

FRIDAY SEMINAR SYLLABUS

Integrated Studies 002: Reality
University of Pennsylvania
Spring 2014

Instructors:

- Dr. Sophie Brockmann. Office Hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 2:30-3:30 and by appointment. Cohen Hall 234. Contact: sbrockmann@sas.upenn.edu
- Dr. Lisa Messeri. Cohen Hall 175. Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00-3:00, Thursday 1:30-2:30 and by appointment. Contact: lmesseri@sas.upenn.edu
- Dr. Julio Tuma. Cohen Hall 429. Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:20 and by appointment. Contact: tuma@sas.upenn.edu

Please attend the section assigned to you by the registrar:

- 301: 11-11:50, Tuma, Arch 110
302: 11-11:50, Messeri, Arch 107
303: 12-12:50, Tuma, Arch 110
304: 12-12:50, Brockmann, Arch 107
305: 1-1:50, Messeri, Arch 110
306: 1-1:50, Brockmann, Arch 107

This semester continues your intellectual journey. You will continue to live with your classmates, attend extracurricular activities, and participate in conversations with a new group of professors. It is a multi-faceted discussion about interrelated ideas, a discussion that requires deep levels of earnest participation. The Friday Seminars are the cornerstone of this process, the main venue for your voice to be expressed and heard, and the most important time for receiving feedback about how your own thinking is developing. Each Friday we will continue to consider the questions raised at Thursday's Symposium, in addition to discussing themes and readings from the streams and doing incremental preparations for the main assignments, the 4 Integration Essays.

The goal for both Friday Seminars and the Integration Essays is to continue to learn how to use the tools of synthetic thinking to understand the world around you in ever more diverse ways. We will ask what ideas can be generated and what conclusions can be drawn by examining the interrelationships between different disciplines and concepts. This is a discussion-based seminar and each class will be shaped by student questions and concerns, therefore attendance is absolutely mandatory. We expect you to engage in serious debate, deep thinking, and courteous dialogue because we believe it will create a conversation where we can advance our understanding of ourselves as human beings and our relationship with the world around us.

REQUIREMENTS:

Participation and attendance: 20%
Essay 1: 15%
Essay 2: 20%
Essay 3: 20%
Essay 4: 25%

Participation and attendance. This semester, in addition to attending and participating in Friday discussions, you and a peer(s) will be responsible for leading one or two sessions during the semester. Our expectation is that the group of students will meet independently to consider a topic worthy of Friday discussion, focusing on generating questions that will prompt conversation. You will bring these ideas to a meeting with your seminar instructor in advance of Friday's class. You will then be in charge of starting off Friday's discussion, with the instructor helping out. How you decide to approach this task is open ended. It can be (a) a continuation of an aspect of the Thursday discussion, (b) a different way of bringing the streams and the week's theme together, (c) a close reading of a tricky passage from one of the readings, or anything else you wish to propose to your seminar leader. Leading discussion will comprise half of your participation grade, or 10% of your overall grade.

As with last semester, attendance at Friday Synthesis seminars is mandatory; unexcused absences will impact your grade. If you anticipate missing class for any reason, discuss it with your seminar professor in advance. Your individual seminar professor will determine other opportunities to discuss the themes of the course. These activities will evolve over the course of the semester and may include commentaries on each other's essays, commentaries on current events, and the use of online discussion forums. Your participation grade also includes more general forms of participation within the ISP program, including (but not limited to): participating in lectures (showing up and asking questions when appropriate); participating at Thursday Symposium (showing up and joining in the discussion); coming to office hours. We are looking for "engagement" across all aspects of the course.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Below are guidelines for each assignment, to be submitted on the date and time listed through Canvas. Each assignment tracks to one of the four themes of this semester: representing reality, experiencing reality, knowing reality, and creating reality. More detail on each assignment will be provided at the beginning of each thematic module.

Please submit your essay in .doc or .docx (unless specified otherwise by your seminar professor). Name your document LastnameFirstinitial_AssignmentDescription.doc (Assignment Description is IA1, IA2, etc). Always include your name and provide a thoughtful title for each assignment.

Due Date		
2/14 10 am	Integrative Assignment 1	You will explore two modes of representing reality, by translating 24 hours of "your reality" of life at Penn into a short play and a mathematical model.
3/7 10 am	Integrative Assignment 2	In this assignment you will consider how objects relate to experiences of reality, drawing on encounters with objects at the Penn museum.
4/7 10 am	Integrative Assignment 3	Nothingness might be thought of as an absence of reality, but here we will ask you to explore the very real and concrete approaches we have learned for how people come to know nothingness. You will carefully analyze readings from two or more of the streams to

		complete this assignment.
4/30	Integrative Assignment 4	Finally, we will ask you to consider what “reality” means. Your essay will create a reality in which this question can be answered. We will ask you to consider readings and topics from each of the streams.