More than Twitter: The Return of the Essay

Maria Jerinic, PhD

In a 2013 *New York Times* op-ed Christy Wampole suggests that “the essay has become a talisman of our times.” Could it be true? Is the essay the form for the early 21st century? If so, what is the essay? Does it differ from those thesis-driven pieces we write for classes? Is it a blog entry or a tweet or something else? Did the form just pop up now, or does it have a tradition from which we can learn?

We will explore these questions by reading many pieces dubbed essays, including those by Montaigne, Bacon, Woolf, White, Fadiman, Didion and Sedaris. We will also read and write critical work on the essay form, and then further develop our response to the questions and texts by writing our own essays. Class requirements will probably include a presentation and two 3-5 page critical analyses in the first half of the semester and a collection of essays (which we will workshop) with a critical introduction in the second half.

**HON 410-1002**

M 5:30-8:15p

**Medicine and Literature**

**Dr. Russell Gollard**

We will be reading both works of non-fiction and fiction in this seminar. We will concern ourselves with illness from both the perspective of the patient and clinician. To that end we will read works both of fiction and non-fiction, both classic and newly minted. We will look at the perspective of physicians, particularly their long “training”. We will also look at how biases are built into such training. We will also focus on the different attitudes toward illness manifest in the experience of a patient. Discussion will be required. This class will be of a complete non-lecture format.

**HON 410-1003**

F 8:30-11:15a

**Motivation and Leadership**

**Daniel McAllister, PhD**

As you develop technical and professional skills, remember that because you are competent you will be leading. This class will assist you in your preparation for that reality. Specifically, this class will focus on the concepts, theories and case studies concerning the leadership and motivation of people in modern organizations. The best way to learn about leadership and motivation is to participate in, and observe and analyze that behavior. The class discussions will provide a framework for observation and analysis, and participation in the team assignments will provide additional experience for that observation and analysis. In order to be fully successful in your
development of your leadership knowledge and skills, both the framework and the experience are crucial. I will do everything I can to help you increase your knowledge and skills. I need your commitment to prepare and to participate fully in class and team discussions.

**HON 410-1004**  
**MW 11:30-12:45p**  
**Principles and Practice of Psychotherapy**  
Noelle Lefforge, PhD  
“I want to be happy.” This is a phrase every psychotherapist has heard many times. Alleviating suffering and improving well-being are the cornerstones of psychotherapy, but how does this happen? This course will explore via readings, discussions, videos, in-class activities, and writings the answers that have been reached by psychological science and practice over the last century. We will identify universal aspects of psychotherapy that promote change and you will attempt to enhance your own ability to exhibit these “common factors.” We will also investigate more specific interventions such as psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and dialectic-behavioral therapies that have different conceptualizations of clients’ suffering and corresponding techniques for promoting change. Lastly, we will consider the limitations of psychotherapy to reach its desired outcomes and what is currently being done to advance its endeavors.

**HON 410-1005**  
**T 2:30-5:15p**  
**The Good Life**  
Greg Janssen, PhD  
Defining what is a good life, and how best to achieve it, has been an important force in shaping Western Culture. Today you have parents, friends, and the media giving you specific and sometimes contrasting advice on how to lead what each considers to be a good life. The ancients presented their conceptions of the good life in philosophical texts, but also through epic tales (e.g. the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer) and tragic morality plays (e.g. the works of Aeschylus and Sophocles).

Though it may seem less obvious, this dual presentation of the good life still holds true today, over two millennia later. Philosophers are still struggling with their exploration of the good life, and artists and storytellers are still incorporating the themes of what makes a life good in their novels, films, and songs. We will survey the views of the good life espoused by ancient philosophers, like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, as well as the views defended by more contemporary philosophical sources. Throughout the course, we will attempt to connect the philosophical texts with our present day lives, especially by examining how these ideas may be expressed in contemporary culture.

**HON 410-1006**  
**TR 1:00-2:15**  
**A Place of Transformation: The Desert in Literature**  
Jaclyn Costello, MFA  
From the Biblical Judaean and Paran, to the exotic Arabian and Sahara, to the more familiar Sonoran and Mojave, the desert has long been regarded as a place of stark contrasts, crude survival, mystery, and transformation.

In this course, we will discover the desert as a vital character in four distinct pieces of literature; through these works, the authors use the desert as a metaphor for emotional identity (The English
Patient), as a magical teacher and sacred place of revelation (The Alchemist), as void & emptiness & symbol of a world which no longer offers any metaphysical answers to existence (The Sheltering Sky), and as a breathtaking and picturesque landscape used to harshly juxtapose the savage brutality of man when there are no limitations of morality or law (Blood Meridian).

We will also utilize excerpts from The Sacred Desert: Religion, Literature, Art and Culture as a means to make connections across millennia of desert literature, thus deepening our understanding of the desert as a physical terrain, a textual character, and an interior atmosphere.

HON 420-1001
TR 6-7:15p
Bellagio Art(Off Campus Component)
Robert Tracy, PhD
This Art/Honors class will examine the aristocratic life style of the Russian imperial family and the “ART accessories” they commissioned from famed Russian artisan Peter Carl Faberge. Faberge’s workshop was the standard of excellence for craftsmanship in goldsmithing and jewelry design and production at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Faberge and his exquisite designs were sought after by royalty and the aristocratic order in Eastern Europe.

HON 430-1001
TR 8:30-9:45
Wish You Were Here: The Literature of Travel and Leisure
Timothy Erwin, PhD
This class takes the traveler's appreciation of different cultures for its point of departure. The reading begins during the European Enlightenment by comparing the other-directed journeys of Lady Mary Wortley Montague to Constantinople, and of Boswell and Johnson to the Scottish Hebrides, to the inner-directed voyage of Laurence Sterne's Sentimental Journey to Italy and France, before considering such classic British and American texts as Charles Dickens's Pictures from Italy and Mark Twain's Innocents Abroad. The closing reading is Bruce Chatwin's Songlines. A quiz follows each reading. Course requirements include regular class reports, a 10-12 page term paper, and a comprehensive objective final exam.

HON 440-1001
T 2:30-5:15
Slavery, Emancipation, and Civil Rights
Michael Green, PhD
2015 marks the 150th anniversary of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Why it was necessary and where it led are at the heart of this course, which examines the institution of slavery, the process of emancipation, and the fight for civil rights (by and for African Americans, but also how this fight influenced and was influenced by other groups). Students will read a variety of books and documents, with an opportunity to do their own original research on the subject.