HUMANITIES 1

Syllabus

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On the Humanities Sequence

The Humanities Sequence introduces you to the European cultural tradition. From the early years of the nineteenth century to the mid-1970s, Americans regarded that tradition as THE tradition. Educated Europeans and Americans considered "Western"—i.e. European—civilization as the best civilization ever created. They thought that Judaeo-Christian values were the culmination of human moral development, and European civilization dominated the world through empires that competed politically and economically but that all represented a single cultural heritage. Through much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Europeans and Americans thought that this domination represented the true relationship among the world's civilizations and that it was a permanent relationship. Even after the empires began to break up following World War II (1939-45), Europeans and Americans thought that they had civilized the colonial elites, if not the common people, and that the emerging independent nations would be subordinate members of the European cultural empire that would survive the political one.

Since the 1970s Americans, more than any other group, have changed their perceptions about the world's cultures. First, they have come to recognize that the cultural traditions of China, India, and Islam are equivalent to the European-American tradition, and also to appreciate the effect of exchanges of ideas and material goods on all civilizations. No civilization grew up in isolation; none can claim to have invented all their characteristic elements. Second, other cultures, in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia among other places, have reasserted themselves and acquired some respect among westerners. Third, the society of the United States, and for that matter of European countries, has become much more culturally diverse than it was in the 1950s and 1960s, and Americans' attitudes towards civilization in general and European civilization in particular have changed.

Right after World War II, Americans thought that they were the heirs of European civilization. They thought that in its American form European civilization would be

saved from the Europeans, who, notwithstanding their civilization, had tried to destroy one another in two world wars. Americans thought that they would carry on the old civilization without sliding into the racism and wanton destructiveness that had been evident in the Europe of the fascists, Nazis, and communists. Of course, we thought all these noble thoughts while practicing racism at home and while fighting wars in Korea and Vietnam. However, the point is not to expose our delusions. It is to highlight our cultural ideology. That ideology had produced a peculiarly American approach to education, and Revelle College's Humanities Sequence is a product of that approach.

How do we justify a five-quarter sequence focused exclusively on European civilization in light of the transformations of American society and culture wrought by the civil rights movement and the new, massive immigration during the second half of the 20th century? There are two answers to this question.

The first arises from the prehistory of the course. The faculty members who created the Humanities courses were deeply influenced by the University of Chicago, where many of them had been students or faculty members before they came to UCSD. Chicago was the first major university to challenge the Eurocentric tradition in American higher education by insisting that students study at least two traditions, the western or European and another—Asian, Islamic, or African. In that curriculum, the study of the European tradition shifted its emphasis from the study of Europe as a master civilization to the idea of cultural tradition, of which European culture was one among many. The founding faculty members of Revelle College were certainly Eurocentric in their outlook, but they recognized that one of the important features of the course was that it taught students about cultural traditions.

The second answer to the question is that, in our time, even though both faculty members and students challenge the hegemony of the European tradition, the value of studying and understanding cultural traditions has become one of the goals of education. The new American society and culture that is being formed around us and by us is an emerging amalgam of cultural traditions. Each of these traditions is strikingly strong; people raised in them cling tightly to their values, moral ideas, modes of personal relationships, arts, and foods. So, we must understand how traditions form and work, how they absorb influences from other traditions, how they resist challenges, how they relate to political and economic systems.

The Humanities Sequence approaches this need by introducing you to one of the principal traditions in more depth than most introductory courses. The assumption of the course is that you will be able to understand all traditions, when you study them, if you have learned to understand one of them. The experience of your faculty and of the students who came before you justifies this assumption. You will find that once you have completed the Humanities Sequence, you will gain knowledge of other civilizations more quickly and more deeply than you would have had you approached them without a grasp of what a tradition is and how it functions.

I've used several words that require explication—civilization, culture, and tradition. The first two of these terms are partly synonymous, used sometimes as synonyms and sometimes to highlight a difference. The use of these terms can be confusing, both because they overlap and because they are often used sloppily.

All human communities have cultures composed of the ideas and practices passed down from generation to generation. You could say that a civilization is a culture writ large. We generally use that term to mean a culture that uses writing and thus can preserve a much larger collection of ideas and practices than a culture that relies on living memory and oral communication. In addition, a civilization can encompass vastly more people than what we normally call a culture, because the written record can be disseminated and used by people who never meet, who even have no idea that others using the record exist. Of course, the invention of telecommunications has extended the realm of every civilization beyond the library of written records, and the new technology has also facilitated the exchange of ideas, arts, and other components of civilizations. Your grandchildren may live in a global civilization and may regard survivals from the "ancient" civilizations of Europe, Asia, Islam, and other cultural communities as quaint oddities associated with whatever remains of ethnic cultures, much as, today, fondness for certain foods marks someone ethnically, even if in most respects—language, dress, willingness to eat at McDonalds, interest in various forms of entertainment—the person is just like the majority of the community.

When we talk of a tradition, we are focusing not so much on the content as on the life of cultures and civilizations. The word "tradition" means literally a handing down of ideas and practices from one generation to another. The way your parents teach you to interact with others—with your parents themselves and other elders, with siblings, with friends, with classmates, with enemies—derives from a tradition that can be traced back for generations in your family and in families from a similar cultural background. Within each tradition there are sayings, stories, ways of doing things (preparing food, practicing religion etc.), and works of art that people within the tradition regard as emblematic. So, "tradition" is sometimes used as a synonym of "culture" and "civilization," as in the phrase "the European tradition," but the reference in this phrase is really to the historical life of the civilization, not to some summary of its characteristics as if those were permanent and unchanging. When we talk about a tradition, we are referring to history or, put another way, to change—to the way the culture started, how it has been passed down, how it has changed as it has been transmitted, and what influences have changed it (contact with foreign civilizations and cultures, transplantation to new ecological environments etc.). In the Humanities, we focus on literature of different kinds, because literary works have been the most public or shared conveyers of cultural tradition, because we can trace the changes in the culture through the history of written works, and because literature reveals in its stories, characterizations, and descriptive passages many of the private aspects of culture. Literature, broadly understood to include philosophy and religious texts as well as what we now call fiction, is a rich source of knowledge about the formation, the content, and the life of a tradition.

On Humanities 1

The European cultural tradition formed from two roots, one in Greece and the other in the Near East, in the cultures of the Greeks and the Jews. The two root traditions came together in the culture of the later Roman Empire, the period after 300 C.E. (Common Era). So, the study of the European tradition must begin with the traditions of the Greeks and the Jews, the subject of the first quarter of Humanities. (Humanities 2 begins with the Romans.)

Both the Greek and the Jewish traditions began to form in the twelfth century B.C.E. (Before the Common Era), and both rest on literary works compiled or written down centuries later. These writings rested on long oral traditions—the transmission of stories about the history of the people passed on orally from generation to generation. In both cases the writings in which we can first discover the tradition captured a portion of the oral culture and shaped it into a coherent picture of society and the way people were supposed to behave in it. Each tradition presented a world view—a notion about how the world came to be and what constituted good and bad behavior. Each defined the characteristics of the culture's notions of ideal persons and what the culture expected of people. Each found a way to explain the mysterious ways of the world: What powers controlled it? What was the place of mankind in it? Why did some succeed and some fail? Why did one people win wars and another lose them? What were the proper roles of men and women? What was the relationship between parents and children? These questions and others will be the subjects of this course and of the whole Humanities Sequence.

A note on dating: We will use C.E., the Common Era, and B.C.E., Before the Common Era, instead of B.C., Before Christ, and A.D., Anno Domini (in the year of the lord). The transition from one era to the other is the same in both systems – the supposed birth of Jesus – but B.C.E./C.E. is now preferred because it appears to be culturally neutral. Historians of Islam, China, India, and other cultures use this dating convention, even though each culture has its own calendar system; some cultures have multiple calendars. That the unified system is the Christian European one is a result of European world dominance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We might have used the Islamic system in which year 1 equals 622 C.E. or the Chinese system in which year 1 equals either 2697 or 2637 B.C.E, but, for better or worse, European Christians managed to establish their calendar as the "common" one. B.C.E. and C.E. make this establishment a little more palatable to people of other civilizations. (In addition, A.D., Anno Domini, is not appropriate as a designation of a period – decade, century etc. – because it means "in the YEAR of the lord." It can be properly used only when naming a year, such as 2014 A.D. You'll find that like many faculty members, I am of the species Pedantosaurus.)

Communications

I have not given you a phone number, because my campus office does not have a phone. Communicate with me by email. I will try to answer messages quickly—though if you drop me a note at 2AM, don't expect an answer until the next morning.

Office Hour: I have set up an official office hour, Thursday 9:30-10:30. **I will hold office hours at the coffee cart at Mandeville Hall**, but I will meet you elsewhere on campus, if you make an appointment to see me outside of office hours. I know that for some students the office hour conflicts with other classes and work schedules. I'll be happy to make an appointment to see you at another time during the week. Set up an appointment by email.

Students generally think of office hours as occasions when they can come complain or ask questions about an assignment or deal with some issue, such as handing in a paper late because they were ill or their computer crashed. That thinking is understandable, but I ask you to consider office hours as an opportunity to chat with me and keep me company. I like to drink my coffee with someone to talk to. And, if you have to turn in a paper late, talk to your TA, not to me. I don't manage that aspect of the course.

Occasionally, I will communicate with the class by email to make an announcement or inform you of something you should know. The TED platform has your UCSD email addresses in it, so I'll be communicating with you through that address. If you do not use UCSD email as your primary mailbox, be sure to set a forwarding command in it so that you get my messages.

The Components of the Course

This course has three main components: Lectures, discussion sections, and readings.

I will assign readings for each lecture, and if you have not read the materials listed for a lecture, you may find yourself lost when I'm talking about them. Also, plan ahead. The schedule of reading and assignments in your courses is relentless. Plot out your workload ahead so that you don't fall behind in Humanities or any other course.

I believe that geographical orientation is important. The societies that produced the Hebrew bible, the Homeric poems, and classical Greek drama existed in space and time. I think it is necessary that you understand the geography of the events. So, I will put maps on the web site and will have maps in some classes. I have created my own historical "atlas" for the course, based on digital versions of physical maps. All of the maps I use in class will also be on the web site, so you can look at them at your leisure. I'll expect you to know the geography of the Mediterranean and of the Near East.

Class Web Site: The class web site contains the syllabus, the maps, other course materials, and announcements. There will also be a **discussion board** so you to post questions for me, for the TAs, and for your fellow students on the readings, lectures, and any other course materials. My intention is to give you an opportunity to ask questions or make comments as they occur to you. I will check the discussion board frequently, if I find that you are using it. I like to exchange information and ideas on the discussion board, and I sometimes use questions raised there in my lectures. I want to respond to your questions and ideas, not just carry on about what I think is interesting or relevant.

Technical Assistance: If you need some technical assistance with the web site, you can email the Instructional Web Development Center (iWDC): iwdc@ucsd.edu. Students often ask me for help, but I am, relative to most of you, a techno-peasant. You are better off seeking help from iWDC.

Grading: Grading in the course will be based on your participation in discussion section and the completion of all assignments—the papers and the final exam. **To pass the course, you must complete all assigned work and participate actively in discussion sections.**

Papers: Humanities 1 combines a course about the western cultural tradition with an intensive writing course. You will write four papers. We will comment on the first paper but will not give it a grade. We want you to get an idea of what we expect of you as writers before we give you grades. Each successive paper will weigh more than its predecessor as a percentage of your course grade. You will see the breakdown below.

Section: We will also assign a grade for participation in section. The success of the sections depends on your being there and on your participation. I will ask the TAs to record attendance. If you must miss a section meeting, you should contact your TA to explain the absence. **If you have three (3) unexcused absences from section, you will get an F in that component of the course.**

Final Exam: The final exam will be about the course content. It will have three sections—short answers (1-2 paragraphs), short essays (2-3 pages of a blue book), and a long essay. Each section should take an hour to complete.

You will do best on the exam if you have attended lecture regularly. We will not ask you to recite what I said in lecture, but the questions and prompts will concern questions and issues that I will be talking about in lecture.

Every week, I will post questions and comments that arise from the lectures on the TED discussion board. I invite you to comment and raise questions about these posts. The purpose of these postings is to help you learn the skills you will need to do well on the papers and the final exam. You do not have to participate. The questions on the final exam will be related to the items I post on the discussion board each week.

You will not be allowed to bring any notes to the exam. We will monitor the exam for cheating.

Academic Honesty: The Humanities courses use Turnitin.com™ to review the textual similarity of submitted papers with external sources. The purpose of the review is to detect plagiarism, so that grades reflect the quality of each student's own work. Turnitin.com™ maintains a database of all submitted papers solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such papers. The service does not use the database for any

commercial purpose other than detection of plagiarism and in no way restricts the authors' commercial rights or use of the papers.

Many students who are caught plagiarizing claim that they were merely negligent in keeping track of the sources they used. Negligence is not an excuse. Obviously, we will make a judgment about the seriousness of the offence, but you should know that even a small amount of plagiarized text can lead to a serious penalty, both disciplinary and academic.

If you have any problem understanding what plagiarism is, look at the UCSD Student Handbook. You'll also find a very good, clear statement on plagiarism on the Princeton University web site (www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity).

If you are caught cheating on the exam or plagiarizing parts of a paper, we may treat the assignment as if it had not been submitted at all. If that happens, you will automatically fail the course, because you must submit all assignments to pass the course. An F for cheating is permanently recorded on your transcript; it is not a good thing.

We will compute your course grade based on the following weighting of assignments. (**Note that even though we have not assigned a weight for the first paper, which we've designated the Ungraded Paper, you must hand it in to pass the course**. However, you will not have to submit the Ungraded Paper to Turnitin.com.):

Ungraded Paper	0%
Paper 1:	10%
Paper 2:	20%
Paper 3:	25%
Section:	10%
Final Exam:	35%

Course Calendar:

Lectures: Tues.-Thurs., 11AM-12:20PM, Center Hall 119
Final Exam: Thursday, March 19, 11:30AM-2:30PM, Center Hall 119

Required Texts:

Tanakh, The Holy Scriptures, Jewish Publication Society
Homer, Odyssey, trans. Robert Fagles, Penguin
Plato, Gorgias, trans. Walter Hamilton and Chris Emlyn-Jones, Penguin
Greek Tragedies, vol. 1, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore, U of Chicago Press
Euripides, Helen (separate "Reader")
Dornan and Dawe, The Brief English Handbook, 7th edn., Pearson Longman

Syllabus

1/6: Introduction to the Course and Approaches to the Bible

1/8: Israelite Religion and the Patriarchs
Readings: Genesis 1-36

1/13: Jacob, Joseph and the Formation of the Nation
Readings: Genesis 37-50; Exodus 1-15

1/15: Wandering in the Wilderness
Readings: Exodus 16-20, 24, 32-34, 40; Numbers 11-14, 16-17, 20, 25; Deuteronomy 29-34

1/20: The Rule of the Judges
Readings: Joshua 1, 3, 6, 10, 24; Judges

1/22: Foundations of the Monarchy
Readings: 1 Samuel; 2 Samuel

1/27: The Two Kingdoms
Readings: 1 Kings 1-13, 16:29-19:21; 21-22; 2 Kings 1-7, 17-25

1/29: Exile and Restoration
Readings: Ezra 1, 3, 7; Nehemiah 1-2, 8-9; Esther, Isaiah 1-12, Jeremiah 1-8

2/3: The End of History – Jewish Apocalyptic and the new kingdom
Readings: Isaiah 40-55, Daniel, 1 Maccabees 1-4 (1 Macc is on the TED web page)

2/5: Mycenaean Greece and the Homeric Poems
Readings: Homer, The Odyssey

2/10: Return of the Hero – Telemachus, Odysseus, Penelope
Readings: Homer, The Odyssey

2/12: Return of the Hero – Chaos and Order
Readings: Homer, The Odyssey

2/17: Return of the Hero – Odysseus and Menelaus
Readings: Homer, Odyssey; Euripides, Helen

2/19: Return of the Hero – Agamemnon
Readings: Aeschylus, Agamemnon

2/24: The Trials of Greek Culture I – Oedipus
Readings: Sophocles, Oedipus the King

2/26: The Trials of Greek Culture II – Antigone
Readings: Sophocles, Antigone

3/3: The Trials of Greek Culture III – Hippolytus
Readings: Euripides, Hippolytus

3/5: Justice, The Best Life, and Rhetoric – Politics, the State, and the Good
Readings: Plato, Gorgias

3/10: Justice, the Best Life, and Rhetoric – Sources of Truth
Readings: Plato, Gorgias

3/12: Jews, Greeks, and the Creation of Mediterranean Culture

3/19: FINAL EXAM: 11:30AM – 2:30PM, Center Hall 119