

YOU CAN'T READ THAT! BANNED TEXTS THROUGH THE AGES

Buena Vista University, Winter 2012
Instructor: Christy Horpedahl
Credits: 3 MTWRF 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
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This syllabus represents the constitutional contract between student and instructor. Please read it carefully and sign the last page to indicate understanding and agreement. Minor changes may be made at the instructor's discretion.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Throughout history powerful individuals have tried to suppress threatening ideas. Religious leaders, kings, politicians and social crusaders have banned works for personal gain, to promote ideals, to prevent rebellion and for a variety of other reasons. In this text-based course students will read and discuss controversial writings from an interdisciplinary perspective. Banned texts will span religious, scientific, political and social works. Students will read a variety of excerpted and complete works and will take turns defending and "condemning" writings.

READINGS

Students must have copies of "120 Banned Books: Censorship Histories of World Literature" by Karolides, Bald, & Sova for general reference, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* and George Orwell's *1984*. Additional online and excerpted readings are listed in the Course Outline below. Students may have to purchase up to 2 additional books depending upon their choice of readings.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is expected, and a portion of your grade will be determined by class attendance and participation. If you must miss class, you are strongly encouraged to tell the instructor in advance and meet with the instructor to go over what you missed.

GRADES

Writing Assignments (20%): There will be frequent in class writing assignments. Topics will be announced as we work our way through the material.

Reaction Papers (25%): You will write a reaction paper to each reading. Papers should be between 750-1,000 words. They are due before class begins in the appropriate ANGEL dropbox or emailed to the instructor. Late papers will be penalized.

Two In-Class Projects (10% each): There will be two in-class projects: a presentation of a children or young adult fiction banned book; participation in a mock trial or debate.

Final Project (20%): You will choose a banned work not included in the course for an independent project. Final projects may be on books but may also be on other kinds of censored media: music, art, film, websites, video games, etc. The third week you must meet with the instructor to discuss your idea and turn in a thorough outline. At the end of the course you will turn in a paper on the topic (2,500 – 3,000 words) and present your project to the class.

In-Class Discussion (15%): The instructor will assign you a grade based on the quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussions.

Daily Attendance: Each unexcused class period that you miss will result in a 10% reduction of your grade. For excused absences, you must schedule an individual meeting with the instructor to go over the material. Excused absences are University functions and major, unforeseen emergencies. If you are ill, you must present a note from the school nurse.

The grading scale is:

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| ≥ 90% | A |
| ≥ 80% | B |
| ≥ 70% | C |
| ≥ 60% | D (lowest passing grade for P/F) |
| < 60% | F |

NOTICES

Academic Honesty: As stated in the Academic Catalog, “Buena Vista University believes that personal integrity and academic honesty are fundamental to scholarship. ... Any attempt to cheat, misrepresent someone else’s work as one’s own, receive credit for work one did not do, obtain an unfair advantage over other students, or aid another student to do the above will be considered a breach of academic integrity.” This statement is taken seriously in this class. You are encouraged to read the academic honesty policy in the Academic Handbook (page 20-22, <http://www.bvu.edu/academics/catalog/>), though most of this is common sense to a responsible adult such as yourself. Violations result in a failing grade for the course. Plagiarism is more obvious and easier to detect than you think.

Disability Accommodations: BVU complies with Section 504 granting accommodations for students with disabilities who have appropriate documentation. If you have a disability, contact the Director of the Center for Academic Excellence for assistance or to fill out paperwork requesting accommodations. Also please see me in private within the first week of class.

Laptop and iPad Policy: Laptops and iPads are only permitted in class for course-related purposes. For example, to refer to a text during the course of a discussion or to take notes. If you are caught using your laptop or iPad inappropriately, your laptop privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the class.

Course Outline

Week 1

Class 1: Introduction

Class 2: John Milton's *Areopagitica*

Class 3: Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago 1918-1956 (Part I, Chapter 2)*;
Arthur Butz's *The Hoax of the 20th Century (Chapter 1)*

Week 2

Class 4: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engel's *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

Class 5: First 3 New York Times articles by Neil Sheehan on the Vietnam Archives; *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967 "The Pentagon Papers" (Memorandum & Index; Volume 2, Chapter 2: The Strategic Hamlet)*; Bradley Manning's Wikileaks release video "*Collateral Murder*"; any other release on the Wikileaks site.

Class 6: Children & Young Adult Fiction Bans

Class 7: Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin (Chapter 1)*/ Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Chapter 8)*

Class 8: George Orwell's *1984*

Week 3

Class 9: Galileo Galilei's *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems ("To the discerning reader" & "First Day")*; & Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species ("Introduction" & "Recapitulation and Conclusion")*

Class 10: The Bible, The Koran, The Talmud

Class 11: Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses (Part I: The Angel Gibreel)* & Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja (Shame) (Preface, Chronology of Events, Day 1- Day 3)*

Class 12: Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*

Week 4

Class 13: Autobiographies: *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl (Sunday, 14 June, 1942 - Friday, 7 January, 1944)*, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (entirety)*, John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me (entirety)*, Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf (Chapter 5: The World War - Chapter 11: Nation and Race)*

Class 14: Final projects

Class 15: Final projects

Instructor

Student