

Exploring the Liberal Arts L&S W1

2 Semester Credits

Course Description

Letters and Science W1 is a course for entering students, particularly those who are excited to be at Cal but uncertain of where to start their explorations. It provides an introduction to the intellectual landscape of the College of Letters and Science, revealing the underlying assumptions, goals and structure of a liberal arts education. Guest speakers, drawn largely from the faculty and recent graduates of L&S, will shed light on the nature and attractions of their disciplines. Topics will be both theoretical and practical: for example, you'll learn why the L&S breadth requirement exists and also get a good sense of which disciplines would be most engaging for you to pursue while satisfying breadth. The ultimate goal of the course is to transform students into informed participants in their own educational experiences at Berkeley.

This is a special online summer version of the course, which means it will be very fast paced. Your work will be completed in the context of this course website.

Prerequisites

None.

Course Materials and Technical Requirements

Required Materials

- This course is self-contained. Required readings and videos are made accessible in the course.

Recommended Materials

- Headset and microphone to participate in Online Office Hours (aka "Social Hours")

Technical Requirements

This course is built on a learning management system (LMS) called Canvas and you will need to [meet these computer specifications to participate within this online platform.](#)

Optional

Canvas allows you to record audio or video files of yourself and upload them in the course. Although doing so is not required for any of the activities, using these features will enhance your engagement in the course. If you would like to use these features, you will need to have a webcam and a microphone installed on your computer.

Learning Activities

VERY IMPORTANT

You won't be able to access your course material until you take the Academic Integrity Pledge. Click the following button to first read the Academic Integrity Premise.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PREMISE

You are expected to fully participate in all the course activities described here.

1. Read the assigned articles.
2. Participate in the discussion forums.
3. Watch and listen to all of the assigned video lecture presentations.
4. Complete the "Answer the Question" post-lecture quizzes.
5. Complete all writing assignments.
6. Read web-based announcements and postings assigned during the course.

Modules

Each week is a module, which is a grouping of topics related to one area of study, typically with readings, video lectures and various kinds of assignments. Your assignments reflect the learning activities to perform each week. For an at-a-glance view of due dates and projects, refer to the course [Calendar](#). For more information refer to the Canvas help guide, [How do I use the calendar?](#)

Course Requirements

Watch approximately six short lectures per week: These are mostly given by Berkeley faculty members, but you will also encounter deans, alumni, and some staff members who organize academic enrichment activities in these online lectures.

Complete the lecture "Answer the Question" quizzes: Some lectures have short answer quizzes following the videos (or appearing between the two halves of a longer lecture).

You must complete all of the lecture "Answer the Question" quizzes for the videos you watch.

Read one to two essays or articles per week: All but one of the readings are authored by Berkeley faculty members. This expands the number and range of Berkeley faculty whom you will encounter in the class.

Online discussions of the lectures and readings: Each week we will be focusing on one disciplinary or interdisciplinary area of the college, and the lectures and readings will all relate to that area. We will have online discussion boards where you will be expected to participate weekly. Your instructor and GSI will be present online to help guide the discussion.

A large portion of our classroom activity will take place in discussion threads. Quality *and* quantity participation count in the online learning activities. Quantity includes the number of activities that you complete for the week and the length of your posts, as well as the number of replies you make to other student posts. Quality includes, among other things:

- Thoughtful, insightful responses to the lectures and readings. A summary, for instance, would not count, whereas an analytical comment or thought-provoking question that assists in reshaping or furthering the asynchronous conversation would count.
- Insightful, constructive and respectful critiques of others' contributions
- Integrative comments across activities and/or courses

You will find discussion topics and further clarifications of expectations within each week's module.

Essay Assignments: There will be one short (2- to 3-page) and two slightly longer (4-page) essay assignments. See below for details. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be typed and double-spaced, using 12- point font, and 1- inch margins, and submitted through bCourses by the stated due date.

Late assignments will be docked two points for each day they are late.

Participation: You will earn participation points for completing a few shorter assignments (often just a sentence or a paragraph long).

Reminder: Your Course End Date

Your course will end on Sunday, August 13, at 11:59 p.m. (PT). As you work through the course, please keep the end date in mind, and if you want to save any commentary or assignments for future reference, please make sure to print or copy/paste those materials before your access ends.

Communication and Office Hours (aka Social Hours)

Course Instructor

[Alix Schwartz](#)

Course GSIs

Chris Adalio

Social Hour

The course instructor and GSIs (graduate student instructors) will offer virtual social hours, when students can communicate in real time (synchronously) using Zoom conferencing services. While these online meetings are optional they can be valuable for discussion, answering questions, and coming to know one another on another level. Social Hours are optional; no points are awarded for participation.

Each session will be for one hour. However, if no one shows up in the first 15 minutes, then that office hour will be cancelled.

Please see the [Social Hour](#) section for the schedule of days and times.

Course Mail

Make sure to check the Course Mail for messages from the instructor. You can access course email within the Learning Management System by selecting the Inbox icon in the left global navigation toolbar.

See the Canvas Help Guides for information on how to [set your personal notification preferences](#). You can [add additional contact methods](#) to your account so your course messages are forwarded to your personal email or cell phone.

General Question & Answer Forums

There are two forums set up: a general question forum and an assignment forum.

Please use the general question forum to post questions about the course material, the learning management system or online homework.

Please post any assignment specific questions to the assignment forum.

The instructor and GSIs will monitor these forums, but you should also feel free to post answers to help other students. This helps to create a general FAQ so that all students in the course may benefit from the exchange.

Grading

Grading

The course is graded on a Pass/No Pass basis only. In order to pass the course you will be expected to watch the lectures regularly, keep up on the reading, participate actively in the discussion forums for both the lectures and the readings, and complete written assignments and exercises. Note that it is impossible to pass this class unless you complete and submit all three required essays.

Discussion forum participation:

- Discussions of lectures: up to 4 points each week
- Discussions of readings: up to 6 points for each reading
- Peer responses in lecture forums: up to 2 points each
- Peer responses in reading forums: up to 2 points each

Essays:

- Berkeley Blog draft (and your peer responses to others' drafts): up to 20 points
- Berkeley Blog Assignment: up to 35 points
- Value of a Liberal Arts Education research/reflection paper: up to 45 points
- Self-reflection essay: up to 45 points

Answer the Question Quizzes (following video segments):

- There are 45 quizzes, worth up to 2 points each, but you are not required to view all videos, so the minimum number of quizzes required is 34: up to 68 points.

Miscellaneous:

- Includes smaller assignments such as the links and summary due in week 5: up to 8 points
- Academic Integrity Pledge quiz: 1 point

There are 410 points possible. Students must earn at least 287 points, and complete all three essays, to pass the course.

Late assignments will be docked two points for each day they are late.

It is important to note that not all components are graded online and included in the online course grade book. Because of this, the online course grade book will not convey your exact number of earned points at any given time, or your final grade. It should simply be used to assess your performance on the components that are included within it. Your final letter grade will be mailed to you by the registrar's office.

Course Policies

Promptness

Homework assignments and discussion forum postings all have specific final due dates and times. You will not receive full credit if assignments are submitted after the indicated due date.

Further, each online activity must be submitted through the course website by the due date. Fax or mail submission will not be accepted. Students who wait until the final hours prior to a submission deadline risk having problems with their ISP, hardware, software, or various other site access difficulties. Therefore, it is advisable to submit assignments and tests through the course website early. The multiple days allowed for submission are to accommodate busy schedules, not to accommodate procrastination. Students should plan accordingly and get into the habit of checking the course website several times each week, and submitting and posting early.

Honor Code

The student community at UC Berkeley has adopted the following Honor Code: "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." The expectation is that you will adhere to this code.

Plagiarism

To copy text or ideas from another source without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, explore the resources linked below:

[UC Berkeley Library Citation Page, Plagiarism Section](#)

[GSI Guide for Preventing Plagiarism](#)

Incomplete Course Grade

Students who have substantially completed the course but for serious extenuating circumstances are unable to complete the final essay may request an Incomplete grade. This request must be submitted in writing or by email to the GSI and course instructor. You must provide verifiable documentation for the seriousness of the extenuating circumstances. According to the policy of the college, Incomplete grades must be made up within the first three weeks of the next semester.

Students with Disabilities

Any students requiring course accommodations due to a physical, emotional, or learning disability must contact the [Disabled Students' Program \(DSP\)](#). They will review all requests on an individual basis.

Request your Disabled Student Program Specialist to send the instructor a formal request *before the official course start date* by email

In addition, notify the instructor and your Online Learning Support Specialist, which accommodations you would like to use.

Your Online Learning Support Specialist can be contacted at summer_online_support@berkeley.edu

Academic Integrity, Research, and Proper Citation

As an online student, you are encouraged to reach out to your fellow students in the online classroom to discuss materials and ask each other questions, but there are limits to this collaboration. Reviewing lecture and reading materials and studying for exams can be enjoyable and enriching things to do with fellow students. This is recommended. However, unless otherwise instructed, homework assignments are to be completed independently, and materials submitted as homework should be the result of your own independent work.

As a UC Berkeley student you are bound by the [Academic Integrity, Research and Proper Citation policies](#) outlined in the [UC Berkeley Extension Code of Student Conduct Policy Statement](#) dated July 11, 2011 that clearly defines what constitutes cheating, as well as plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct.

You must review all sections of the Academic Integrity Pledge and Course Policies Module within your Canvas course and complete the following item prior to gaining access to course content: Take the Pledge to Academic Integrity.

Course Evaluation and Course End Date

Course Evaluation

UC Berkeley Extension is committed to improving its online courses and instruction. Please take a few minutes to participate in the Course Evaluation. UC Berkeley Extension instructors and administrators are interested in your online learning experience, and your candid feedback will help to plan for the future and make improvements. Please complete the evaluation before your course End Date. The evaluation does not request any personal information, and your responses will remain strictly confidential.

Course End Date

Your access to the online classroom will expire at 11:59pm on Sunday August 13th, which is indicated in the initial e-mail you received when you enrolled.

Canvas Tech Support and UC Berkeley Extension Student Services

Canvas Tech Support

The learning management system (LMS) used in this course is Canvas, which has convenient mobile apps for phones and tablets. Part of the orientation materials in your course will help you make sure that your computer is at par with Canvas specifications. Any time you are in Canvas you can report problems, get support, and search Canvas user guides from the Help link on the top menu bar. Other options:

- Canvas Support 24/7 Hotline: 855-308-2758
- Email: support@instructure.com

UC Berkeley Extension FAQs and Student Services

Start at the [Student Services webpage](#) to find help with issues such as the following:

- Course registration
- Refunds, withdrawals, and transfers
- Requests for transcripts or official receipts

If you need further help, [UC Berkeley Extension's Online Learning page](#) includes a contact section that lists Program Coordinators' email and phone numbers for each academic department.

Course Outline

You'll find complete instructions for your assignments within the course modules.

WEEK ONE (Monday June 19th - Sunday June 25th): LIBERAL ARTS OVERVIEW; ARTS AND HUMANITIES, PART I

Pre-writing

What is the value of a liberal arts education? (1 paragraph, submit online)

Watch/discuss:

- Course overview by Alix Schwartz

- Liberal Arts lecture by Carol Christ
- Arts and Humanities Dean interview
- Arts and Humanities Alumni Panel: Taleen Alexander (English), Masis Parunyan (Music), Pierce Vollucci (Rhetoric), and Sam Bleiberg (Comparative Literature)

Read/discuss:

- Robert Hass, "Images," from *Twentieth Century Pleasures: Prose on Poetry*

Get Ready!:

- Make it a habit to read at least two [Berkeley Blog](#) entries per week: you will need to write an essay in response to one of them in Week Four.

WEEK TWO (Monday June 26th - Sunday July 2nd): ARTS AND HUMANITIES, PART II

Watch/discuss:

Choose six of the seven lectures by the following professors:

- Gail de Kosnik (TDPS)
- Ken Ueno (Music)
- John Campbell (Philosophy)
- Anneke Lenssen (History of Art)
- Harsha Ram (Slavic Languages and Literatures)
- Kathleen Donegan (English)
- Professor Eglantine Colon (French Studies)

Read/discuss:

- Ken Ueno, "Finding the Score Within," *Opinionator, New York Times*, June 22, 2011;
- Daniel Boyarin, "Genealogy of a Book," *The Townsend Center Newsletter*, April/May 2008

Get Ready!

- Keep reading the Berkeley Blog, and read the essay prompt for essay #1, due in two weeks.

WEEK THREE (Monday July 3rd - Sunday July 9th): MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCE

Watch/discuss:

Watch the interview with the Mathematical and Physical Science dean, and then choose four of the five lectures by Professors in her division:

- Mariska Kriek (Astronomy)
- Richard Allen (Earth and Planetary Science)
- Ken Ribet (Math)
- Elizabeth Purdum (Statistics)
- Dan Garcia (Computer Science)

Also watch three of the four Physical Science Alumni videos:

- Arturo Fernandez (Statistics)
- Alen Gong (Statistics)
- Mike McGowan (Math)
- Pierce Vollucci (Computer Science)

Read/discuss:

- Walter Alvarez, Prelude and Chapter 1 from *The Mountains of St Francis*;
- Edward Frenkel, “Apprentice Mathematician,” from *Love and Math*

Get Ready!:

- Turn in a good draft of your Berkeley Blog essay for two peers to read and respond to, and respond to two peers’ drafts.

WEEK FOUR (Monday July 10th - Sunday July 16th): SOCIAL SCIENCES, PART I**Watch/discuss:**

interview with the Social Sciences dean, plus an Alumni panel:

- Jesekeh Odom (Sociology)
- Andrew Saito (Ethnic Studies)
- Adam Francis (Political Science)
- Glory Liu (Political Economy)
- Andrew Reddie (Peace and Conflict Studies)

Read/discuss:

- Kristin Luker, “Sex and Politics in American Life” and all three Appendices from *When Sex Goes to School*

Get Ready!

- Complete sections 1-7 of the UC Library Research Tutorial
- Read Week 6 Assignment Instructions Assignment 6

Assignment due:

- Berkeley Blog essay

WEEK FIVE (Monday July 17th - Sunday July 23rd): SOCIAL SCIENCES, PART II

Watch/discuss:

Choose at least six of the nine lectures by Social Sciences professors:

- Stefano DellaVigna (Econ)
- Jake Kosek (Geography)
- David Henkin (History)
- Serena Chen (Psychology)
- Sandra Smith (Sociology)
- Line Mikkelsen (Linguistics)
- Professor Max Auffhammer (Political Economy)
- Tom Griffiths (Cognitive Science)
- Professor Stephen Small (African American Studies)

Read/discuss:

- Rodolfo Mendoza-Denton, "Framed!," *Greater Good*, Summer 2008;
- Dacher Keltner and Jason Marsh, "We Are All Bystanders," *Greater Good*, Fall/Winter 2006-07

Get Ready!:

- Find and provide links to at least three academic journal articles that interest you, on the topic of the value of a liberal arts education.

Assignment due:

- Submit a short bibliography listing all three articles you selected, plus a one-paragraph summary of one of the three academic journal articles you identified, and one paragraph on why it interests you.

WEEK SIX (Monday July 24th - Sunday July 30th): BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Watch/discuss:

Interview with the Biological Sciences Dean and lectures by at least three of the four Biological Sciences professors:

- Diana Bautista (MCB)
- Eileen Lacey (IB)
- David Weisblat (MCB—Cell and Developmental Biology)
- David Presti (MCB--Neurobiology)

Also watch the two alumni videos: Ernie Fok (MCB) and Rachael Shen (IB)

Read/discuss:

- Anthony Barnosky, Chapter 1 from *Heatstroke: Nature in an Age of Global Warming*;
- Marian Diamond, Chapter 1 from *Magic Trees of the Mind*

Assignment due:

- Value of a Liberal Arts research/reflection paper

Get Ready:

1. Read the prompt for essay #3.
2. The following steps will ensure you are prepared for the online demo next week, which will in turn prepare you for essay #3, due in the final week.
 1. Please visit this link to setup your Eureka username and password
 2. Complete Personal Information (email address is required in case you forget your password)
 3. Under "Registered Counselors/Teachers:", highlight "Jung, Paula"
 4. Click Next to create your username and password

WEEK SEVEN (Monday July 31st- Sunday August 6th): INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Watch/discuss:

Interview with the Undergraduate Studies Dean and lectures by Professors:

- Don McQuade (American Studies)

- Peter Sahlins (Interdisciplinary Studies Field Major)
- Edward Timke (Media Studies)
- Alumni Panel: Angie Chau (ISF), Eli Wirtschafter (American Studies), and Chandler Le Francis (Media Studies).

Read/discuss:

- Jean Retzinger, "Spectacles of Labor: Viewing Food Production Through a Television Screen," from [Environmental Communication](#), December 2010
- Michael Cohen, "Jim Crow's Drug War," from *Southern Culture*, Fall 2006

Get Ready!:

- Watch the online demo of Eureka prepared especially for our class, then explore Eureka or other self-assessment tools available through our bCourses site.

WEEK EIGHT (Monday August 7th- Sunday August 13th): ENRICHMENT PANEL AND WRAP-UP

Watch/discuss:

The nine enrichment program presentations:

- The Art of Writing, Berkeley Connect, Big Ideas Courses, Cal Teach, Course Threads, Public Service Center, Study Abroad, UCDC, and Undergraduate Research,

Read/Discuss:

- "My Shot," from the musical *Hamilton*

Assignment due:

- Self-reflection essay

End of Course Evaluation

Before your course end date, please take a few minutes to participate in our Course Evaluation to share your opinions about this course.

You will be receiving the Course Evaluation via email. The evaluation does not request any personal information, and your responses will remain strictly confidential.

You may only take the evaluation once. It will open on July 27th and close on August 11th at midnight.

