

## SYLLABUS

**IDH 3005 Honors Seminar V / IDH 3006 Honors Seminar VI**  
section UO3class no. 84834  
**IDH 4007 Honors Seminar VII / IDH 4007 Honors Seminar IIX** <sup>1</sup>  
section UO3class no. 84856  
**Fall 2009 / Spring 2010**

Instructor: Stephen M. Fain  
Office: Green Library 232B  
Office Hours: Tuesday: 1:00 - 2:00 pm by appointment  
Wednesday 5:00 -6:00 pm by appointment  
other times may also be arranged  
All appointments should be made directly with Professor Fain  
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Fax: office: (305) 348-6579, home: (954)677-0295  
Class Meetings: Wednesday 2-4:45 pm  
Room: Chemistry & Physics 111

### **AESTHETICS, VALUES AND AUTHORITY: CONFRONTING AMERICA**

In recent years it has become commonplace for American citizens to look critically at the behavior of the nation and its people. The idea that it is a good thing for citizens to actively critique and criticize the government and the people is alive and well in the United States. Today there is a spirit in this nation that supports challenges to authority and individualism, and there is a conflict between citizens as to what beliefs and behaviors define national loyalty and patriotism. Clearly there is conflict within the nation. In the United States articulation of conflicting views is protected by the *Constitution* and the *Bill of Rights*. The American experience is grounded in this spirit and the authority associated with citizenship empowers all to participate in the process of governing the nation. Evidence of this is obtained by considering the struggles and changes which mark the evolution of the nation from its inception. Beginning with a reading of *Common Sense*, the *Constitution* and the *Bill of Rights* we will examine personalities and phenomena which give America meaning. Utilizing selected readings, films, and other cultural artifacts, as well as through individual and group projects, we will examine the character of America. The Fall semester will focus on the foundations of the American character and the Spring term will focus on an analysis of more contemporary issues grounded in the foundations central to the academic work done in the Fall.

In the past this seminar has planned a four day trip to Washington, D.C. during the Spring term. Early in the Fall seminar participants will decide if they wish to build such a trip into their Honors experience. If the seminar decides to include this experience in the Spring term it will be expected to earn money to help reduce out of pocket expenses for all.

### **FALL 2008: - THE AMERICAN CHARACTER**

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<sup>1</sup> This course is designed to span both the Fall and Spring semesters.

The seminar will begin by examining cultural artifacts, personalities and events that have shaped the character of the people of America from the founding of the nation to 1975. Recognizing that it is not possible to consider all of the forces that shaped the American character, specific themes have been identified which provide a basis for understanding aspects of this unique national prospective. These understandings will serve as a base-line for the analysis of contemporary issues in American life during the Spring semester.

**Goals of the seminar are to:**

- engage students in critical thought
- create and maintain a simulating intellectual experience for all seminar participants
- advance each seminar participant's understanding of the importance of aesthetics, values and authority in establishing a national character.
- demonstrate the interrelationships linking aesthetics, values and authority in shaping a world view
- identify the issues which will serve as the central themes for the spring seminar

**Format::**

This course is offered as a seminar. It is expected that meetings will include regular and lively focused discussions. The course instructor has the responsibility for setting the themes, making assignments and respecting the contributions of well prepared seminar participants in all discussions. The participants have the responsibility to come to meetings prepared, actively participate in discussions, act respectfully towards all seminar participants, and to complete all assignments on time. It should be understood that students who arrive at seminar meetings late and/or unprepared are by definition disrespectful to the entire seminar.

Because the seminar meets for 2 hours and 45 minutes there is plenty of time for discussion and the viewing of full length films.

**Course Requirements:**

**Class notes: 20%**

When noted on the course calendar students will submit "class notes" based on the assigned readings prior to class. Class notes are typed and may not exceed 2 standard pages. Class notes should end with two (2) questions that are reflective of the student's understanding of the readings. Only the five (5) highest grades in this category will be averaged for the final grade.

**Reflective papers: 20%**

At intervals noted on the seminar calendar students will submit reflective papers of no more than 3 pages. These papers are intended to provide seminar participants with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the evolution of the seminar up to a specific point in time. Three (3) reflective papers must be submitted. A fourth reflective paper may be written by students carrying an average below A- in this category. Students who elect this option can not earn a grade higher than A- for their reflective papers.

**Group project: 10%**

Participants will join a reading group and, after reading the selected novel, collectively prepare a paper of no more than 8 pages relating the story to the theme of *the need to assimilate while maintaining identity*. Additionally, the group will make a presentation of approximately 20 minutes in length to the seminar and entertain questions.

**Take home mid-term examination: 20%**

Students will respond to 2 of 3 questions on a take home examination. These questions will be drawn from the experiences of the seminar up to the point of the examination. Students will have two weeks to complete this task.

**Final synthesis project: 20%**

Each participant in the seminar will be expected to develop a project that synthesizes the seminar experience. This idea behind this assignment is that students will be able to create new knowledge as a result of the seminar experience. Participants will present their projects to the entire seminar in a five (5) to seven (7) minute presentation. (Presentations taking more than 7 minutes will be penalized .5 (½) grade for each minute over 7.

Those electing to develop a traditional paper will be limited to 10 pages of text. Students may also choose to develop a non-traditional project. Non traditional projects must be augmented with a written explanation of the project. All students should present the instructor with a written proposal (1 page limit). Projects should not be undertaken without the instructor's approval.

**Participation: 5%**

A seminar is only as good as the participants make it. Students will be graded on the quality of their participation in seminar activities. It should be understood that quality is significantly more noteworthy than quantity.

**University Citizenship: 5%**

As students in the Honors College you are expected to be involved as active citizens in our University community. During the course of the semester each member of this seminar will provide evidence of participation in at least five (5) diverse University sanctioned activities. The Honors College Parade and Convocation is one such activity and participation is expected. Students will submit a citizenship log at the close of the semester.

**Academic misconduct:**

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.

**Guideline for all written work:**

All papers and the mid term examination will be submitted electronically. This work should be produced in accordance with the guidelines below.

- Work will be submitted no later than 2 pm on the date it is due.
- Work should be formatted as if on standard 8 1/2 x 11 paper, doubled spaced, with standard margins, and prepared using a standard 12 point font.
- All work done outside of the seminar will be proofread and corrected thoroughly.

- Students should follow a manual of style when preparing written. Any standard style is acceptable.
- Name and Panther ID number as well as page numbers should appear on top of each page of all work.
- All work should have a title page. (not counted in page limits)
- Students should keep a copy of all written work submitted
- Work received after deadlines may be marked down for lateness
- ALL STUDENT WORK IS TO BE ORIGINAL. PROPER REFERENCES ARE REQUIRED WHEN USING THE WORK OF OTHERS IN YOUR PAPERS. VIOLATORS OF THIS POLICY MAY BE AWARDED A GRADE OF "F" FOR THE COURSE.

### **Submission of written work**

All work should be sent electronically to [fainhonors.09.10@gmail.com](mailto:fainhonors.09.10@gmail.com)

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:** (these texts will be used in during the Spring Semester)

Fain, et al (Eds.) (2007) *Educating for Democracy in a Changing World: Understanding Freedom in Contemporary America*. New York: Peter Lang. ISBN 978-0-82047066-5

Hansbery, L. (1988). *A Raisin in the Sun*. New York: Vintage Books. ISBN 0-679-75533-0

Kramnick, I. (ed) (1976). *Thomas Paine: Common Sense (1776)*. New York: Penguin Books. ISBN 0-14-039016-2

*The Constitution of the United States of America*. Bedford, MA: Applewood Books. ISBN 1-55709-105-6

*The Declaration of Independence with short biographies of its signers* (1996). Bedford, MA: Applewood Books. ISBN 1-55709-448-9

Voltaire. (1759/2003). *Candide*. Translated by Lowell Blair. New York: Bantam Book ISBN 0-553-21166-8

### **GROUP PROJECT BOOKS** (only one required per student – assignments will be made in class):

Rodriguez, R. (1982). *Hunger for memory: The education of Richard Rodriguez*. New York: Bantam Books. ISBN 0-553-27293-4

Tan, A. (1989). *The Joy Luck Club*. New York: Ballantine Books. ISBN 0-8041-0630-4

Yeziarska, Anzia.(1925/2003). *Bread givers*. NY: Persea Books; 1925. ISBN 0-89255-014-7

### **Electronic Readings:** See the course calendar for access to electronic readings<sup>2</sup>

#### **The Founding of the Nation**

*Thomas Paine; Common Sense*

*Second Treatise on Government; Chapter 2 - Of the State of Nature*

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<sup>2</sup> Additional readings may be added during the semester.

*Benjamin Franklin On the Federal Constitution*  
*Time Magazine: Citizen Ben's Great Virtues*  
*Securing the Republic: Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia*  
*George Washington's Farewell Address*  
*Last Will and Testament by George Washington*

### **The Negroes and the Nation**

*The Emancipation Proclamation*

*A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand- 1858*  
*The Avalon Project; Second Inaugural Address of Abraham Lincoln*  
*Industrial Education for the Negro by Booker T. Washington*  
*The Case of the Negro*  
*The Talented Tenth by W.E.B. DuBois*  
*Susan B. Anthony; Women's Right to Vote*

### **An Emerging Nation Responds to Immigration**

*The New Colossus*  
Ancestors in the Americas; The Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act  
United States Immigration Policy; Bill of Rights in Action  
Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882  
*No Irish Need Apply*  
*Melting pot America*  
*NEW DIALOGUE: Cuban immigration, Haitian repatriation*

### **Unique American Art forms**

*Casey at the Bat*  
*Isadora Duncan and The Dance*  
Louis Sullivan, *The tall office building artistically considered*  
Louis Sullivan, *Buildings Extant in Chicago*  
William James, *What Pragmatism Means*  
*The Life of Louis*  
*O Captain! My Captain*  
*You're a Grand Old Flag,*

### **The Spirit of a Nation**

Franklin Delano Roosevelt; The Four Freedoms Speech

## **RECOMMENDED READINGS FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN THOUGHT ON THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICA AND AMERICAN IDEAS AND IDEALS**

Bellah, R. N. et al (1985). *Habits of the heart: individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkely, CA: University of California Press.

Bok, D. (2001). *The trouble with government*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brokaw, T (2001). *The greatest generation*. New York: Dell Books.

Boyer, W. H. (2003). *Myth America: Democracy vs. capitalism*. New York: Apex Press.

Darmer, M. K., Baird, R. M., & Rosenbaum, S. E., (Eds.) (2004). *Civil liberties vs. national security in a post - 9/11 world*. New York: Prometheus Books.

Dionne, E.J., Jr. Drogosz, K, M. & Litan, R.E, (Eds) (2003). *United we serve: National service and the*

- future of citizenship*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Ehrenreich, B. (2001). *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Ellis, J. J. (2000). *Founding brothers: The revolutionary generation*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Etzioni, A. (2004). *How patriotic is the Patriot Act? Freedom versus security in the age of terrorism*. New York: Routledge
- Euchner, C.C. (1996). *Extraordinary politics: How protest and dissent are changing American democracy*.  
Boulder, CO, Westview Press.
- Frank, T., (2004) *What's the matter with Kansas?: How conservatives won the heart of America*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Friedman, T.L. (2003). *Longitudes and attitudes: The world in the age of terrorism*. New York: Anchor Books
- Glazer, A., & Rothenberg (2001). *Why government succeeds and why it fails*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Harrington, M. (1993). *The other America: Poverty in the United States*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Hentoff, N. (2003). *The war on the Bill of Rights and the gathering resistance*. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Hartmann, T. (2006). *Screwed: The undeclared war against the middle class – and what you can do about it*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Inc.
- Hofstadter, R. (1973). *The American political tradition and the men who made it*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Huntington, S.P. (2004). *Who are we? The challenges to America's national identity*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Kaplan, A., (1958). *American ethics and public policy*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Leone, R.C., and Anrig, G. Jr. (Eds) (2003). *The war on our freedoms: Civil liberties in an age of terrorism*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Lepore, J. (2002). *A Is for America*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Lieven, A. (2003). *America right or wrong: An anatomy of American nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mandelbaum, M. (2003). *The ideas that conquered the world: Peace, democracy, and free markets in the twenty-first century*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Menand, L. (2001). *The metaphysical club: A story of ideas in America*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Morris, E. (2001). *Theodore Rex*. New York: Random House
- Needleman, J. (2002). *The American soul: Rediscovering the wisdom of the founders*. New York: Jeremy D. Tarcher / Putnam.

- Putnam, R. D. & Feldstein, L. M. with Cohen, D. (2003). *Better together: Restoring the American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Scalia, A. (1997). *A matter of interpretation: Federal Courts and the law*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Schlesinger, A.M., Jr. (1992) *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a multicultural society*. New York: W. W, Norton & Company.
- Simon, J. F. (2002). *What kind of nation: Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall, and the epic struggle to create the United States*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Stuart, J.A. and Stack, J. F., Jr. Eds. (2008). *The New Deal in South Florida: Design, policy, and community building, 1933-1940*. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press.
- Sunstein, C. R. (2004). *The second bill of rights: FDR's unfinished revolution and why we need it more than ever*. New York: Basic Books.
- Waldman, S. (2008). *Founding Faith: Providence, politics, and the birth of religious freedom in America*. New York: Random House.
- Wilkinson, J. H. III, (1997). *One nation indivisible: How ethnic separatism threatens America*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.
- Zakaria, F. (2004). *The future of freedom: Illiberal democracy at home and abroad*. New York: W. W., Norton & Company.
- Zinn, H. (1990). *Declarations of independence: Cross-examining American ideology*. New York: Harper Perennial

**Course Calendar  
and  
Electronic Reading List  
IDH 3005 and IDH 4007  
Fall semester 2009**

*Adjustments may be made during the semester*

**Professor S. M. Fain**

**Aug 26 Presentation of the seminar**

Understanding the American Character

The emerging spirit of the enlightenment: Aesthetics (the American spirit), Values (the American disposition) and Authority (the structure of American government)

**Sept 2**

**A particular moment in history**

Read: Voltaire: *Candide*.

**Class notes due electronically prior to class:** Identify specific points you consider to be related to social/political aspects of life reflected in the reading.

**Sept 9**

**Fundamental forces shaping the character of Americans**

Read: John Lock: *Second Treatise on Government* (electronic reading)

<http://www.constitution.org/jl/2ndtreat.htm>

Read: Thomas Paine: *Common Sense* beginning on pp 63-81 in Kramnick or (electronic reading) <http://www.ushistory.org/paine/commonsense/>

Read: Benjamin Franklin: *On the Federal Constitution* (electronic reading)

<http://www.usconstitution.net/franklin.html>

**Class notes due electronically prior to class:** Identify four (4) ideas found in the readings above that you believe are reflective of the values fundamental to the development of the United States and its citizens.

September 14 - 18 Faculty Convocation Week

**Sept 16**

**Sources of Authority**

**Foundational Documents for In Class analysis:**

Read: *The Declaration of Independence*

Read: *The Constitution of the United States of America* and *The Bill of Rights*

Read: Gutierrez, Chapter 3, "The Four Freedoms Viewed in Comparison to Traditional American Political Ideals," (*Educating for Democracy in a Changing World*).

**Discussion:** What are the sources of authority called upon in these readings? (A synthesis of readings)

**Class notes due electronically prior to class:** Identify three (3) sources of authority rooted in *The Declaration of Independence* and *The Constitution of the United States*.

**Sept 23**

**Basic American Values: Role Models and Initiatives**

Continuation of the Discussion above

Read: George Washington: *Farewell Address* (electronic reading)

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/washing.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp)

Read: George Washington: *Last Will and Testament* (electronic reading)  
<http://usgovinfo.about.com/library/blgwfarewell.htm>

*continued on next page*

Read: Thomas Jefferson: Notes on the State of Virginia [*synopsis*] (electronic reading)  
<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/whatwedo/k12/psd/colony/tjnotes.htm>

Read: Time Magazine: Citizen Ben's Great Virtues (electronic reading)  
<http://www.time.com/time/2003/franklin/bffranklin.html>

**Reflective Paper 1 Due (sent electronically prior to class)**

**Task:** After reflecting on all seminar readings to date identify four (4) specific ideas that today you consider fundamental to the character of the American People. Provide a supportive example for each idea.

**Assignment of book groups**

Sept 26 FIU Home Opener Football Game - FIU vs. Toledo

**Sept 30 Romantic America**

Film: *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*

**Oct 7 Refining Basic American Values: Role Models and Initiatives**

Read: A. Lincoln: *A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand* (electronic reading)  
<http://www.historyplace.com/lincoln/divided.htm>

Read: A. Lincoln: *Second Inaugural* Address (electronic reading)  
<http://libertyonline.hypermall.com/Lincoln/lincoln-2.html>

Read: Susan B. Anthony: *Women's Right to Vote* (electronic reading)  
<http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/anthony.htm>

Read: Theodore Roosevelt: True Americanism (electronic reading)  
<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mlassite/discussions261/tr1.html>

**Discussion:** How important is the unity of the people in the building of a nation?  
How important is diversity in the building of a nation?

**Class notes:** Identify at least two (2) values that drive the arguments for each of the assigned readings.

**October 12 Monday Honors College Convocation.**

**Oct 14 Conflicting Visions**

Read: B.T. Washington: *Industrial Education for the Negro* (electronic reading)  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=62>

Read: B.T. Washington: *The Case of the Negro* (electronic reading)  
<http://history.hanover.edu/courses/excerpts/111bwash.html>

Read: W.E.B. DuBois: *The Talented Tenth* (electronic reading)  
<http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1148.htm>

Read: *W.E.B. DuBois Critiques Booker T. Washington* (electronic reading)

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/40/>

**Reflective Paper 2 Due (sent electronically prior to class)**

**Task:** After considering all of the experiences of our seminar to date explain the schism separating Washington and DuBois and then, building on prior seminar experiences, explain how the position of each man can be seen as rooted in fundamental American values.

Oct 17 FIU Home Football Game - FIU vs. Troy

**Oct 21 Welcome to American; Conflicting realities**

Read: E. Lazarus: The New Colossus (electronic reading)

<http://www.legallanguage.com/resources/poems/statuelibertypoem/>

Read: Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882 (electronic reading)

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/chinex.htm>

Read: Ancestors in the Americas; The Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act (electronic reading)

[http://www.cetel.org/1943\\_repeal.html](http://www.cetel.org/1943_repeal.html)

Read: NEW DIALOGUE: Cuban immigration, Haitian repatriation

[http://www.sftimes.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=808&Itemid=37](http://www.sftimes.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=808&Itemid=37)

Read: "No Irish Need Apply," by William F. Buckley, Jr. (electronic reading)

Access using *google*

Read: "Melting pot" America, BBC (electronic reading)

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4931534.stm>

**Class notes:** identify at least one (1) principle that you deem "American in character"

in  
each of the  
first four  
(4)  
assigned  
readings.  
Then  
identify  
one (1)  
point of  
agreement  
shared by  
the last  
two (2)

assigned readings and one point that separates them. .

### Take Home Mid-Term Examination distributed

Oct 28

#### Truth and beauty from American perspectives

Read: R. B. Winn, "The Beauty of Nature and Art." (FIU electronic library using jstor)

Read: W. James: What Pragmatism Means (electronic reading)

<http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/james.htm>

Read: B. J. Zavrel: Isadora Duncan and The Dance (electronic reading)

<http://www.meaus.com/isadora-duncan.htm>

reading) Read: Lieber-Meister - The Louis Sullivan Page [the Life of Louis Sullivan] (electronic

<http://www.geocities.com/soho/1469/sullivan.html>

Read: E. L. Thayer: *Casey at the Bat* (electronic reading)

<http://ops.tamu.edu/x075bb/poems/casey.html>

Read: W. Whitman: *O Captain! My Captain!* (electronic reading)

<http://www.civilwarhome.com/ocaptain.htm>

Read: *You're a Grand Old Flag*, (electronic reading)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/You're\\_a\\_Grand\\_Old\\_Flag](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/You're_a_Grand_Old_Flag)

**Class notes:** Consider the relationship between perception, pragmatism and art and then respond to the idea that Americans tend to have a practical prospective on the arts.

Oct 31 FIU Home Football - FIU vs Louisiana (Monroe)

Nov 3 Tuesday Election Day – Don't Forget to Vote!

#### NOV 4 The Great Depression and the New Deal: The reconceptualization of American Values

**Read:** The Great Depression (About the Great Depression, The Depression in the United States – An Overview, and About the Dust Bowl). Check out the accompany photos and art. (electronic reading)

<http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/depression.htm>

**Video:** The Great Depression

**Class notes:** How do you think the American character was demonstrated during the Great Depression?

## **Nov 11**

**November 11 Wednesday Veterans' Day Holiday (University Closed)**

Nov 14 FIU Football - HOMECOMING FIU vs North Texas

**Nov 15 Sunday Last day for HC study abroad deposits insuring priority consideration**

**Nov 18 Film: Swing Shift**

**Take Home Mid-Term Examination due (sent electronically prior to class)**

Nov 21 FIU Football - FIU vs University of Florida in Gainesville

**Nov 25 In class reading:**

**Dec 2** *A Raisin in the Sun* **Presentation by book groups**

Dec 4 FIU Football - FIU vs FAU

**Dec 9 Last Class Meeting of the Semester:** Synthesis Project Presentations  
Synthesis Projects submitted for grading  
Course Evaluation