

Humanism
HUMN 101 – AS01
Fall 2016

Instructor: Sean Hannan, PhD
Office: 7-352H
Phone: 780-633-3914
E-mail: hannans@macewan.ca
Office Hours: W 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Lecture Time: TR 2:00-3:20 p.m.
Lecture Room: 7-187
Course Credits: 3
Course Pre-requisite: None.

Course Description:

This course considers humanist values and principles through the reading of canonical works of history, literature, and philosophy from more than one historical period and geographical area. An empathetic understanding of human beings is emphasized through a consideration of what is important to human beings, and how humans relate to others. Readings from the following authors will be included: Aeschylus, Plato, Ibn Tufayl, Rousseau, and Shelley.

Our section of HUMN 101 will focus on texts that try to locate the meaning of human life somewhere between the ideal heights of divine existence and the brute reality of animal experience. Familiarizing ourselves with figures like Aeschylus' Prometheus, Plato's Socrates, Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqzan, Rousseau's 'natural man,' and Shelley's Frankenstein, we will aim to uncover this tension between the human urge to pursue godlike power (or knowledge) and the human need to remain within the confines of our material conditions.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Read and analyze texts from history, literature and philosophy from a humanistic perspective.
- Identify and discuss humanistic themes in a variety of works and authors.
- Identify and explain the values and thoughts of people from different places and times.
- Grapple with difficult questions about what it means to be human.
- Discuss the relationship between religion and philosophy in an intelligent manner.

Textbooks and Other Learning Resources:

- Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, trans. James Scully & C. John Herrington (Oxford, 1990).
ISBN: 978-0195061659
- Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, 3rd ed., trans. G.M.A. Grube (Hackett, 2001).
ISBN: 978-0872205543
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*, ed. Donald Cress (Hackett, 1992).
ISBN: 978-0872201507
- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus (the 1818 text)*, ed. Marilyn Butler (Oxford, 1998).
ISBN: 978-0199537150
- Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*. Trans. Lenn Evan Goodman (U of Chicago Press, 2009).
ISBN: 978-0226303109

HUMN 101's Blackboard portal is an invaluable way to submit assignments electronically, communicate via MacEwan email accounts, access helpful resources, and receive course announcements. Students should check Blackboard and their MacEwan accounts regularly.

Grade Evaluation:

Reading Responses (x3)	30%
Participation (ongoing)	10%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Take-Home Final Exam	40%
	100%

Assignment and Exam Dates:

- Reading Responses (choose 3 of 5): Sep. 22, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Nov. 17, Dec. 1
- Mid-Term Exam (comparison of 2 texts): Oct. 20
- Take-Home Final Exam (1200 words): (see below)

Final Exam Schedule:

The date, time and location will be available online at MacEwan.ca/Exams later in the term.

Assignment Descriptions:

Participation: Taking part in our discussions of these texts will be necessary for success in this course. Reading the assigned pages before coming to class is a basic requirement, but students will also be encouraged to go further and engage in constructive conversations about the readings with their peers.

Reading Responses: Students will write short responses to three of the five texts we will be reading this semester. It is up to the student to decide which three texts will get a response. These responses will be short (one double-spaced page, typed in 12-point Times New Roman). The goal will be to craft a concise but compelling reply to one of the prompts that will be posted on our Blackboard site. Completed assignments should then also be submitted electronically via Blackboard. If any problems are encountered, students are welcome to email the instructor and arrange to submit their assignment in some other way.

Mid-Term Exam: The mid-term examination will ask students to constructively compare the first two readings in our course: Aeschylus' *Prometheus* and Plato's *Apology*. Generally speaking, the exam will focus on the question of whether those ancient Greek authors agree on what it means to be human. Further details will be provided closer to the date of the exam.

Take-Home Final Exam: The final exam will be in a take-home format, which means that students will be able to work on it outside of class and then turn it in before the final exam date scheduled by the University. The questions will be disseminated via Blackboard at the end of the semester. They will deal broadly with the relationship between the human, the divine, and the animal in all five of our chosen texts.

Final Grade:

The official grading system at MacEwan University is the 12-point letter grade system. While instructors may use percentages to aid in their grade development, percentages are not part of MacEwan University's official grading system. Policy [C2020: Grading](#).

Grade	Percentage	Grade Point	Descriptor
A+	96-100	4.0	Outstanding
A	88-95	4.0	Excellent
A-	82-87	3.7	
B+	78-81	3.3	Good
B	74-77	3.0	
B-	71-73	2.7	
C+	66-70	2.3	Satisfactory
C	63-65	2.0	
C-	58-62	1.7	
D+	53-57	1.3	Poor
D	48-52	1.0	
F	0-47	0.0	Fail

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students are expected to be aware of their academic responsibilities as outlined in Policy [E3101: Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Policies are available online at MacEwan.ca/policymanual.

1. **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Policy [C1000: Academic Integrity](#). All incidents of academic dishonesty, as outlined in the policy, are reported and recorded by the [Academic Integrity Office](#).
2. **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:** Policy [E3400: Student with Disabilities](#). Students who require special accommodation in this course due to a disability are advised to discuss their needs with [Services to Students with Disabilities \(SSD\)](#).
3. **PREREQUISITES:** Students who do not have the appropriate prerequisite may be removed from the course and may be responsible for any tuition costs up to the date of removal.
4. **FINAL EXAMS:** Policy [C2005: Final Assessment](#) and Policy [C2020: Grading](#). Students are responsible for confirming the date, time, duration and location of the final exam. Students may apply for a deferred final exam to the [Faculty of Arts and Science Program Services Office](#). **Applications must be received within two business days of the final exam** (\$50 per exam to a maximum of \$100 per scheduled exam period).
5. **APPEALS:** Policy [E3103: Student Appeals](#). Students may contact [Student Affairs](#) for assistance.

INSTRUCTOR COURSE POLICIES:

Students must communicate with their instructors using their myMacEwan email accounts.

1. **Late penalties/policy:** Students must submit all assignments by the stated deadlines in order to for their grade to receive full consideration. Late submissions will have their grades docked at a rate of 5% per day. No assignments will be accepted more than one week after their stated deadline. Exceptions may be made in the case of compelling medical circumstances. In that case, it will be necessary to provide documentation in the form of a doctor's note.
2. **Attendance:** Attendance at and attention during class are expected of all students in this course. Failure to attend will put students at a disadvantage when it comes to understanding the material and succeeding with their assignments. This is especially true of in-class presentations!

DISCLAIMER:

The information in this course outline is subject to change and any changes will be announced in class or in writing.

COURSE TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

Week One

Thursday, Sept. 8: Opening Discussion – What is Humanism?

Week Two

Tuesday, Sept. 13: Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 1-430 (p. 29-43).

Guest Lecture: Colin Bailey on Tragedy in Athens.

Thursday, Sept. 15: Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 430-820. (p. 43-55).

Week Three

Tuesday, Sept. 20: Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 820-1360 (p. 55-73).

Thursday, Sept. 22: Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 1360-end (p. 73-83).

Aeschylus Response Due.

Week Four

Tuesday, Sept. 27: Plato, *Apology*, 17a-24a. (p. 20-27)

Guest Lecture: Ed Lorkovic on the *Apology* and Philosophy.

Thursday, Sept. 29: Plato, *Apology*, 24b-27e. (p. 27-31)

Week Five

Tuesday, Oct. 4: Plato, *Apology*, 28a-34b. (p. 31-36)

Thursday, Oct. 6: Plato, *Apology*, 34c-42a. (p. 36-42)

Plato Response Due.

Week Six

Tuesday, Oct. 11: Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, p. 95-103.

Thursday, Oct. 13: Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, p. 103-115.

Week Seven

Tuesday, Oct. 18: Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, p. 115-138.

Thursday, Oct. 20: **In-Class Mid-Term Exam.**

Week Eight

Tuesday, Oct. 25: Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, p. 138-148.

Thursday, Oct. 27: Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, p. 148-166.

Week Nine

Tuesday, Nov. 1: Rousseau, *Discourse*, p. 1-15.

Thursday, Nov. 3: Rousseau, *Discourse*, p. 15-24.

Ibn Tufayl Response Due.

Week Ten

Tuesday, Nov. 8: Rousseau, *Discourse*, p. 24-44.

Thursday, Nov. 10: **No Class – Reading Break.**

Week Eleven

Tuesday, Nov. 15: Rousseau, *Discourse*, p. 44-58.

Thursday, Nov. 17: Rousseau, *Discourse*, p. 58-71.

Rousseau Response Due.

Week Twelve

Tuesday, Nov. 22: Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 1-51.

Thursday, Nov. 24: Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 51-102.

Week Thirteen

Tuesday, Nov. 29: Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 102-155.

Thursday, Dec. 1: Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 155-191.

Shelley Response Due.