

Delta State University

BIS 300 – Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies

Fall 2006

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Introduction to the concepts and methods of interdisciplinary study through critical examination of anticipated workplace and civic trends in the global environment. Using a multicultural focus, we will look at ethics and decision-making in contemporary society. Emphasis is placed on development of critical and analytical thinking skills, as well as written and oral communication. Key ethical questions will be addressed from a variety of perspectives both past and present as a basis for informed decision-making.

Course Objectives

- Students will identify current ethical challenges in science, education, business, government, and in their various communities;
- Students will study ethical concerns (and interactive effects) at the individual, group, community, nation, society, and global levels;
- Students will develop an awareness of personal values, the diversity of values held by others, and the process of moral/ethical inquiry and decision-making;
- Students will develop critical thinking skills by bringing multiple perspectives to bear on particular ethical dilemmas and issues and by using reflection, logic, evidence, and well-chosen examples to support positions or arguments;
- Students will enhance their speaking and writing skills in exploring ethical issues, making decisions, and presenting conclusions to others. Students will also demonstrate effective oral communication skills in a variety of personal and professional situations, both formal and informal, using the appropriate technology.
- Students will gain an appreciation of the diverse perspectives of the disciplines represented in classroom enrollment and/or reading assignments, and of the ways in which they complement and/or contradict one another.
- Students will develop the ability to synthesize the perspectives of the various disciplines represented.
- Students will gain an appreciation of culturally-diverse perspectives by comparing and contrasting beliefs and practices.

Presentation Methods:

Presentation of course subject matter will be primarily directed readings, individual research, class discussion of assigned material, experiential exercises, case studies, and class meetings led by guest speakers. (exception: For BIS 300 -- Independent Study, assigned readings and scheduled meetings with professor are primary presentation modes).

Class Attendance:

The University requires students to attend at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all class meetings in order to receive a passing grade. Attendance and active participation are essential for the student to perform in a satisfactory manner. Any student exceeding the allowed absences, excused or otherwise, will receive a grade of "F" for the course. It should be evident -- regular class attendance and active participation are heartily encouraged.

Course Requirements:

All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for the semester. Any assignment completed after the due date will be accepted for the purpose of allowing the student to meet course requirements, but a **grade of zero (0) will be given for that assignment**. Failure to complete all assignments will result in the student receiving a grade of "F" for the course.

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
Paper 1	20 pts
Paper 2	30 pts.
Reading responses (JOURNAL)	30 pts.
Participation (discussion, preparation, attendance)	20 pts.
 Total Points	 100 pts.

Grading Scale:

The scale below will be used.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A	93 - 100
B	85 - 92
C	76 - 84
D	70 - 75
F	00 - 69

Readings and Writings:

I. For the writing assignments listed as Journals A – I, find two articles or essays that present opposing OR differing views and write a 500-600 word response on the arguments presented. For each of these assignments, at least one of the articles should reveal, address, or examine the perspectives of Japanese culture. Don't limit yourself to contemporary writings only; instead, consider that there are many classic texts over many centuries of writings. In each of your journal responses, first demonstrate that you recognize the key ideas of the writers and determine the quality of the argument(s)—do not let your personal opinion keep you from seeing the value of someone's rhetoric. Second, write a limited personal response that demonstrates your opinion and evaluates your own stance: is it rational or emotional, is it determined by your upbringing, others' opinions, etc. (Copy the articles or essays, label them with the Journal Assignment letter (A-I) and put them in your journal with the response.)

II. For the two longer papers:

Paper 1: Each student will read one of the novels in List 1 below. Write a 1000+ word critical response to the novel. DO NOT summarize the plot. In this paper, address a philosophical, moral, or ethical issue or situation and discuss how this novel presents a position. Especially consider how the narratives demonstrate a position with which you may not be familiar or comfortable.

Paper 2: Read one of the texts from the List 2 below and write a 1500+ word critical response. Evaluate the text by examining its position on one or more of the questions we've discussed during the semester.

List 1: Novels to consider (These will not be available through the bookstore. Order online ASAP because you need to start reading):

Abe, Kobo. *The Box Man : A Novel*. Vintage, 2001

Abe, Kobo. *The Woman in the Dunes*. Vintage, 1991

Ariyoshi, Sawako. *The Doctor's Wife*. Trans. Hironaka Wakako and Ann Siller Kostant. Kodansha International, 1978.

Dazai, Osamu. *No Longer Human*. New Directions, 1973

Enchi, Fumiko. *The Waiting Years*. Trans. John Bester. Kodansha International (JPN), 2002

Marakami, Haruki. *Kafka on the Shore*. Vintage, 2005

Leithauser, Brad. *Equal Distance*. 1984.

McInerney, Jay. *Ransom*. Vintage, 1985.

Mori, Ogai. *Vita Sexualis*. Trans. Kazuji Ninomiya and Sanford Goldstein. Tuttle, 1972.

Morley, *Pictures from the Water-Trade*. Harper Collins, 1986

Soseki, Natsume. *Kokoro*. Gateway, 1957

Takahashi, Genichiro. *Sayonara, Gangsters*. Vertical, 2004

Tanizaki, Junichiro. *Some Prefer Nettles*. Trans. Edward G. Seidensticker. Vintage, 1995

Yoshimoto, Banana. *Kitchen*. Trans. Megan Backus. Grove Press, 1993.

List 2: Critical texts to consider – non-fiction (most of these are available through the DSU library system)

Bachnik, Jane M. and Charles J. Quinn, eds. *Situated Meaning: Inside and Outside in Japanese Self, Society, and Language*. Princeton: Princeton U P, 1994.

Benedict, Ruth. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword : Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston : Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946.

Bornoff, Nicholas. *Pink Samurai: Love, Marriage and Sex in Contemporary Japan*. New York: Pocket, 1991.

Horio, Teruhisa. *Educational Thought and Ideology in Modern Japan: State Authority and Intellectual Freedom*. Ed. and trans. Steven Platzer. Tokyo: U of Tokyo P, 1988.

Ishido, Hiroshi. *Social Mobility in Contemporary Japan: Educational Credentials, Class and the Labour Market in a Cross-national Perspective*. Stanford: Stanford U P, 1993.

Miller, Laura, and Jan Bardsley. *Bad Girls of Japan*. Palgrave, 2005.

Nelson, John K. *Enduring Identities : The Guise of Shinto in Contemporary Japan*. Honolulu : U of Hawai'i P, 2000.

Phillips, James M. *From the Rising of the Sun : Christians and Society in Contemporary Japan*. Maryknoll, N.Y. : Orbis, 1981.

Reader, Ian. *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan: The Case of Aum Shinrikyo*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 2000.

Sato, Ryuzo. *The Chrysanthemum and the Eagle: the Future of U.S.-Japan Relations*. New York : New York U P, 1994.

Setouchi Harumi. *Beauty in Disarray*. Translated by Sanford Goldstein and Kuzuji Ninomiya. Tuttle: Rutland, VT, 1993.

Silverman, Laura K, ed. *Bringing Home the Sushi : An Inside Look at Japanese Business Through Japanese Comics*. Atlanta: Mangajin Inc., 1995.

Whiting, Robert. *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat : Baseball Samurai Style* . New York: Avon, 1983.

READING AND WRITING SCHEDULE

DATE	READING	
	2 essays/ articles; start reading NOVEL choice	A. Philosophy: personal?
	2 essays/ articles; NOVEL	B. Organized religion: morality?
	2 essays/ articles; NOVEL	C. Medicine: laws?
	2 essays/ articles; NOVEL	D. Science: values?
	NOVEL	<u>Rough draft of paper 1 due for discussion</u>
	2 essays/ articles	E. Business: responsibility?
		<u>Paper 1 due</u>
	2 essays/ articles; start reading the Critical text	F. The law: public opinion?
	2 essays/ articles; Critical Text	G. Journalism: community?
	Critical Text	<u>Rough draft paper 2 due for discussion</u>
	2 essays/ articles; Critical Text	H. Entertainment: values?
	Critical Text	<u>Discussion of Paper 2</u>
	Critical Text	<u>Paper 2 due</u>
	2 essays/ articles	I. Gender?
		Journal evaluation: Write a wrap-up of what you think you've learned this semester; look back at your readings and the responses and determine what shifts you have noticed in the way you evaluate ideas and information. 600+ words – final journal entry

Bibliography
(for selection of essays with Japanese or non-Western focus)

- Beauchamp, Edward. R., ed. *Windows on Japanese Education*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1991.
- Fu, Charles Wei-hsun, and Steven Heine, eds. *Japan in Traditional and Postmodern Perspectives*. Albany: State U of New York P, 1995.
- Hamon, Raeann R. and Bron B. Ingoldsby, eds. *Mate Selection across Cultures*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003.
- Ito, Makoto. *Value and Crisis: Essays on Marxian Economics in Japan*. New York: Monthly Review P, 1980.
- Ikels, Charlotte, ed. *Filial Piety: Practice and Discourse in Contemporary East Asia*. Stanford: Stanford U P, 2004.
- Pharr, Susan J. and Ellis S. Krauss, eds. *Media and Politics in Japan*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 1996.
- Puligandla, Ramakrishna, and David Lee Miller, eds. *Buddhism and the Emerging World Civilization: Essays in Honor of Nolan Pliny Jacobson*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois U P, 1996. (DSU)
- Richie, Donald. *A Lateral View: Essays on Culture and Style in Contemporary Japan*. Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge P, 1992.
- Thernstrom, Amy McCreedy, ed. *Japanese Women: Lineage and Legacies*. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2005. (online)
- Tu, Wei-ming. *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-dragons*. Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1996.

Many collections of essays, besides these listed, are available through the DSU catalog. Find them in the catalog through “words and phrase” searches: “japan* contemporary,” “japan* essays,” “japan* philosophy” and so forth