

INTER 130 How to Survive the Collapse of Western Civilization

Winter 2016

ROOM: R 110 A & B

TIME: M-Th 1:30 – 3:20

SECTION: HYD ITEM: 5830

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Is the consumerist conception of the good life really worthy of us as human beings? It's increasingly clear to many that the lifestyle we know is neither just nor sustainable. In this course we will investigate the possibilities for leading lives that are both more sustainable and more fulfilling.

Your grade breaks down like this:

Quizzes & Exams	20%
Writing & Research Assignments	40%
Participation	40%

EXPECTATIONS

The following outlines what we expect of you as students in this class:

Be respectful:

Be engaged with scheduled group work for which your peers rely on your promptness and contributions. Don't talk when someone else has the floor. Listen to what other people say.

Any comments or jokes that belittle another person (based on physical attributes, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or anything else) *will not be tolerated*. Inappropriate comments and/or behavior will result in you being removed from class and / or directed to the Associate Dean of Student Conduct.

Contribute in a positive way to the classroom environment:

Come to class. In accordance with BC Arts and Humanities policy, you are at significant risk of failing this course if you miss more than 20% of class meetings.

So come to class on time every day, Monday through Thursday. If you can't make it (or make it on time), do let us know. This won't 'excuse' an absence, but we do want to know about obstacles you are facing and how we might help you cope with these.

Make sure that when in class, you contribute meaningfully to class discussions in a way that furthers

the discussion and invites other students to do the same. Ask questions, offer insight based on personal experience, and ground your comments with material we've learned and read in class.

Be honest:

Plagiarizing is a form of cheating that includes using another's words or ideas and representing them as your own.

It can mean having someone write a paper or part of a paper for you. It can mean copy / pasting from Wikipedia or other online sources. It can also mean failing to cite information properly (something we will learn a lot more about in this course.)

Bellevue College uses the plagiarism detecting service, "Turn It In." Students can access originality reports for their work when they submit drafts through Canvas. We encourage you to double check your Turn It In reports for any problems.

If you are caught plagiarizing, you fail the course. There is no excuse in the world that would prevent this repercussion; it's not worth it!

To learn more about plagiarism, click this button ==>

Do the work:

What to do if you miss class and/or assignments:

We cover a lot in this class, and we move forward at a brusque pace. In addition, the nature of a hybrid requires a great deal of discipline and planning on your part, since so much of the coursework takes place outside of class.

Thus, ***coursework cannot be made up or turned in late***. Please do not contact us about accepting late assignments or to ask what you missed when you were out of town / away from the internet / on vacation. There is no such thing as an "excused" absence, so please plan trips, vacations, journeys out of the country or away from an internet connection accordingly. Being prepared and present online and turning things in promptly is vital because strong preparation and participation creates a strong learning community. The stronger learning community we build, the more you get out of our class.

Also, our work in this class is cumulative. This means that smaller assignments and daily activities build toward the bigger things. So, missing class sessions affects not just your ability to get a good participation grade, but your research and writing will suffer as well.

Of course life happens. Some of you participate in extracurricular activities, are athletes, act in plays, play music in a band, contribute art to galleries, or travel with student organizations. We understand that some of you have children who will get sick or will get sick yourselves. And some of you are holding down jobs and taking care of others whilst enrolled in college classes. We fully support you participating in extracurricular activities and taking care of yourselves and your families.

Keep us apprised of any situation that creates extenuating circumstances for you. We will almost always make arrangements for you to get caught up if you fall behind-- but, if you don't let us know beforehand what's happening, there is little we can do.

The following outlines what you may expect of us as the instructors:

Be a resource for you to become critical thinkers:

Critical thinking is the foundation of becoming an educated person. It is therefore the impetus for everything we read, write and do in class.

Be a resource for you to become strong writers:

Being a strong writer gets you far, no matter what profession you choose. It is also inexorably linked to thinking critically and being a strong reader. So we have a big job here. These things are important not just for this class, not just for your future classes, but forever. We hope to impress upon you the significance of this. So, in our class, you will read and write a great deal, and we will use our flex critical thinking muscles all the time.

Contribute in a positive way to the classroom environment:

This necessitates that we create a space in which all students feel comfortable speaking and are encouraged to make meaningful contributions to our learning community (but establishing a strong learning community goes both ways-- see "What We Expect of You" above.)

We design all class activities to be diverse, interesting and inclusive. We will watch films, write, read, discuss responses, and engage in a wide variety of experiential activities. Our philosophy is that the more learning styles and approaches we offer through class activities, the better you will learn.

Help with access to resources:

We also believe that student success is directly correlated with access to student resources. We can help with the access part— but *make sure to let us know if you're struggling* so there's no time lost in getting our assistance and / or connecting you with a department that can help you.

To find out more about Campus Resources available to you, click this button ==>

OUTCOMES and GOALS

This is an Interdisciplinary Studies Class. One of the goals of an IDS class is to dissolve traditional barriers between disciplines as we investigate a common theme. Another barrier we seek to dissolve is the one that separates teachers and students. In an IDS class, we are all teachers and we are all students. This means that you, every one of you, are the driving force of the course. You will be asked to make several decisions concerning form and content of the course. Working collaboratively with other students and the instructors, you will work to keep what works working, and to solve any problems that come up. Yet another characteristic of an IDS course is that you are primarily responsible for your own education, not others in the class, nor the instructors, although we will do what we can to help. Should you find something interfering with your ability to get the most out of this class, it is up to you to address this problem with either your group or the class as a whole. From that point on, all concerned parties will work together to resolve the problem.

Keep in mind that this is not a “Warm Body” class (ha ha- get it?); one of those classes which you attend half conscious, take the occasional note and leave. Expect to be challenged, expect to contribute regularly, and expect to labor hard to develop your understanding of the material.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Formulate, clarify and evaluate arguments.
- Explain and evaluate substantive ethical theories including utilitarianism and respect for persons and the ethics of care.
- Explain how substantive ethical theories including utilitarianism, respect for persons and the ethics of care incorporate the value of cultural diversity.
- Demonstrate awareness of the epistemic issues that pertain to environmental policy by identifying gaps in our knowledge of how our actions effect the environment.
- Explain some specific environmental problems (for instance; saving salmon, global warming or wilderness preservation) and how to go about formulating and supporting policies that address those problems.
- Demonstrate various invention practices: brainstorming, free writing; outlining, journaling.
- Demonstrate ability to write in various modes: personal narrative, expository, analytical, descriptive, argument.
- Explore sources of writing: reading, thinking, analyzing, discussion.
- Practice good group skills: how to give useful feedback, and how to make use of feedback you receive.
- Develop self-assessment skills.
- Demonstrate an awareness of a cultural attitudes, social/political forces, philosophical attitudes presented in the literature from a particular current issue.
- Demonstrate an awareness of varying points of view within this current issue.
- Conduct primary research.
- Create a final essay demonstrating strong research skills.