

Origin of Ideas, Ideas of Origins
IDH 1002 U29 & U30
On the Footsteps of the Polymaths
The Honors College, Florida International University
Spring 2019
Tuesdays and Thursdays: 9:30 – 10:45
Classroom: PG 6, Room 112
January 8 – April 28, 2019

Professors

Sian Evans – sevans@fiu.edu
Office Hours: **TBD**
Location: **TBD**

A. Antonio Pedrero – apedrero@fiu.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment
Location: TBA

Course Overview and Requirements

This course will address and explore the importance of employing interdisciplinary approaches to acquiring knowledge and making decisions as to when and how to use that knowledge. In an era of over-specialization and single-issue decision-making, those with the tools to integrate knowledge acquired from different perspectives and to cross the boundaries between disciplines offer the best hope for attaining resolution to the modern world's challenges, on both a micro and macro level.

The course will also explore knowledge integration through a combination of lectures/presentations and a polymath research project (presented through the study of the lives of two prominent polymaths). Like its predecessor, IDH 1001, this course is designed to encourage students to become self-conscious learners and allow them to explore important issues through class activities, including writing assignments, debates, extracurricular activities, and participation in cultural activity and citizenship opportunities.

The class is divided into two sections (**U29, Evans and U30, Pedrero**) that will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The classes will meet in joint sessions to explore topics of common interest and listen to student and guest lecturer presentations (as noted in the syllabus; subject to change). The student may be required, as necessary or convenient, to meet and/or participate in events other than in the classroom and/or regular class time. Students are expected to come to class prepared (including having read all assigned materials) and to participate fully in all class activities. IDH-1002 is a web-assisted course and will utilize **Canvas**. Students **MUST** use the

web-assisted application assigned for the course and their usage will be diligently tracked by the professors.

Please NOTE that there will be considerable college-level reading required for this course.

Course Learning Objectives

- Describe, discuss, and apply the seminal issues regarding the theory of knowledge as covered previously in IDH 1001;
- Understand the value of the different academic disciplines and how they work in unison to further societal and individual progress and welfare;
- Identify the influence of Western values and the students' own belief systems on how they perceive others;
- Recognize the importance of interdisciplinary thought processes and general knowledge in the decision-making process; and
- Apply the insights learned concerning what knowledge is, how it is acquired and understood, and its uses and limits, to contemporary social issues.

Required Course Material

1. RTTP: Athens (*to be discussed in class*)
2. Evans: TBD
3. Pedrero: no additional text to purchase; reading materials will be available on Canvas
4. ** Other texts and materials as assigned, and available free of charge through the class's web application (**Canvas** or **handouts**).

Grading

Participation	20 %
Papers (2)	30 %
Quizzes	10 %
RTTP Essay	10%
Research Project Presentation	30 %
<u>(Discretionary Extra Credit</u>	<u>up to 5%)</u>
Total	100%

1. RTTP Essay. You will write a **maximum** 1000-word paper describing the character you have been assigned to role play and his/her significance and interaction. All opinions on the paper must be those of the character you have been assigned and NOT your own. You should not merely copy the historical character's biography, but use it as research and craft your own vision of your role. The paper should include (a) a brief biographical sketch of your character, (b) an outline of his/her political position in 403 BCE, including any issues of importance to the character, and (c) the and the answers to these questions: "What are your hopes and fears for the future, who did you work with, what negotiations were you involved with, and how did the results differ from your initial aspirations?"
2. Paper 1. Discuss one aspect of the lectures in the Humanities part of the course that personally affected you, and how such knowledge or practice can enhance or alter decision-making based purely on knowledge as described by K=JTB (as discussed last semester).
3. Paper 2. An INDIVIDUAL paper of minimum 1000 and **maximum** 3000 words in length, looking at a specific aspect of a particular polymath's life, and how likely it was to shape / affect the polymath's overall philosophy and actions. The polymath should be selected jointly with, and approved by, your professor. See below for more information on the Polymath Research Project.
4. Research Project. A GROUP presentation of at least **20** minutes in length, utilizing a variety of media, that looks at a polymath's life and his/her effects or influence in society. The group will select a presentation based on an approved polymath. See below for more information on the Polymath Research Project.

The Polymath Research Project

A polymath is described as a person with wide and varied knowledge. The term is closely identified with the notion of the Renaissance man or woman. The Polymath Research Project is designed to give students the opportunity to integrate science, the humanities, and the social sciences, and their implications, into one multidisciplinary project. It has individual and group student elements. However, the grading will reflect real-world experiences and situations and will therefore be based upon the results of the group as a whole. Students will work in small groups selected at the beginning of the semester. The teams will select a figure from the list of polymaths provided in the course website. The professor must approve the selection prior to completion of the project. Each student should focus on one aspect of the work of the polymath as his/her focus, and the team will present an overall picture of the multifaceted

polymath. To better understand how a polymath thinks, students will study the works of selected polymaths.

Project elements are: (a) introductory reading materials and list of polymaths, (b) selection of groups, (c) students select historical figure, (d) proposals, (e) group presentations.

Laptop Policy

- Laptops will be permitted **ONLY** on designated days and solely for the purposes of taking class notes during lectures.
- **NOTE:** 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. This is a **zero-tolerance policy** – PLEASE do NOT attempt to use electronic devices – including phone texting – during class.

Written Work Guidelines

You are Honors College students. ALL written work must consistently adhere to MLA or APA style. Students are advised to carefully proofread ALL papers before submitting them. All students are encouraged to take advantage of University resources for writing, found in the Center for Excellence in Writing, a full-service writing center providing assistance and feedback to university students, from first year students to PhD candidates. This center is particularly helpful to those seeking to polish their writing skills. Center offices are located in GL 120 (MMC). For more information go to <http://writingcenterfiu.edu/>

All written work is submitted through **Canvas**. It must include your name, Panther ID number, course number, and the name of the professor on the title page, or first page if there is no title page.

Plagiarism can result in expulsion from the Honors College and will have a negative effect on your entire college career. You could also be subject to university sanctions ranging from mandatory ethics courses to expulsion from FIU. Note that your academic misconduct will remain part of your permanent record. Don't do it. See below for more on academic conduct policies.

PROPOSED COURSE CALENDAR *

* This is merely a GUIDELINE and subject to change at the discretion of the professors.

PART ONE – INTRODUCTION

WEEK ONE Introduction to the course: polymaths as learning tools (**Pedrero and Evans**); The Polymath Research Project and Group Assignments
Readings: Wiens, “In Defense of Polymaths” (online), Arbesman, “Let’s Bring the Polymath – and the Dabblers – Back “ (online), Long, “In Praise of Polymaths: The Value of Cross-Functional People” (online);

PART TWO – OF WINGS, ENIGMATIC SMILES, AND OTHER THINGS

WEEK TWO The (Real) DaVinci Code (**Pedrero**)
Readings: TBD

WEEK THREE Intro To My Chosen Polymath (**Evans**)
Readings: TBD

PART THREE – THE UNIQUE CONSILIENCE OF THE POLYMATHS

WEEK FOUR The power – and need for – a Salvator Mundi (**Pedrero and Evans**)
Readings: TBD.

WEEK FIVE The Role of the Visual and Performing Arts (**TBA/guest/s**)
Readings: TBD

- WEEK SIX The Roles of Architecture, Science, and Technology (**Pedrero and Evans**)
Readings View: "The Fountainhead", 1949 (link online); Diamond, "Germes, Guns, and Steel" pp. 195-214, 239-264; (online)
- WEEK SEVEN TBD (**Evans**)
Readings: TBD
- WEEK EIGHT The Role of Economics and Law (**Pedrero**)
Readings: Posner, "The Crisis of Capitalist Society", pp. 249-256, 363-388; (online); Aquinas, "Treatise on Law" (excerpts – online)
- WEEK NINE The Role of War, Violence and Ethics (**Pedrero and Evans**)
*Films: "War Comes to America" (online); "Why We Fight" (online);
 Readings: Ginsburg, "My Own Words" pp. 248-276 (online);
 Prepare for RTTP*

SPRING BREAK

PART FOUR – PUTTING POLYMATHY INTO PRACTICE

- WEEK TEN RTTP: Building Athenian Democracy, Part I (**Pedrero and Evans**)
Readings: TBD
- WEEK ELEVEN RTTP: Building Athenian Democracy, Part II (**Pedrero and Evans**)
- WEEK TWELVE The Arts of Communicating Effectively and of Persuasion (**Pedrero and Evans**)

Readings: Scalia, "Making Your Case", pp. 3-38 (online)

NOTE: **Copy of ALL presentations due to both professors**

PART FIVE – SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

WEEK THIRTEEN Class Presentations

Readings: none

WEEK FOURTEEN Class Presentations (cont'd)

Readings: none

WEEK FIFTEEN Reflections and Take-away Points

Readings: none

Papers Due.

***** Syllabus continues next page *****

Class Policies and Procedures

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.

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.

Estimated Grade

Number of Unexcused Absences	Estimated Grade											
	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
2	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
3	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F	F	F	F
4+	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F

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 Engagement Requirements

Beginning in Fall 2014, Honors College students are required to accumulate at least **20 engagement 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 engagement points**. See <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/citizenship/>.

Community Service

As always, Honors College students must also complete 20 volunteer service hours. These hours DO NOT count toward the 20 citizenship points discussed above. See <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/community-service/>.

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.

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/>), and the Academic Misconduct Procedures, available at <http://integrity.fiu.edu/misconducts.html>.

Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Code of Academic Integrity – <http://integrity.fiu.edu/>

FIU Student Handbook – <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php>

FIU Honors College Plagiarism Policy – <http://honors.fiu.edu/honors-policies/>

Honors Education in the ARTS (HEARTS)

The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to "explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets. See:

<http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/hearts/>.

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.