

THE INDIANA ACADEMY FOR SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, and the HUMANITIES

Junior Colloquium Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Phillip Lobo

Office: EL-B008D

Office Hours: MWF 11:30-12:30am and 2:00-4:00pm

Thursday 12:00am-1:00pm, and by appointment

Email: plobo@bsu.edu

Any changes to these office hours will be posted.

MEETING TIMES and PLACE

Thursday; 8:30-9:45am or 10-11:15am

BU 119

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Junior Colloquium is a discussion-oriented seminar which is meant to foster critical thinking, critical engagement with texts, and rational dialogue with peers. The semester will be divided up into five 'sequences': i) Philosophy; ii) Social media and the Internet; iii) Identity; iv) Human/Non-Human; v) Politics. While all sections of Colloquium will be covering the same readings at the same pace, the topic of the final sequence will be decided by you, the class.

COURSE PREREQUISITE – None

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To participate in an interdisciplinary seminar focusing on great ideas of differing times and dimensions;
- To develop questioning strategies and techniques which stimulate productive discussion;
- To build a body of written and non-written material that incorporates a philosophical foundation and a series of readings on an intellectual level;
- To adapt scholarly content to conditions that exist in your life;
- To develop an intellectual and practical vehicle in which you may be able to demonstrate your highest level of reading, listening, and speaking skills

COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

This course is first and foremost a group-oriented intellectual investigation of some of the most significant ideas in the course of human history. You will read primary literature (i.e. unadapted source material) and secondary literature (i.e. material written about primary literature). Merely reading or reciting these texts, however, is not enough. In order to succeed in this course, you must *engage* with the readings – wonder at them, question them, interrogate them, offer arguments critical of them or in support of their ideas, etc. In other words, mere receptivity is not enough. You must offer input and ideas via analysis, evaluation, and synthesis.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All assigned articles will be accessible on Canvas and/or will be distributed by your instructor.

COURSE METHODOLOGY

- Reading of texts and sources in a variety of disciplines on which regular, structured, in-class interpretational discussion will be based;

- Written responses to the readings and ideas will be required for every class as part of the preparatory work

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Participation – 60% The primary method of evaluation will be an assessment of your consistent and meaningful **participation** in the class discussion. Every person will be required to **speak** and provide input to our class discussions, to **listen** attentively and with empathy to what your classmates have to say, and to **reflect** on the ideas brought up during our discussions. A few things pertinent to the evaluation of your participation must be said: i) your instructor recognizes that it is probably impossible (and counterproductive) to require *everyone* to speak at *every* class discussion – we do not want meaningless talk for the sake of talking; ii) as in life, you absolutely *must* be mindful of others – do not dominate the conversation, do not be mean, if you notice that someone seems eager to say something but can't seem to get a turn to speak *include* that person in our conversation (e.g. politely ask him/her for his/her thoughts); iii) *cite* your sources – i.e. show us the passage you are referring to, recite to us the quotation you are referencing, point us to the page and paragraph, etc.

Specifically, your instructor will take copious notes on your participation during discussion. Your daily grade will be determined by your display of the following observable criteria (see last page for more specifics):

SPEAKING: a) quantity – did you speak at all? did you *dominate* the conversation or *contribute* to it.
 b) quality – were your comments insightful? did you add to the conversation or detract from it? did you appropriately cite your sources?

LISTENING: did you listen attentively and respond thoughtfully, or did you merely wait out the person speaking so that you could finally have a turn to make your point?

DECORUM: were you respectful? did you take others' views (even when different from yours) into account? did you handle disagreement appropriately, i.e. not by getting angry or yelling but by discussing the pertinent ideas and/or agreeing to hold differing opinions? did you attempt to include others in our conversation, e.g. by asking someone else what they think?

NOTE: if you are especially shy or reticent to speak, **please meet with me during office hours** ASAP so that we can discuss your participation. As a rule, **more than one class in a row** in which you do not speak will result in a reduced participation grade. If your instructor notices a participation deficit, you may be required to attend office hours to discuss.

Preparation (reading response papers) – 40% You will also be evaluated on your preparation for class. For each reading you will write a brief response to the reading consisting of no more than TWO PARAGRAPHS, no more no less. This is typically equivalent to a page of double-spaced text. In order to receive full credit, you must also include TWO QUOTATIONS from the text which you found worthy of discussion and TWO QUESTIONS provoked by the reading that you want dealt with in class. You will turn in a copy of your response paper at the beginning of class. Please bring at least two copies (one to turn in to me at the beginning of class, and one to read on days when you are leading the discussion.) Here is the same information in **list format**:

- a two-paragraph response to the text, no more no less, **typed, double-spaced**, in a reasonable font (preferably **Times New Roman**)
- two questions which you would like us to discuss in class, questions pertinent to the text
- two discussion-worthy quotations from the reading which stand out to you

At the opening of each class, some students will read their reflection papers aloud (and, optionally, will tell us what they found interesting about the reading and want to discuss). They will then initiate discussion by asking questions about the text and/or giving us one or more quotations. In order to facilitate discussion, discussion leaders may be chosen in advance to start off our discussion with questions and/or comments.

Papers are due at the beginning of class each day. You must turn in your response paper on time in order to earn credit. If you miss class due to an excused absence and need an extension of a few days, please let me know. (This is only for excused absences).

The following grading scale will be used for this course:

Grading Scale

93-100%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
78-79%	C+
73-77%	C
70-72%	C-
69% & below	D*

CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students will attend all class meetings and abide by guidelines as stated in the Student Handbook. Arrival within the first 10 minutes of class will constitute a tardy, otherwise you will be marked absent. Sleeping during class will be marked on your attendance as well. Classes missed **due to an excused absence** will be made up by writing a longer reflection paper on that week's text – let's say ~2 pages of writing. *Please note you are also expected to submit your discussion questions along with these make-up written reflections. There are no makeup privileges for unexcused absences.*

GUIDE TO SUCCEEDING IN COLLOQUIUM

Prior to class, **all students** are expected to:

- Read the assigned text
- prepare a 2 paragraph typed reflection on the reading (see above for technical requirements)
- prepare at least 2 questions and 2 quotations (just put them at the end of your written reflection)

Prior to class, I recommend that you:

- Annotate as you read – this will make coming up with questions easier
- Highlight or write down significant passages
- DO NOT DO EVERYTHING ON MONDAY – you will be overwhelmed and you will not enjoy the class, which is meant to be enjoyable and not overly taxing; we are in this together, and your peers expect you to have read and thought about the reading accordingly – don't let them down by not spending enough time on your work!
- Plan out your week so that you read the text and annotate one day, write your reflection a second day, and prepare for discussion a third day

N.B. The selected quotations could represent central points from the piece, aspects of the article you found confusing and want to discuss more, or provocative statements you'd like to hear others' takes on.

METHOD OF COURSE EVALUATION

This course will be evaluated by students by means of on-line and/or written instruments at the conclusion of the course. The instructor will also evaluate the efficacy of the course through an on-going process during and concluding the course.

COLLOQUIA DIALOGUE RULES OF THUMB

1. The exchange of declarative monologues tends to be unproductive. The effort to be too complete is often self-defeating. Brevity stimulates dialogue. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there – respectful disagreement is normal and expected.
2. The imaginative and unexpected are frequently more fruitful than a prematurely prudent opinion.
3. In respectful conversation, listening intently is in everybody's intellectual interest.
4. Agreeing to disagree respectfully is a powerful asset to any conversation. This practice will heighten the courtesy that any good and rigorous conversation demands. Also, don't assume that everyone holds the views they put forward – Colloquium is a space for testing out ideas and analyses. Sometimes I myself might play the 'devil's advocate' so as to help the class think through important issues.
5. Follow the argument wherever it leads. Think with your peers and trust their intelligence to lead to (sometimes much unexpected) understanding.
6. The truly relevant jest is never out of order, so long as the conversation blends intellectual seriousness with relevant playfulness.

READINGS AND SCHEDULE

8/20 – Intro to Colloquium, syllabus, meta-discussion about discussion, argument, discussion of quotations

8/27 – Philosophy Reading 1

9/3 – Labor Day extended break, no class.

9/10 – Philosophy Reading 2

9/17 – Social media Reading 1

9/24 – Social media Reading 2

10/1 – Internet/ social media Reading 3

10/8 – Fall break extended, no class.

10/15 – Identity Reading 1

10/22 – Identity Reading 2

10/29 – Identity Reading 3

11/5 – Human/Non-Human Reading 1

11/12 – Human/Non-Human Reading 2

11/19 – Human/Non-Human Reading 3

11/26 – No class, Thanksgiving break

12/3 – Politics Reading 1

12/10 – Politics Reading 2 OPEN TOPIC

NOTE: this is a tentative schedule that is open to modification by your instructor.

DISCUSSION RUBRIC FOR COLLOQUIA SERIES (MORE SPECIFIC)

- ✓ Clarifies point in discussion
- ✓ Refers to the discussion of another participant
- ✓ Asks a question
- ✓ Offers a comparison
- ✓ Offers a contrast
- ✓ Offers an idea contrary to the authors and explains
- ✓ Offers supporting evidence for an idea of the author
- ✓ Refers to a literary work germane to ideas being discussed
- ✓ Refers to a historical idea/work germane to the ideas being discussed
- ✓ Analyzes a section of writing with depth
- ✓ Synthesizes from various parts of the writing and/or other sources
- ✓ Agrees with and expands another participant's remarks
- ✓ Disagrees with another participant and explained the disagreement
- ✓ Offers a definition for a term/concept/idea
- ✓ Assists in moving discussion from one point to another
- ✓ Provides a summary for various parts of the article(s)
- ✓ Provides evaluations of the material
- ✓ Proposes a hypothesis
- ✓ Produces a creative explanation
- ✓ Improvisation of thought evident
- ✓ Scholarly language and application of ideas

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our Beneficence Pledge and through university resources found at <http://cms.bsu.edu/campuslife/multiculturalcenter>

Use of Technology All electronic devices are to remain off unless otherwise instructed. The unauthorized use of a device is strictly forbidden and will result in a warning the first time the student is caught and confiscation of the device the second time. In addition, your attendance will be recorded as “unauthorized use of device” and consequences will occur.

Disabilities or Special Needs If any disability requires course adaptations or accommodations, if emergency medical information needs to be shared with me, or if any special arrangements must be made in order to evacuate the building, please advise me at your earliest convenience.

Academic Integrity Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the Indiana Academy community. Because language should be communicative, students are encouraged to collaborate in their studying. You may make judicious use of advice from tutors. However, this does not mean copying someone else's work or letting someone copy your work. It means working with a partner to gain a better understanding of the material, read the literature together, etc. All work that you turn in—*in class or otherwise*—must be your own and completed without *any* kind of outside assistance. If you have questions about what constitutes “your own” work, please see me. ***Plagiarism will not be tolerated.*** *Academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the assignment and other penalties outlined in the Student Handbook.*