Origins of Ideas and Ideas of Origins
IDH 1001 - Fall 2015
The Honors College
Florida International University

Classrooms and Professor Contacts
Lecture/large-group classes:
Tuesdays at 3:30 PM in SIPA 125 or in Pod Group Rooms
Individual sections meet on Thursdays in the rooms noted below

**POD Group 1 (GL 245)**
Cynthia Dottin
Section: 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM, GC 276
Office hours: By appointment, GL 233A
dottinc@fiu.edu; (305) 348-2414

Brian Peterson
12:30 PM – 1:15 PM, GC 271A
Office hours: By appointment, DM 396
peterson@fiu.edu; (305) 348-2343

Sian Evans
Section: 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM, GC 279A
Office hours: By appointment, OE 243
sevans@fiu.edu; (305) 238-9981

POD Group 2 (GC 280)
Ruben Garrote
11:00 AM - 12:15 PM, GC 273A
Office hours: By appointment, DM 233
garrote@fiu.edu; (305) 348-4100

Bennett Schwartz
Section: 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM,
Office Hours: By appointment, DM 283
schwartb@fiu.edu; (305) 348-4025

POD Group 3 (GL 165)
Adam Gorelick
12:30 PM – 1:45 PM, GC 273A
Office hours: By appointment, DM 233
gorelic@fiu.edu; (305) 348-4100

Scott Kass
12:30 PM – 1:45 PM, GC 275B
Office hours: By appointment, DM 233
kass@fiu.edu; (305) 348-4100

POD Group 4 (PG6-1121)
Joan Baker
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM, GC 273B
Office hours: By appointment, DM454c
bakerj@fiu.edu; (305) 348-3873

Helen Cornely
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM, GC 271A
Office Hours by appointment AHC3 - Room 538
cornelyh@fiu.edu (305) 348-1968

Joseph Lichter
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM, AHC4-202
Office hours: MW 3-5pm, CP307
jlichter@fiu.edu; (305) 348-6209

POD Group 5 (SIPA 125)
Regina Bailey
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM, GL 139
Office hours: By appointment, DM 233
regina@thewolf.fiu.edu; (305) 535-2649

Thomas Pliske
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM, GC 278B
Office hours: By appointment, DM 233
plisket@fiu.edu; (305) 348-4100

Patsy Self
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM, AHC5-212B
Office hours: By appointment, ZEB 237A
Selfp@fiu.edu, 305-348-3388

Juan Carlos Espinosa
First Year Seminar Coordinator
Office hours: By appointment, DM 233
espinosj@fiu.edu; (305) 348-4100
Course Overview
The course will be conducted as a combination of lecture/presentation and discussion seminar. It is designed to encourage students to become self-conscious learners exploring not only the what, but also the how and why of knowing (epistemology). Students will be able to explore important issues through class activities including writing assignments, debates, extracurricular activities and participation in cultural activity and citizenship opportunities. In the second semester of the Honors College First Year Seminar, students continue their exploration of knowledge focusing more on the integration of knowledge, the social implications of the control and dissemination of knowledge, and the comparison of the way science and art see the world and obtain knowledge. Students will go beyond theory and into actual practice through truly interdisciplinary work that highlights innovation, creativity and intellectual rigor.

On Tuesdays, the entire first-year class will meet together in SIPA 125 or in the room assigned to your Pod group for a lecture, discussion, film or other presentation. On Thursdays, students will meet in their assigned sections to explore more deeply the subject of the Tuesday session. Students are expected to come to class prepared (i.e., having read/listened to assigned material, brought their iClickers to participate fully in class discussions and activities. IDH1001-1002 is a web-assisted course using the learning management system Blackboard. Assignments, electronic readings, the discussion board, quizzes, video, music and supplementary material will be found there. You MUST use Blackboard to be able to participate in the course. Your usage is diligently tracked by the Blackboard system and is available to your professors. For more information on Blackboard and e-Campus, visit http://ecampus.fiu.edu/.

Course Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe and discuss seminal issues in the theory of knowledge covered in this course.
- Incorporate into their reflections on contemporary social, moral, political, and scientific issues, pertinent concerns raised in class with respect to: what knowledge is, how it is acquired and understood, and the role it plays in societies.
- Recognize and articulate the ways in which perception, conception, memory, and language affect our ideas about the nature and origins of human beings and of our societies.
- Recognize different approaches to the questions of natural and human origins.
- Describe and discuss how different ways of knowing can cause conflicts in contemporary society.

Guidelines for Written Work
All written work must consistently adhere to the MLA Formatting and Style Guide. Students are advised to carefully proofread all papers before submitting them. All students are encouraged to take advantage of the University resources for writing to be found in the Center for Excellence in Writing, a full-service writing center providing writing assistance and feedback to university students. For more information, go to http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/.

All written work is submitted through Turnitin. Plagiarism can result in expulsion from the Honors College and will have a negative effect on your entire college career. All written work must include your name, Panther ID number, course number and the name of the professor on the title page. It must be double spaced, have 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left and right) and be typed in 12 point font, Times New Roman or Calibri.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are four (4) major written assignments during the Fall 2015 semester. Detailed instructions on the written work will be posted on the class Blackboard site.

- Demian Paper, 15% - minimum 1,000 words. Due September 14.
- Flatland Paper, 15% - minimum 1,000 words. Due October 20.
- Notebook, 15% - minimum 8 entries during the Fall semester. Begin work on week 4.
- Thesis Project, 30% - Question, research plan, literature review.
- Participation, 20% - includes coming to class prepared with readings and other assignments completed, turning in written work on time, and being involved in class activities. Mere attendance does not constitute participation.
Demian Paper

As a first year student, you are experiencing not just your first college courses but also your own individuation and own identity of your true self. In the course you were asked to read *Demian* by Herman Hesse. The following questions are going to be drawn from both your knowledge and comprehension of the book and a reflection on your own experiences in your first year. Please be certain to balance your answers to the question with material from the text (and/or supplementary texts) and your own life experiences. You must choose one of the three questions and put together a paper. You must reference the *Demian* (including characters, relationships and events). You are encouraged to use texts in addition to the *Demian* (either those assigned in the semester or texts you find on your own). The paper must include a works cited page.

1. When Emil and Demian discuss the biblical story of Cain and Abel, Demian provides a different perspective on the story, explaining that because people feared the very intelligent Cain, they fabricated this story to make him seem evil. This new take on the biblical tale contradicts what Emil believed to be the morally correct version and impacts him in a way that makes him open to new interpretations not of just this story but of much bigger life questions. Reflect on any experience(s) that you may have had here in your first semester at FIU in which you were presented with a new perspective on something and explain how that has impacted your ways of seeking knowledge and evaluating your existing beliefs and/or morals.

2. In *Demian*, Hesse explores the concept of duality. A major example of this is seen when Demian is discussing with Emil how religions mainly focus on God and the goodness associated with God, and how there seems to be a lack of mention of the devil and the badness in the world. There are other examples that Hesse uses, and for this question you are asked to identify the examples of duality that are discussed in the book (and ideas of your own on the theme of duality) and relate them to your own life in such a way that you can evaluate the importance and when applicable any imbalances that you think exist between such examples.

3. Emil Sinclair has some very vivid dreams, filled with symbolism (the sparrow hawk, the coat of arms, the woman with the masculine features) and these dreams seem to not only impact his emotional state but also to direct him to follow certain paths (i.e. his need to break free of his existing personality). Find other examples of texts in which dream symbolism is used to drive the protagonist’s adventure and compare it with the symbolism seen in *Demian*. Also answer the question of whether dreams are a valid source for learning about one’s self, or just a random collection of thoughts that should be discredited. Find evidence that would support your position.

Flatland Paper

1. How does the Flatland view of Irregularities in configuration relate to the question of whether nature or nurture has a greater influence on character development? How are Irregulars treated in Flatland society?

2. Write an essay in which you describe how Flatland combines two subjects that are not usually related: literature and mathematics. Discuss how these elements work together to emphasize and illustrate the novel’s central theme.

3. Discuss how class and social critique come together with math, logic, and methods of proof to tell a story on “many dimensions.”

Notebook Project

(Directed by Professors Joan Baker, Adam Gorelick, and Thomas Pliske)

The Notebook Project is an opportunity to explore a natural setting of your own choosing that also may prove to be a portal through which you can explore and expand your own perceptions and consciousness and in the process soak up some of Nature’s peace and beauty. There is a rich literary and scientific precedent for this kind of personal experience. Darwin’s *Voyage of the Beagle*, Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*, A.R. Wallace’s *The Malay Archipelago*, H.D. Thoreau’s *Walden* and Annie Dillard’s *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* are just a few examples. What they have in common is a long span of time over which they were written and an intense enthusiasm or love the writers felt for their subject.

Thomas Jefferson, our third President, drew regularly on the beauty of Nature in his personal, agricultural and political life. He writes,

“*And our own dear Monticello—where has Nature spread so rich a mantle under the eye?—Mountains, forests, rocks, rivers. With what majesty do we ride above the storms! How sublime to look down into the workhouse of Nature, to see her clouds, hail, snow, rain, thunder, all fabricated at our feet! And the glorious sun, when rising as if out of a distant water, just gliding the tops of the mountains, and giving life to all nature!*”

(Letter to Maria Cosway, October 12, 1786; quoted in *Light and Liberty*, Eric Petersen, ed. 2004)
Over the next two or three weeks, try to find a spot in Nature where you feel comfortable, have easy access and that gives you inspiration. If you are searching on the MM campus, you can try the Ecosystem Nature Preserve adjacent to the basketball arena, the organic garden within the Preserve or some of the quieter groves of trees in the landscaped part of the campus. If it is more convenient, find a place near home, but in all cases it should be a place where you feel inspired and connected. Once you find a place, discuss it with your section or pod instructors.

You should purchase a bound notebook which is dedicated to the project, and between now and the end of IDH-1002 make a minimum of 20 visits to the site for 20-30 minutes each visit. Once you "connect" with your place, the amount of time you spend may be a bit shorter or longer depending on circumstances and your own insights. Each time you visit, you should note the date, time and general weather conditions, since these are very much part of the place you have chosen. What you record and the form you use (prose, poetry, sketches, music, etc.) is up to you, but when you return to your entries, they should be able to evoke what you felt and experienced when you were actually there.

Why a notebook and not a laptop or I-phone? It is primarily because these devices tend to house numerous distractions which are antithetical to the project. For exactly the same reasons, we urge you not to include human subjects in your observations. We carry enough distractions in our own unamplified thoughts without adding even more baggage to carry.

For those who would like to learn the art of the silent mind, some of your instructors will organize sessions to teach you some basic practical techniques of concentration and meditation in connection with the Notebook Project. As some of you probably already know, these techniques have extremely valuable applications in nearly every aspect of your life, not just in this project. Participation in these sessions is voluntary. Stay tuned for the announcement later in the course.

Before the end of IDH-1001 and after several site visits, you will be sharing your notebook with your section instructor and discuss any problems you may be encountering. Near the end of IDH-1002 next spring, your journals will become the source of a personal Reflection Paper which will be part of your evaluation for that course.

**Freshman Thesis**

All students will be writing and presenting a thesis at the end of the academic year. They will be selecting a topic in collaboration with their instructor. Although student will be given general subjects to work with around the fifth week of the fall semester, they must tease out a reasonable and feasible topic. Students will be responsible or finding the topic, preparing a research question or statement, planning a preliminary literature review by the end of the semester. The final thesis will have a **minimum of 7,000 words excluding references, chart, and diagrams.**

**Important Dates**

Research Question or Statement due on Monday, October 12 by 11:59 PM
Literature Review, due on Monday, December 7 by 11:59 PM

Some of the topics are listed below, although others will emerge during the first four weeks of class. Watch Blackboard for developments.

"Plato's 'Allegory of the Cave' and Abbott's 'Flatland': Treatment of Proof and Knowledge"
"Proving Ourselves: Borges, Dennett, and Harding"
"The Use of Language and Style as Identity Symbols"
"The Role of Globalization in the Fragility, Endangerment, or Death of Languages"
Course Materials

Available at FIU Bookstore


Available on Blackboard

- Jorge Luis Borges, “Borges and I”*
- D.E. Harding, “On Having No Head”*
- Plato, “Allegory of the Cave” (from *The Republic*)
- Huston Smith, “The Way We Are”  
  * Found in Douglas R. Hofstadter and Daniel C. Dennett, *The Mind’s I: Fantasies and Reflections on Self and Soul* (e-book)

Poetry on the Evolution of the Self

- e.e. cummings, “sometimes I am alive because with”
- Emily Dickinson, “I’m Nobody! Who are you?”
- Sylvia Plath, *Lady Lazarus*
- Rumi, “Whoever Brought Me Here”
- Shankaracharya, “I am He!”

Video

- Daniel Dennett, *The Illusion of Consciousness*
- Steven Pinker, *Steven Pinker: Linguistics as a Window to Understanding the Brain*

Please note the course calendar may be subject to change. You will be notified in a timely manner. It is your responsibility to monitor Blackboard for updates.
FALL SEMESTER CALENDAR

How do we know anything? How much do you really know about what is going on in another person’s mind? What does it mean to be? What does the structure of knowledge look like? To what extent do the senses deceive?

Week 1, August 25 (Meet in SIPA 125)
Tuesday
- Introduction to First Year at the Honors College - Introduction of IDH 1001-1002 Faculty (Espinosa)
- Introduction to the Fall Semester (Lichter, Garote)
Thursday
- Plato, “Allegory of the Cave.” Read this brief selection from Plato’s Republic for discussion in class

Week 2, September 1 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday – “On the nature of reality and consciousness - Where, What, and Who Am I?”
- Dennett, The Illusion of Consciousness
- Borges, “Borges and I”
- Harding, “On Having No Head”
Thursday
- Class activity

Week 3, September 8 (Meet in SIPA 125)
Tuesday – “Finding Oneself Through Introspection and Experience”
- Demian: Identity and Self-Realization (Lichter)
Thursday
- Class Discussion

Week 4, September 15 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday – “Observing and Documenting the External World”
- Introduction to the Notebook Project (Guidelines prepared by Evans and Pliske)
Thursday
- Bring notebooks to class

Week 5, September 22 (Meet in SIPA 125)
Tuesday – “Ways of Knowing”
- Presentation (Garrote)
Thursday
- Class Discussion

Week 6, September 29 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday – “The Big Paper”
- Introduction to Freshman Thesis (Guidelines prepared by Baker, Dottin, Lichter)
Thursday
- Discussion of Freshman Thesis, How to Select a Topic

Week 7, October 6 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday – Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions
Thursday
- Class Discussion

Week 8, October 13 (Meet in SIPA 125)
Tuesday - Flatland: A Discussion of Many Dimensions
Thursday
- Class Activity

Week 9, October 20 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday, “Language and Knowledge” (Text and video available on BB)
- “Evolutionary Theories: Explaining How Things Change Over Time”
Thursday
- Class Activity
Week 10, October 27 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday – “The Evolution of Language” (Presented by Bennett Schwartz)
Thursday –
  • Class Activity
  • Steven Pinker: Linguistics as a Window to Understanding the Brain
  • See Language Resources and activities on BB

Week 11, November 3 (SIPA 125)
Tuesday - “When Languages Die, What Is Lost?” (Guest Lecturer: K. David Harrison)
  • Harrison, A World of Many Fewer Voices (pp. 1-59)
Thursday –
  • Class Activity
  • See Language Resources and activities on BB

Week 12, November 10 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday - “Many Moons Ago: Language and Time”
  • Harrison, When Languages Die (pp. 60 - 100)
Thursday –
  • Class Activity
  • See Language Resources and activities on BB

Week 13, November 17 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday - “An Atlas of the Mind”
  • Harrison, When Languages Die (pp. 101 - 166)
Thursday –
  • Class Activity
  • See Language Resources and activities on BB

Week 14, November 24 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday - “Worlds within Words: Language and Identity”
  • Harrison, When Languages Die (pp. 167 - 236)
Thursday –
  • Class Activity
  • See Language Resources and activities on BB

Week 15, December 1 (Meet in Pod Rooms)
Tuesday - “Poetry and the Evolution of the Self”
  • Plath, Lady Lazarus
  • Dickinson, “I’m Nobody! Who are you?”
  • Eliot, “Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”
  • Shankaracharya, “I am He!”
  • Cummings, “sometimes I am alive because with”
  • Rumi, “Whoever Brought Me Here”
Thursday
  • Students bring in a poem they learned when they were younger to discuss if their interpretation of the text had changed with the passage of time
  • Discussion of notebooks and theses.

Class Policies and Procedures

Policy on laptops and electronic devices for students attending Tuesday sessions in SIPA 125
  • The use of laptops and tablets is forbidden in SIPA 125.
  • Students who have a legitimate need to use a laptop or other electronic device in class, must present proper documentation to the instructor.
  • The use of all other electronic devices is prohibited. Devices will be subject to confiscation for the duration of the class session and will be returned to students at the end of the session.
  • Laptop use in the PODs and in individual sections is determined by each professor.
**Attendance/Classroom Etiquette**

Attendance is required and will be reflected in the final grade. You are expected to be on time for class and to remain in class for the duration of the lecture. Material will be covered in class that is not covered in the readings, thus each absence will negatively affect your ability to do well on assignments. Students will be allowed 2 absences. All other absences will adversely affect your grade. Please see the chart below for more information.

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**Attendance in the large group session will be taken by iClicker. All students must have one by the end of the second week.**

Students will behave in a courteous manner at all times. Talking in class is disruptive and shows a lack of respect for the lecturer, your fellow students and others present in the room.

**Honors College Requirements and Policies**

Registration in this course implies an acceptance of and compliance with the Honors College policies for students and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity.

**Honors Citizenship Requirements**

Beginning in Fall 2014, Honors College students are required to accumulate at least 20 citizenship points each academic year (Fall and Spring) by attending Honors College activities. Students attending only one semester (Fall or Spring) are required to accumulate 10 citizenship points. See [http://honors.fiu.edu/academics/policies/citizenship/](http://honors.fiu.edu/academics/policies/citizenship/).

**Student Portfolios**

The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students' learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what "artifacts" or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience. See [www.honors.fiu.edu/portfolios](http://www.honors.fiu.edu/portfolios).

**Academic Misconduct Procedures and Penalties**

In The Honors College, the term "honor" refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Honors College website [http://honors.fiu.edu/academics/policies/](http://honors.fiu.edu/academics/policies/), and the Academic Misconduct Procedures, available at [http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm](http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm).

Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

- FIU Honors College Student Handbook – [http://honors.fiu.edu/handbook0910.html](http://honors.fiu.edu/handbook0910.html)

**Religious Observances**

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements or scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be
absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.

**Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges**
Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center, if you have not done so already.