 14:    Likely date of final meeting with UC students; presentations of videos, Power Points or storyboard talks, location and time TBA

Wed., Apr. 16:    *Crow Call*

Wed., Apr. 23:    *Crow Call*

Fri., Apr. 25:    *Crow Call*

Mon., Apr. 28:    **Panels on Crow Call**

Wed., Apr. 30:    **Test on Crow Call**

Fri., May 2:      Review and synthesis

Wed., May 7:      **Final project due** in oral and written form during exam period, 10:00-11:50