Letters and Science W1: Exploring the Liberal Arts, L&S W1

2 semester credits.

Purpose of the Course

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.

Instructor Information, Contact, Social Hour, & Communication

Course Instructor

Alix Schwartz

Course GSIs

- Mary Crabb
- Elena Kempf
- Chiara Ricciardone

Social Hour
The course instructor and GSIs (graduate student instructors) will offer virtual social hours, when students can communicate in real time (synchronously) using Adobe Connect. 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.

The 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 Course Question & Answer Forum
Please use this forum to post questions about the course material, assignments, the learning management system or online homework. **The instructor and GSIs will monitor this forum**, 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.

Course Materials and Technical Requirements and Support

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

Recommended Materials
- Headset and microphone to participate in Online Office Hours

Technical Requirements
This course is built on a Learning Management system (LMS) called Canvas and you will need to meet the [basic 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.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulties please alert the instructor immediately. Your instructor may not be able to help resolve your issue. It is your responsibility to call or email tech support as soon as possible. Be sure to document (save emails and transaction numbers) for all interactions with tech support. **Extensions and late submissions will not be accepted due to "technical difficulties".**

For technical support, select the "Help" icon link in the bottom left of the global navigation menu.

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.
- Read the assigned articles.
- Participate in the discussion forums.
- Watch and listen to all of the lecture presentations.
- Complete the "Answer the Question" post-lecture quizzes.
- Submit questions to the professors through the weekly question form.
- Complete all writing assignments.
- Read web-based announcements and postings assign during the course.

Modules
Each week is a module, which is a grouping of topics related to one area of study, typically with readings, 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.

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 via the dropbox 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 14, 2016 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.

Grading

The course is graded on a Pass/Fail 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.

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 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

Miscellaneous:

- Includes "Answer the Question" quizzes after video segments, and smaller assignments such as the links and summary due in week 5: up to 32 points
- Academic Integrity Pledge quiz: 1 point

There are 358 points possible. Students must earn at least 245 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 the 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 exam, 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 is Tracie Allen and her email is twgallen@berkeley.edu

Week by Week Course Syllabus

WEEK ONE (Monday June 20th - Sunday June 26th): 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), Glory Liu (Classics), Masis Parunyan (Music), and Pierce Vollucci (Rhetoric)

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 27th - Sunday July 3rd): ARTS AND HUMANITIES, PART II

Watch/discuss: lectures by Professors Catherine Cole, Gail de Kosnik (TDPS), Ken Ueno (Music), John Campbell (Philosophy), Anneke Lenssen (History of Art), Harsha Ram (Slavic Languages and Literatures) and Kathleen Donegan (English)

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 4th - Sunday July 10th): PHYSICAL SCIENCE

Watch/discuss: interview with Physical Science dean and lectures by Professors Mariska Kriek(Astronomy), Richard Allen (Earth and Planetary Science), Ken Ribet (Math) and Dan Garcia (Computer Science), plus a Physical Science Alumni Panel: Arturo Fernandez (Statistics), Alen Gong (Statistics), Mike McGowan (Math), and 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!:

1. Keep reading the Berkeley Blog.
2. Complete sections 1, 2, and 3 of the UC Library Research Tutorial. This will help prepare you for essay #2.

3. Read the prompt for essay #2, due at the end of week 6.

WEEK FOUR (Monday July 11th - Sunday July 17th): SOCIAL SCIENCES, PART I

Watch/discuss: interview with Social Science dean, plus an Alumni panel: Jesekah Odom (Sociology), Andrew Saito (Ethnic Studies), Adam Francis (Political Science), and Jacqueline Hoffman (Gender and Women's 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 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the UC Library Research Tutorial

Assignment due: Berkeley Blog essay

WEEK FIVE (Monday July 18th - Sunday July 24th): SOCIAL SCIENCES, PART II

Watch/discuss: Lectures by Professors Stefano DellaVigna (Econ), Jake Kosek (Geography), David Henkin (History), Serena Chen (Psychology), Sandra Smith (Sociology), Na'ilah Suad Nasir (African American Studies), and Line Mikkelson (Linguistics)

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 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 25th - Sunday July 31st): BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE

Watch/discuss: Interview with the Biological Science Dean and lectures by Professors Diana Bautista (MCB, Eileen Lacey (IB),David Weisblat (MCB—Cell and Developmental Biology) and David Presti (MCB--Neurobiology), and an Alumni Panel: Ernie Fok (MCB), Sean Jenvey (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.
    a. Please visit this link to setup your Eureka username and password
    b. Complete Personal Information (email address is required in case you forget your password)
    c. Under "Registered Counselors/Teachers:", highlight "Jung, Paula"
    d. Click Next to create your username and password

WEEK SEVEN (Monday August 1st- Sunday August 7th): INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Watch/discuss: Interview with the Undergraduate Studies Dean and lectures by Professors Max Auffhammer (Political Economy), Tom Griffiths (Cognitive Science), Don McQuade (American Studies), and Peter Sahlins (Interdisciplinary Studies Field Major), plus an Alumni Panel: Angie Chau (ISF), Glory Liu (PE) and Andrew Reddie (PACS)

Read/discuss: John Searle, chapter 2, "Can Computers Think?" from *Minds, Brains and Science*; 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 8th- Sunday August 14th): ENRICHMENT PANEL AND WRAP-UP

Watch/discuss: the eight enrichment program presentations (Berkeley Connect, Big Ideas Courses, Cal Teach, Course Threads, Public Service Center, Study Abroad, UCDC, and Undergraduate Research)

Read/Discuss: excerpt from Introduction, Higher Ground from Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption; Bryan Stevenson

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 close August 14, 2016.