

# What is the Good Life? A Look through Western Eyes

## SUMMER 2020

Lecture & Discussion: Type G

July 20 – 31, 2020

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 08:30 – 12:00

### INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Will Kesling, Professor of Music/Humanities

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Drawing on the cluster of disciplines that make up the Humanities, this course makes inquiries into the very nature and experience of being human. Applying multi-disciplinary and cross-cultural approaches to explore the question “What is the good life? A Look through Western Eyes” students consider the cost of the good life, examine how people have chosen to live as members of local and global communities, and analyze conceptions and expressions of beauty, power, love, and health.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students are provided instruction in multi-disciplinary approaches used in the humanities to study the good life through an analysis of juxtaposed works of art, architecture, history, literature, music, religion, and philosophy.

- **Content Objectives:** Students will identify how different people from different societies across time conceptualize the good life, what meaning and value individuals ascribe to the lives that they live or want to live, and what are the choices, costs, and benefits of the good life.
- **Communication Objectives:** Students will communicate concepts, expressions, and representations of the good life clearly and effectively in written and oral form as stated in the rubrics of the course.
- **Critical Thinking Objectives:** Students will analyze the conflicts and tensions that arise between the individual and the community, the normative and the exceptional, culture and nature, needs and wants, pleasure and happiness, short-term benefits and long-term consequences of the pursuit of the good life. They will critically evaluate the costs and benefits of the good life in order to make sound decisions.

## COURSE FORMAT

Elements include the required “gateway” readings, one common activity, and the course assignments. The readings have been selected to complement the instructor’s areas of interest and expertise, and for the purpose of making the course a unique experience for the student.

## COMMON ACTIVITIES

This course expects students to become actively engaged in experiences unique to the course. As such, course requirements include attending the Musical Performance, seeing an exhibit at a Museum, or watching the Common Lecture.

## TEXT

Required readings and materials for the course consist of the following online eBooks or paperbacks:

- Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*, translated by Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Penguin Books, 2002). ISBN: 978-0142437186.

All other required readings and materials are in the Resources folder of the prepared by the instructor.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. A forty-five minute Midterm Exam in lecture on Tuesday, July 28 (150 points, 15% of the course grade)
2. An 750-word Analytical Essay due Tuesday, July 21. Detailed instructions will be supplied prior to the due date. (200 points, 20% of course grade)
3. A sixty minute Final Exam (non-cumulative) in lecture on Friday July 31. (300 points, 30% of course grade)
5. 4 Take-Home Quizzes on Thursday, July 23; Friday, July 24; Wednesday, July 29; Thursday, July 30 (identification and/or multiple choice). Each quiz is worth 25 points. (100 points, 10% of course grade)
6. Discussion Activities. (130 points, 13% of course grade)
  - a. Participation in class discussions. (30 points)
  - b. Sacred Space Postcard, due in lecture on Friday, July 26 (30 points)
  - c. Oral Presentation on your Sacred Space Postcard on Friday, July 26 (30 points)
  - d. Essay Outline. (10 points)
  - e. Oral Presentation on gateways/pillars as assigned (30 points)
7. Attendance. (120 points, 12% of course grade)
  - a. Lecture (100 points)
  - b. Common Activity (20 points)

## GRADING SCALE AND ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

Grade Proportion	Grade Scale	Grade Value
Quizzes (4): 100 points (10%)	930-1,000 = A	A = 4.0
Attendance: 120 points (12%)	900-929 = A-	A- = 3.67
Discussion Activities: 130 points (13%)	870-899 = B+	B+ = 3.33
Mid-Term Exam: 150 points (15%)	830-869 = B	B = 3.00
Essay: 200 points (20%)	790-829 = B-	B- = 2.67
Final Exam: 300 points (30%)	750-789 = C+	C+ = 2.33
<b>Total: 1,000 points (100%)</b>	720-749 = C	C = 2.00
	690-719 = C-	C- = 1.67
	660-689 = D+	D+ = 1.33
	620-659 = D	D = 1.00
	600-619 = D-	D- = 0.67
	0-599 = E	E = 0.00

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are bound this Honor Pledge: “We, the members of the class, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the University’s Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students in this class, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

## OTHER POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES

1. *Handing in Assignments:* Assignments due in class should be handed directly to your instructor.
2. *Attendance and Make-up Policy:* Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies.
  - In the case of an absence due to participation in an official university activity, observance of a religious holiday, performance of a military duty, or any other university-approved absence (e.g., jury duty) which the student knows about in advance of the scheduled assignment, the student is expected to notify the instructor of the conflict *before the assignment is due*, and if possible at the start of the semester.

- If a student does not hand in the Essay on time and an extension has not been granted, the Essay will be marked down 1/3 grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day it is late.
  - For all other assignments, the students will not be granted an extension or be permitted to make up the assignment without an acceptable reason, such as an illness or serious family emergencies.
3. *Grading Policy*: If you have questions about your grade on an assignment, please make an appointment to meet with the Instructor before by the next day of class. After an assignment has been returned you may have an explanation as to how you were graded.
  4. *Common Courtesy*: Cell phones and other electronic devices must be set to vibrate mode during class. Students who receive or make calls or text messages during class will be asked to leave and marked absent for the day. The instructors may ask a student engaging in disruptive behavior, including but not limited to whispering or snoring, to leave the class, and the student will be marked absent for the day.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **PART 1: THE INDIVIDUAL**

#### **THINKING ABOUT THE GOOD LIFE (July 20 - 21)**

##### **Gateways:**

Vivien Sung, *Five fold Happiness: Chinese concepts of luck, prosperity, longevity, happiness, and wealth*. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002), 11-12; 18-19; 34, 49, 70-71; 94-95 and 97; 152, 156-157; 204-205; 207; 210-211, 214.

President Bernie Machen, "All That & More: The True Purposes of College," delivered on Thursday, January 24, 2013 in the Grand Ballroom of the Reitz Union, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL

##### **Pillars:**

Dominik Wujastyk, ed., and trans. *The Roots of Ayurveda*. (New York: Penguin, 2002), 61-70.

Herodotus, *The History*. Translated by David Greene (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987), Chapter 1, Sections 30-33 and 85-87.

### SEEKING THE GOOD LIFE (July 22)

#### Gateway:

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*, translated by Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Penguin Books, 2002).

### EMBODYING THE GOOD LIFE (July 23)

#### Gateways:

Oscar Wilde, “The Preface, Chapter 1 & Chapter 2” from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (New York: Charterhouse Press, 1904) xiii--xv; 1-44.

Preface                      [http://www.online-literature.com/wilde/dorian\\_gray/0/](http://www.online-literature.com/wilde/dorian_gray/0/)

Chapter 1                     [http://www.online-literature.com/wilde/dorian\\_gray/1/](http://www.online-literature.com/wilde/dorian_gray/1/)

Chapter 2                     [http://www.online-literature.com/wilde/dorian\\_gray/2/](http://www.online-literature.com/wilde/dorian_gray/2/)

#### Pillar:

Emily Prager, “Our Barbies, Ourselves,” originally titled “Major Barbie” by Emily Prager. Originally appeared in the December 1991 issue of *Interview*.

## PART 2: SOCIETY

### SHARING THE GOOD LIFE (July 23)

#### Gateway:

T. S. Eliot, “The love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” from *Prufrock and Other Observations*. (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1920; Bartle.com, 2011.

## CELEBRATING THE GOOD LIFE (July 23)

### Gateway:

Jeanette Winterson, “Art Objects” from *Art Objects* (New York Knopf, 1997); 3-21.

### Pillars:

Leonard Bernstein discusses Beethoven’s 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCiz9XMW\\_jA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCiz9XMW_jA)

Bernstein on Beethoven’s Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U14iJzdPtWI>

4th Movement - part 2 - Ode to Freedom - 1989 - Leonard Bernstein - Beethoven's 9th Symphony HD 720p

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ici>

## GOVERNING THE GOOD LIFE (July 24)

### Gateway:

Freeman, Samuel, “Introduction, 2. The Original Position and Social Doctrine, 3. The Veil of Ignorance from ‘Original Position’”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.)

## FIGHTING FOR THE GOOD LIFE (July 24)

### Gateways:

Martin Luther King, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (1963).

Dr. Kesling PowerPoint - “African American Spirituals: Slavery’s Unchained Melodies” (available on Sakai)

**Mid-Term Exam (July 28)**

## PART 3: NATURE AND THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### OWNING THE GOOD LIFE (July 28)

#### Gateways:

Geraldine Brooks *The Painted Desert*

<https://prezi.com/qqtqbdehwexx/the-painted-desert-by-geraldine-brooks/>

### CONSTRUCTING THE GOOD LIFE (July 28)

#### Gateway:

*Architecture of Hope: Maggie's Centres*

<http://openbuildings.com/blog/2011/08/architecture-of-hope-maggies-centres>

### SUSTAINING THE GOOD LIFE (July 29)

#### Gateway:

Wangari Muta Maathai, *Biography/The Green Belt Movement*

<http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/wangari-maathai/biography>

## PART 4: EPILOGUE (AFTER THE GOOD LIFE)

### QUESTIONING THE GOOD LIFE (July 29)

#### Gateway:

Dudley Clendinen, "The Good Short Life," *The New Times Reprints*.

Mark Twain, "Extracts from the Diaries of Adam and Eve," *Harper's Magazine*, June 1999, 55-62.

## PERPETUATING THE GOOD LIFE (July 30)

### Gateway:

Chapter Two of Barbara Stoler Miller, trans. *The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War* (New York: Bantam Classics, 1986), 31-41.

### Oral Presentation on Essay topic (July 30)

### Sacred Space Postcard Presentation & Final Exam (July 31)