

## **The Idea of Origins and the Origin of Ideas**

### **IDH 1001**

**Fall Term 2009**

*The Idea of Origins and the Origin of Ideas*— This course is designed to encourage students to become self-conscious learners, exploring not only the what, but also the how and why of knowing. The course focuses on the nature of truth and reality and our role in the world each of us has constructed. The primary text for the course, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, discusses important movements in the development of culture. We will spend the year discussing these theories and what they teach us about “origins,” and we will try through discussion, fieldwork, and group and individual research to trace their impact on ourselves and on the world in which we live.

<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Classroom</u>
Regina Bailey (regina@thewolf.fiu.edu)	Wolfsonian	535-2649	ECS 279A
William Beesting (beestb@fiu.edu)	PC 245	348-2800	CBC 142
Caryl Grof (grofc@fiu.edu)	DM 233	348-4100	ECS 132
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All instructors are available by appointment.

### **Required Texts and Material:**

Required Handouts:

Various Myths (Due 9/01)

Bill Bryson, “How to Build a Universe” (Due 9/10)

Texts:

Leslie Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature* (Due throughout semester, beginning

8/27)

ISBN 978-0-19-516974-4, Oxford University Press, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2004

Plato, *The Death of Socrates* (Due 9/17) ISBN 0-87220-554-1, Hackett Publishing, 2000

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed* (Due 10/17) ISBN 0-8050-6389-7, Henry Holt & Co. 2001

Viktor Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning* (Due 10/27) ISBN 0-671-02337-3, Pocket Books, 1984

**Structure:** This course is conceived as a full-year course, but is divided into semesters for scheduling and grading purposes. Through a combination of small group and large group meetings, we will meet for discussions, lectures, and presentations.

**Expectations:** We are excited about the intellectual adventure we are embarking on together in The Honors College. We, the faculty, have spent a great deal of time reading and thinking about our course. We also have enjoyed discussing ideas – dismissing some and embracing others. These discussions have enabled us not only to stretch ourselves intellectually, but also have allowed us to get to know one another in new ways, and not surprisingly, to get to know ourselves better. We hope we create an atmosphere in our classrooms that will encourage you to join us in this same spirit. Although we are acutely aware of the importance to students of receiving good grades, and while we are eager for all of you to do so, we hope that you participate in our Honors class primarily to discover the joy of exploring new ideas and the value in learning to become discerning thinkers. Not simple tasks! We have set the same high standards for your performance as we have set for ourselves. We think we have developed a rigorous, creative course that will challenge you and, we hope, delight you. We are confident that *what* you learn and *how* you learn during the coming year will produce benefits that will last you a lifetime.

**Grades:** Your grade will be determined by attendance (10%), reaction papers and/or journals (20%), projects and papers (50%), and participation (20%). Many students don't realize that poor attendance results in a lack of participation, accounting for 30% of the final grade.

Writing requirements will be discussed by the individual instructors, but in general are less formal than papers and should be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

**Please note:** You may have three excused absences for the term; every additional absence will affect your final grade.

*Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.*

*Misconduct includes: Cheating – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. Plagiarism – The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.*

Students found guilty of academic misconduct, which includes plagiarism (see <http://www.bcm.tmc.edu/immuno/citewell/ethicite.html>), will receive a grade of F in the course and will be subject to further disciplinary action.

**Class Schedule:** All Tuesday 1400 – 1515 large group sessions will be held in **CP 197** unless otherwise noted on this syllabus. A few large group meetings will run beyond the regular class time. Please pay close attention to the syllabus so that you arrive at class in the correct place.

T August 25	Large group: Introduction to the Freshman Honors Seminar. Discuss why the notion of origins is interesting and important to us as a species. Discuss the different approaches to accounting for nature and its behavior that have evolved over history.
TH August 27	Small Group: Discuss Rival Theories (Reading: 10T).
T Sept. 1	Large Group: Creation Myths. Guest lecturer Dennis Wiedman (Myth Readings due)
TH Sept. 3	Small: Discuss Myths and reading materials.
T Sept. 8	Large group: Scientific origins. Guest lecturer James Webb. (Reading: Bryson chapter)
TH Sept. 10	Small group: Discuss lecture and Bryson.
T Sept. 15	<b>FILM??????</b>
TH Sept. 17	Small group: Discuss Plato (reading 10T)

T Sept. 22 Large group: Discuss *Death of Socrates* (Reading: *Death of Socrates*)

TH Sept 24 Small group: Discuss Aristotle (reading 10T)

T Sept. 29 Large group: Guest lecture on Kant (reading 10T)

Th Oct. 1 Small group: discuss Kant; instructions for research assignment

T Oct. 6 Large group: View *Hotel Rwanda* Please note: **class will run until approx. 4:15**

Th Oct. 8 Small group: Discuss *Hotel Rwanda*. Discuss Marx (Reading 10T). **Submit research topic.**

T Oct. 13 Large Group: Discuss *Nickel and Dimed* (Read Ehrenreich's book)

Library class **required**  
**12:30 Sections 1 and 2 GL 280**  
**3:30 Sections 3 and 4 GL 280**

TH Oct. 15 Honors College Convocation: required attendance

T Oct. 20 Large group: *No Exit* performance (Reading: Sartre, 10T; *No Exit* online) **class will run until 4:00**

TH Oct. 22 Small group: Discuss Sartre/existentialism

T Oct. 27 Large group: Discuss *Man's Search for Meaning* (Reading: Frankl's book)

TH Oct. 29 Small group: Research assignment due; Oral presentation of paper and passion plan

T Nov. 3 Large group: Discuss Freud (Reading 10T)

TH Nov. 5 Small group: Continue discussion of Freud; complete Oral presentations  
Honors Lecture: 3:30 Speaker to be announced.

T Nov. 10 Large group: View *High Heels* **Film will run until 4:15**

TH Nov. 12 Small group: discuss *High Heels*; distribute final assignment

T Nov. 17 Large group: Guest lecture on Eastern religions (reading 10T)

TH Nov. 19 Small group: discuss Eastern religions (**video topic due**)

T Nov. 24 Meet in small groups for video preparation (**script due**)

TH Nov. 26 Thanksgiving vacation; no class

T Dec. 1 No class: final editing and preparation for class Presentations

TH Dec. 3 Small group: Class Presentations

Finals week:

Large group: Class Presentations