



Spring 2012

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

What does it really mean to be proud? There is an inherent aversion to the arrogance of a Donald Trump or the conceit and willful ignorance of Michael Scott, but what about the confidence of someone like Harriet Tubman as depicted by Aaron Douglas? And what does it really mean to be humble? We may admire modesty and an unassuming nature, but we also feel distaste toward those who C.S. Lewis describes as “greasy, smarmy persons, who are always telling us that, of course, they are nobody.” What is the best understanding of these qualities, and what might artists and thinkers reveal about them? And how might those insights contribute to our knowledge of a “good life?” In this interdisciplinary seminar, we will explore these fundamental questions, culling insights from literature, art, film, and music and combining them with concepts from philosophers, social scientists, psychologists, scientists, and religious thinkers. We will test these ideas against our own experiences and our collaborative thinking. Goals for this course include developing a critical understanding of different perspectives on pride and humility, examining how such attributes may or may not contribute to a “good life,” honing key analysis, research, and presentation skills, and sharing one’s insights with others and the widest audience possible.

## **COURSE GOALS**

- Critical understanding of different perspectives on pride and humility
- Examination of how pride and humility may or may not contribute to a “good life”
- Develop analysis, research, and presentation skills
- Share those insights with others and the widest audience possible

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Thoroughly understand the insights of a range of thinkers about the nature of pride and humility
- Crosscheck those views in many different works of art and against our own experiences
- Collaborate in our learning to encourage greater insights and enthusiasm
- Develop research skills, including brainstorming, constructing literature reviews, and formulating a quality research question
- Produce a number of insightful presentations of our current progress in exploring course material

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

For each day, you will have an assignment. While many assignments will be readings, others will be examinations of art, literature, or films. The assignments present the key theories surrounding pride and humility and/or give you a chance to critically apply theories about those concepts. For many days you will create a QCQ to bring to class. These assignments, the QCQs, will prepare you for more lengthy examinations of pride and humility in the small papers/projects called Explorations of Pride, Humility, and Good Life. The QCQs and papers culminate in three “exams.” The goal of each exam is to demonstrate the depth of your understanding of the material, but there are many, many ways to demonstrate that depth. In tandem with this project of developing and demonstrating new knowledge, you will develop the foundation of a research project. You will begin by brainstorming some aspect of pride and/or humility to research. You will then do a preliminary literature review to see the status of the research relative to that aspect. From this review you will formulate a preliminary research question. A class workshop on these elements will help you collaboratively advance and improve your research project. The final products of the project are a final literature review and research question.

### These are the books that you will need:

- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Martin Ostwald. New York: Prentice Hall, 1999. (ISBN-10: 0023895306)
- Buber, Martin. *I and Thou*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Touchstone, 1970. (ISBN-10: 0684717255)
- Dyson, Michael Eric. *Pride*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006.
- Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Vintage, 1995. (ISBN-10: 0679732764)
- Homer. *The Iliad*. Translated by Robert Fagles. (ISBN-10: 0140275363)
- Lao Tsu. *Tao Te Ching*. Translated by Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English. New York: Vintage, 1989. (ISBN-10: 0307949303)
- Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*. New York: Viking, 1996. (ISBN-10: 0140247734)
- Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. New York: Harcourt, 1982. (ISBN-10: 0156031825)

### These are other material we will examine, though you will NOT need to purchase them:

- Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*. 3 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980-82.
- *Bible*. The Joseph Story, The Beatitudes
- Heffernan, Margaret. *Willful Blindness*. New York: Walker, 2011.
- Lewis, C.S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Macmillan, 1952.
- Machiavelli. *The Prince*. Translated by T. G. Bergin. Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1947.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Portable Nietzsche*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking, 1977.

### ASSIGNMENTS

- **QCQ:** The QCQ begins with a Quote pulled from the assignment. You will then expand on that Quote with an extended and insightful Commentary. Your Commentary will reveal your knowledge of the **entire** assignment, showing the insights you have gleaned. Finally you will add Questions to your Quote and Commentary. The Questions can be ones you have to clarify the points of the assignment, but you must also include questions beyond the scope of the reading. You will bring 2 copies of each QCQ to class, one to submit and the other to refer to during our class discussions. Late QCQs will result in a failing grade for that assignment. The QCQs will constitute 10% of your final grade. See the QCQ Grade Rubric for more information.
- **Engaging Pride, Humility, and the Good Life:** These are a variety of assignments that are meant to engage you in the material. These will constitute 20% of your final grade. Further information and a grading rubric are given below. Here are some brief descriptions:
  - ★ **Exploring Pride, Humility, and the Good Life:** For this assignment you will write a paper where you apply what you're learning about pride, humility, and the good life to something. That "something" could be a television show, movie, book, poem, work of art, concrete social or personal experience, or whatnot. See the Explorations of Pride, Humility, and the Good Life Grade Rubric for more information.
  - ★ **Invented Conversations:** Conversations are interesting and dramatic ways to see the back-and-forth play of ideas. Your conversations will include different thinkers or characters who represent and respond to key ideas about pride, humility, and the good life.
  - ★ **Concept Map:** A concept map is a diagram showing the relationships among concepts. They are graphical tools for organizing and representing knowledge. You will assemble important concepts in the ways that make sense to you. You will also add other concepts and examples to the map, concepts and examples that are uniquely interesting and illuminating to you.
- **Researching Pride, Humility, and the Good Life:** You will participate in a course-long activity meant to help you develop research skills. This will also help us collaborate in our learning to encourage greater insights and enthusiasm. The activity will begin with a brainstorming activity, and then continue with a preliminary literature review, a research presentation, and a preliminary question. It will culminate in a final question and literature review. The Researching Pride, Humility, and the Good Life portion of the class will constitute 35% of your final grade. See Researching Pride, Humility, and the Good Life Information and Grading rubrics for more information.
- **Exams:** The three (3) exams you will develop give you a chance to demonstrate your thorough understanding of the material. They will also give you a chance to produce a thoughtful response to what you are learning. On the day your exam is due, you will present your exam to the class for our discussion. You are encouraged to collaborate with

other classmates, but keep in mind that your work must reflect the strong efforts of **all** of the collaborators. For each exam you will have many options. The exams will constitute 35% of your final grade. See Exam Information and Grading rubrics for more information.

### GRADING

QCQ—10%; Engaging Pride, Humility, and Good Life —20%; Researching Pride, Humility, and the Good Life —35%; Exams—35%. Grading Scale:

A 100-92%	B+ 89-87%	C+ 79-77%	D+ 69-67%	F 59% ↓↓
A- 91-90%	B 86-82%	C 76-72%	D 66-62%	
	B- 81-80%	C- 71-70%	D- 61-60%	

### NOTE ABOUT GRADING

Doing good work on all of the assignments in the class will result in a good grade (C) or a very good grade (B). Exceptional work done consistently will result in an exceptional grade (A).

### HONOR CODE

Elon University's honor code is based on upholding four fundamental values: honesty, integrity, responsibility and respect. Adherence to these values is expected from students in and out of the classroom, on and off campus and in and out of the country. Breaches of these values will result in an academic or social honor code violation report. In this class, honor code violations that may result in a lowering of your grade or your failure of the class include the following offenses: **plagiarism, lying, cheating, stealing or vandalism, and facilitating academic dishonesty**. Students should be familiar with these policies and should know that while "intent" may be considered in assigning sanctions, it is not a factor in determining responsibility for an offense. Students may learn more about the honor code, including definitions of violations, the process for adjudication and possible sanctions at <http://www.elon.edu/honor>. Students who are uncertain about whether specific behaviors or activities in this class are violations of the honor code should contact the instructor immediately.

### REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability or need special accommodations of any nature whatsoever, I will work with you and the Coordinator of Disabilities Services to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that you have a fair opportunity to perform in this class. Please advise the instructor of such disabilities and the desired accommodations at the first class meeting.

## Course Schedule Spring 2012

Tuesday, January 31	Introductions	
Thursday, February 02	<i>The Iliad</i> (Books 1-2)	QCQ #1
Tuesday, February 07	<i>The Iliad</i> (Books 9, 16, 18, 21)	QCQ #2
Thursday, February 09	<i>The Iliad</i> (Books 22 and 24)	QCQ #3
Tuesday, February 14	Aristotle <i>Ethics</i> (Book 1:4-5, 7-11; Book 2:6-7,9; 4:2-9)	QCQ #4; Brainstorm Due
Thursday, February 16	Machiavelli's <i>The Prince</i> and Colleoni	QCQ #5
Tuesday, February 21	Heffernan <i>Willful Blindness</i>	QCQ #6; Exploration of P,H,GL #1
Thursday, February 23	Miller <i>Death of a Salesman</i> and <i>The Office</i>	QCQ #7
Tuesday, February 28	<b>Exam #1</b>	
Thursday, March 01	"The Joseph Story" & "The Sermon on the Mount"	QCQ #8
Tuesday, March 06	Dante's Purgatory and Lao Tsu's <i>Tao Te Ching</i>	QCQ #9; Preliminary Lit. Review
Thursday, March 08	Outside Assignment	
Tuesday, March 13	Nietzsche and Lewis	QCQ #10
Thursday, March 15	Images of Pride and Humility I	QCQ #11
Tuesday, March 20	Spring Break	
Thursday, March 22	Spring Break	
Tuesday, March 27	Ellison <i>Invisible Man</i> (chapters 1-16)	QCQ #12; Preliminary Question
Thursday, March 29	Ellison <i>Invisible Man</i> (chapter 17-end)	QCQ #13
Tuesday, April 03	Researching P, H, & GL Presentations	
Thursday, April 05	Researching P, H, & GL Presentations	
Tuesday, April 10	<b>Exam #2</b>	
Thursday, April 12	Images of Pride and Humility II	QCQ #14; Exploration of P,H,GL #2 Conversation
Tuesday, April 17	Buber <i>I and Thou</i> (53-122)	QCQ #15
Thursday, April 19	Buber <i>I and Thou</i> (123-168)	QCQ #16
Tuesday, April 24	Dyson <i>Pride</i>	QCQ #17
Thursday, April 26	Workshop Final Literature Review and Question	
Tuesday, May 01	Walker <i>The Color Purple</i>	QCQ #19
Thursday, May 03	Images of Pride and Humility III	QCQ #20
Tuesday, May 08	Examine Maps and Finish Up	Exploration of P,H,GL #3 Concept Map

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, May 10 2012 from 3:00PM to 6:00PM.**