Mendenhall Summer Institute

The Culture of Writing / An Introduction to “Great Books”

English 1311 / Summer II, 2015

Instructor: Prof. Miller.  E-mail: mlmiller@stthom.edu.
Office: Malloy 231.  Hours:  M-W 11:00-12:00 or by Appointment

Course Objectives: English 1311 is designed to give the entering liberal arts student an experience of the essential scholarly activities expected for membership in the academic community. These activities include active reading, logical argumentation, and formal writing techniques. Students are given instruction in techniques that will help them read scholarly texts with increased insight and understanding. Students are given instruction and practice in the “Shared Inquiry” method of discussion developed for the “Great Books” program at the University of Chicago. This formal mode of discourse helps the student participate effectively in a meaningful exchange of opinions and ideas about selected readings in landmark works of literature, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology. Finally, students will review the basics of English grammar and usage and develop an understanding of and facility with the principles of composition.


Requirements: To receive credit for this course, students are expected to attend every class, to read actively and thoroughly all of the assigned readings, to participate effectively in class discussion, and to submit assigned writing assignments on time as assigned. Graded assignments include frequent quizzes, 6 to 8 short “pre-reading” papers of 1-2 pages, 4-5 Graded Seminar discussions, and 4-5 formal essays of 3 to 5 pages. Students will also sit for a Final Exam.

Unexcused absences and habitual tardiness will result in a reduction of the final grade. Work missed or incomplete as a result of unexcused absences or tardiness cannot be made up. There are no “make-up” quizzes. Written work is due at the beginning of class on the dates assigned by the instructor. Work submitted late without prior approval will be penalized with a reduction of a letter grade for each day after due-date.

Grading: For the satisfactory achievement of these requirements, letter grades will constitute percentages of the final grade as follows:

- Quizzes = 10%
- Pre-Reading Papers = 20%
- Seminars = 20%
- Final Exam = 20%
- Essays = 30%