

**"Breaking out of Bounded Rationality"**  
**Understanding Others: Humans and Their Relationships to Each Other  
and the Earth [Inhabiting Others Lives], Epistemological Issues**  
IDH 2003, 2004 (2<sup>nd</sup> Year Honors)

This course is Web assisted, Web CE6. Your computer must be compatible with the browsers used in Web 6. Please check for browser compatibility and Java script at <CE6.fiu.edu> or <https://lms.fiu.edu>. The tab next to the log in lists browser compatibilities; disable "pop up" blockers.

The class meets Tuesday/ Thursday 09:00-10:15 AM, Large group section on Thursday in PCA 180; Small group sections on Tuesday as listed below by section.

**The TEAM:**

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***The syllabus is subject to change, additions and/or corrections. Your 2<sup>nd</sup> year Honors Team reserves the right to make appropriate changes as deemed necessary that will be announced in class and posted through CE6 announcements and by email if any change is a necessary. These changes will be announced in class and posted online through email and announcements***

**No late assignments will be accepted; a zero grade will be assigned for any late or missing assignments, exceptions:** medical emergencies, jury duty, required school functions

**No use of personal computers or cell phones in the classroom during class meetings.**

**"Mini" in class assignments are equivalent to "pop" quizzes in large group meetings during the first ten (10) minutes of class.**

**An "overview" of the class is posted on the Homepage in CE6.**

**Required Texts for Fall 2009:**

- *Deep Ancestry, Inside the National Geographic Project* Spencer Wells, New York: National Geographic, ISBN 978-1-4262-0118-9

- *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge*, K. David Harrison, New York: Oxford University Press, ISBN 978-0-19-537206-0
- *Collapse: How Societies Choose to fail or Succeed*, New York: Penguin, ISBN 978-0-14-303655-5

#### **Online Reading Requirements and DVD's/videos Fall, 2009:**

- PDF: Boundary of Rationality, Ethics and the Chaos Theory
- PDF: Law of Unintended Consequences
- PDF Universality v. Relativism; audio selection on Morality from radiolab, wncy.org
- PDF: Family Tree
- PDF: by James/Stuart Rachels from *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* and *The Right Thing to Do, Basic Readings in Moral Philosophy*

#### DVD/ Videos:

- *Middle Sexes, Redesigning He and She* (2005)
- *Population Explosion*
- *Journey of Man* (2003)
- *Water's Journey Series* (4 DVD's): *The Hidden Rivers of Florida, The River Returns, The Everglades- Currents of Change, The Everglades- Restoring Hope*

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Participation and Attendance (15%); the course is conducted as a seminar; students are expected to come to class prepared and to participate in all discussions; ABSECES WILL RESULT IN THE LOWERING OF YOUR GRADE
- All written work must consistently adhere to a writing style manual of the student's choice: Chicago, MLA, APA, CSI; (use Kate Turabian's guide or Strunk and White)
- Students are advised to proof-read all papers prior to submission
- Free tutoring services: On-Campus Learning Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Green Library
- All students must adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of The Honors College and Florida International University as noted in the student handbook

#### **CLASS ASSIGNMENTS: 65% TOTAL**

4 Papers at 100 points (40%), Group Project and Paper analysis (25%)

In order to demonstrate understanding of the material presented, 4 papers are required- short essay assignments

#### **QUIZZES: 20% Total**

Quizzes are given throughout the course; announced as posted online in CE6 under the assignment tool, and UNANNOUNCED during the first 10 minutes of class

(L indicates large group, S indicates small section; team leaders for each lecture and discussion are indicated by last initial: E- Espinosa, P- Pfeiffer, T- Tsalikis)

#### **Module 1 Weeks 1-5**

Humanity and Society: Individuals/Communities, the evolution of Ethics and Morality: How are we alike? How are we different? What brings us together? What separates us from other species?

#### **Week 1**

Aug 25 (S) Introduction to the course; introduction to "Critical Thinking;" course requirements; Web assisted use in CE6

Aug 27 (L) Discuss "Critical Thinking" (P), ethics and morality (E, P, T)

- **Reading assignment for Weeks 2 and 3:** PDF's Online: "Law of Unintended Consequences," "Ethics and Chaos Theory," excerpts from James Rachels' *The*

*Elements of Moral Philosophy and The Right Thing to Do, Basic Readings in Moral Philosophy*

Week 2

Sept 1(S) Ethics, Morality, "Ethics and Chaos Theory discussion

Sept 3 (L) Tues Sept 2- "Bounded Rationality"; (T); discussion of "Unintended Consequences" and "Ethics;"

Week 3

Sept 8 (S) "Theoretical v. Experimental Science discussion

Sept 10 (L) (T) continued discussions from Week 2

- **Reading assignment for Week 4** "Causality and Unintended Consequences"

Week 4

Sept 15 (S) Discuss "...Unintended Consequences" and Observation Essay

Sept 17 (L) Independent Field Trip to Chuck E. Cheese that relates to the assignment; [Rosh Hashanah, Sept 19; Faculty Convocation Week]; ONLINE QUIZ open from 9/17-9/21

- **Essay Assignment #1: Chunky Cheese Essay, project of observation**, synthesis of bounded rationality that relates to consequences and observations from Chuck E. Cheese assignment; ethics and rationality- the way humans treat each other; include PDF required readings

Week 5

**Essay (#1) (Chuck E Cheese) due Sept 24 at noon, 12:00 PM**

Sept 22 (S) Discuss observations

Sept 24 Summarize theories and issues covered in Module 1, Weeks 1-5; begin video *Middle Sexes, Redefining HE and SHE* [<http://www.hbo.com/docs/programs/middlesexes/>] (Yom Kippur, Sept 28)

**Module 2 Weeks 6-10**

Identities: Roots, DNA

Week 6

Sept 29 (S) Complete discussion of *Middlesexes...*

Oct 1 (L) The Measure of Humans: Classification and power (E); Trace your roots via (a) interviews with family members, family records and (b) the internet; discuss economic outcomes of genealogy

- **Assignment: construct a family tree** (selected templates on line in CE6), **discuss diversity and economics**
- **Reading assignment:** *Deep Ancestry* by Spencer Wells

Week 7

Oct 6 (S) Begin DVD *Journey of Man*

Oct 8 (L) Complete *Journey of Man*, Discuss genealogy, Wells' work. Post preliminary results in the assignment tool, due Oct 10

Week 8

Oct 13 (S) Discuss genealogy

- **Essay Assignment #2, Family tree due Oct 15** online through the assignment tool; post preliminary results online

Oct 15

REQUIRED ATTENDANCE for Honors Convocation, Thursday, Oct. 15, no formal class meeting

- **Assignment #3: essay from Convocation Speaker due Oct 22 at noon (12:00 PM)**
- **Reading Assignment** *When Languages Die...K. David Harrison*

Week 9

Oct 20 (S) Begin discussion of Harrison

Oct 25 (L) Do we care if languages die? (E)

[Overtown Youth Center Luncheon on the Bay (BBC), 12:00 PM, noon; Thursday, Honors Excellence Lecture]

Week 10

Oct 27 (S) Meet in your South Florida Project group: the class is randomly assigned to a specific group: food (Tsalikis' classroom CP 103); transportation (Espinosa's classroom CP 416); water (Pfeiffer's classroom CP 422). Instructions, group assignments and chats are posted Online in CE6

Oct 29 (L) View *Population Explosion*; Honors Excellence Lecture; [Daylight Savings Ends Nov 1]

- **Reading Assignment:** *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, J. Diamond

### **Module 3 Weeks 11-15**

Does Language Define Us?

Week 11

Nov 3 Discuss Collapse... [Election Day Nov.2]

Nov 5 Continue discussion, "Is South Florida collapsing?" Part 1 (E)

Week 12

Nov 10 Continue discussion "Is South Florida collapsing?"

Nov 12 "Is South Florida collapsing?" Part 2 (E)

Week 13

Nov 17 Begin the series, *Water's Journey*; this will carry over into Spring semester

Nov 19 Honors' College Colloquium, REQUIRED ATTENDANCE, 3:30 PM

- **Assignment #4:** "Is South Florida on the verge of collapse?" Essay due Nov 23 in the assignment tool by noon (12:00 PM)

Week 14

Nov 24 (S) Groups meet for project presentation

Nov 26 **No formal class meeting; Thanksgiving Holiday, University Closed Nov 26-27**

Week 15

Dec 1 (S) Final group meetings for presentations

Dec 3 (L) Final Presentation from groups (20 minute limit); Honors' Graduation Awards Assembly

### **Finals**

Dec 8- Group Project Final Essay due today through the assignment tool by noon (12:00 PM)

**Commencement Dec 14 & 15**

*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.*