

UGS 303--Originality in the Arts and Sciences (64225 through 64250)

- *UGS 303—Signature course Requirement*
- *Dean's Scholars Honors Research Degree Requirement*
- *Freshman Research Initiative Course Requirement*

Overview: Students are introduced to the traditions established in the arts and sciences for generating new knowledge from original ideas. Modeling after the way that faculty conduct research, students are required to create original research reports or papers that utilize skills introduced in lecture and developed using the resources of the university including libraries, museums and research collections, research laboratories and computer facilities. Faculty, graduate students and undergraduate mentors will form intellectual communities in which students develop confidence in creating original ideas that will be subject to inquiry.

Instruction Team:

Faculty

David Laude (Lead Instructor) Chemistry and Biochemistry dalaude@mail.utexas.edu
Office: W.C. Hogg 2.222. Office hours by appointment. Please call 471-6176 or e-mail.

Elizabeth Scala (Lead Instructor) Department of English scala@mail.utexas.edu
Office: Calhoun 213.
Office hours Tu 8.30-9.30 and W 1-3 and by appointment Please call 471-8375 or email.

Teaching Assistants

Catherine Bacon (keeper of libraries) English cbacon@mail.utexas.edu
Emma McInturff (keeper of labs) Chemistry elmcinturff@gmail.com

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants (UGTAs) and Cohort Leaders

| | Majors (including double majors) | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Name | Major | Email |
| Allen, Genevieve | Biology | genevieve_allen@ymail.com |
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Where is everything I don't know? Course Website: <http://laude.cm.utexas.edu/courses/>

Course Components

Meeting Times

- Lectures: Monday and Wednesday from 10 to 11 in GRG 102
- Administrative Meetings: This course is complicated so sometimes the class will meet on Fridays from 10 to 11 in GRG 102 to find its bearings.
- Lab Times: Tuesday 3:30 to 9 pm and Thursday 6 to 9 pm in PAI 4.14

Lectures: Professors Laude and Scala will usually lecture once each, per week. Lecture topics are included in the course outline. In addition to the discipline-specific lectures, regularly scheduled informal conversations between the faculty and students will address more general ideas of interest to academicians.

Signature Course Requirements. Signature courses have certain core requirements. Fortunately, the course itself maps onto these requirements effortlessly—you will interact with faculty a great deal, write a great deal, speak a great deal, frequent the libraries and jewels of the university a great deal, and participate in the intellectual life of the university including attending the University Lecture Series. Details of these activities are found in the inquiries and skill modules required for satisfactory completion of the course.

Laboratory: This OAS class has the use of PAI 4.14 between 3:30 and 9 on Tuesday and again on Thursday evening from 6 to 9 pm. The laboratory is a good place for incubating science inquiry ideas and post-inquiry reflections. You will also perform at least one inquiry using the equipment in the lab. One of your TAs, Emma McInturff, will supervise the UGTAs who will help her manage the lab, teach you basic skills, and make sure you are safety-trained and know how to check out and use the equipment.

Museums and Libraries: This OAS class will make substantial use of the University's rich collection of libraries and museums. These locations are a great place for incubating humanities inquiry ideas and post-inquiry reflections. You will perform at least one inquiry using these facilities. To help you prepare, one of your TAs, Catherine Bacon, will supervise the UGTAs who will help in teaching you how to navigate the libraries and museums.

Cohorts and UGTAs: Each student will be assigned to a cohort of about 6 or 7 students with a lead UGTA. The cohorts will attempt to gather students with similar majors, career interests or intellectual thrusts. You are required to meet once a week for an hour with your cohort. It is within the cohort that much of the guidance will be provided in developing inquiry ideas and executing skill modules. Your cohort UGTA will be responsible for managing your work product and seeing that it gets where it needs to go for grading.

Assignments: There are no exams. Instead you will be asked to turn in 16 assignments.

- Three inquiries each of which is worth 15% of your course grade
- Twelve skill modules each of which is worth 2.5% of your course grade
- One group project that is worth 25% of your course grade

Inquiries: The primary mode of assessment will be the work product of self-directed inquiries spawned from original ideas. Each student must complete three original inquiries to fulfill about one points assigned for the course grade. In reality, your three inquiries will define what kind of grade you get for the course since the skill modules and group work are less likely to allow you to individually demonstrate what you are capable of achieving as an independent, creative thinker. In other words, this is where you should put 90% of your effort for the course.

Skills Modules: Over the course of the semester you will be asked to develop an array of skills that you will find to be useful in your quest to become an independent, creative thinker at UT Austin. The resources of this university are vast, and believe it or not, extend well outside the classroom. You may decide to learn how to

navigate the HRC or calibrate a photometer or use Excel to do a statistical analysis or simply talk with a professor about an idea you have. Think of it sort of like earning your merit badges. You will need to earn 12 badges and there will be scores of possibilities from which to choose. To some extent you will decide which ones are right for you (except that we will certainly make you do some that you would prefer to avoid.) These skill modules will constitute about one-fourth of your grade and are graded pretty much on a did-you-do-it-or-not basis. Do one a week and it won't seem so bad.

Group Project: Throughout the semester your cohort will work together to create either a science or humanities research proposal. The project, which has the weight of a final exam, will require that you engage yourself with every aspect of grantsmanship, from coming up with a good idea, to creating context and justification, to developing a timeline, project scope and budget, to drafting a fully developed proposal in a discipline-appropriate style. Through this assignment you will experience the various stages of the proposal process: reference work, vetting by experts, to oral presentation, criticism and rebuttal.

Assignment Grading: This is an honors course—you are expected to do your work well. Should you turn in work the instructors consider to be inferior, it will be returned with suggestions on how to improve. In other words, the two grades you can receive on an assignment are pass or keep (start) trying. Your UGTAs will grade the skill modules. Your professors will grade the inquiries.

Portfolio: A portfolio in which you have neatly organized your 16 assignments must be submitted to Dr. Laude's office by Tuesday, December 14 at 5 pm. Your final course grade will be determined after an evaluation of the portfolio materials. You can pick up your portfolio on the first day of class in the spring semester.

Course Grade: To pass the course you must receive a grade of "pass" for all 16 of your assignment. Don't turn in an assignment, you get an F. Now it is no secret that in honors courses most students earn As, and that is no exception here, but none of your instructors will put up with inferior work, and if we keep returning inquiries with comments that suggest you need to do better, you will not be earning the grade you want.

Late Work: Philosophically Dr. Laude is opposed to assigning due dates in courses based on inquiry. The problem is that if left to your own devices, about half of you will crash and burn, which is no way to start college. The only obvious solution is to establish expected due dates and to hound you (mercifully) till you get the work done. This year we will be relying on the UGTAs to let us know if you are making a legitimate effort to get your work in on time, and if you need additional time because of conflicting coursework, or a non-academic issue, or your inquiry idea didn't pan out, or you are doing something so extraordinary that you need more time, we will grant an extension. However if you have no valid reason for the delay, you will not be granted an extension and will be penalized for late work.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class and cohort meetings unless permission is received to be absent. Period. Repeat offenders will find that their course grade suffers. Show up, or e-mail your regrets, it is that simple.

Chaos: 2 professors, 2 TAs, 16 UGTAs, 100 honors students, 1600 assignments with little guidance and enormous expectation.

OAS COURSE OUTLINE (08/25/2010)

| Lec. # | Day | Date | Topic | Presenter | Assignments |
|--------|-----|-------|--|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| | W | 8/25 | Administrative day--Syllabus, Course Overview, Inquiry 1 | Laude | Inquiry 1 assigned |
| | F | 8/27 | Administrative day - Cohorts Created | | |
| 1 | M | 8/30 | Scientific Method | Laude | |
| 2 | W | 9/1 | What are the Humanities? | Scala | Inquiry 1 idea approved |
| 3 | W | 9/8 | Academic Epiphanies | Scala/Laude | |
| | F | 9/10 | Administrative Day – Inquiry 2 | Scala/Laude | Inquiry 2 assigned |
| 4 | M | 9/13 | Statistics and Uncertainty | Laude | Inquiry 1 due |
| 5 | W | 9/15 | Keywords—learning through and about words | Scala | |
| | M | 9/20 | Comments on Inquiry 1 | Scala/Laude | Inquiry 2 idea approved |
| 6 | W | 9/22 | The Secret Lives of Academicians | Scala/Laude | |
| | F | 9/24 | Administrative Day- FRI explained | Simmons | |
| 7 | M | 9/27 | Experimental Design | Laude | |
| 8 | W | 9/29 | History—why and how context matters | Scala | |
| 9 | M | 10/4 | Optimization | Laude | |
| 10 | W | 10/6 | Dialogue—learning by talking and listening | Scala | Inquiry IV assigned (group proposal) |
| | F | 10/8 | Administrative Day—Inquiries 3 and 4 | | Inquiries 3 and 4 assigned |
| 11 | M | 10/11 | The ins and out of scientific proposals | Laude | Inquiry 2 due |
| 12 | W | 10/13 | The ins and out of humanities proposals | Scala | |
| 13 | M | 10/18 | Modeling Language | Scala | Inquiry 3 idea approved |
| 14 | W | 10/20 | Modeling the Natural World | Laude | |
| 15 | M | 10/25 | All Lies—The Truth About Pretty Data | Laude | |
| 16 | W | 10/27 | Stories—learning through and about narrative | Scala | Inquiry IV idea approved |
| 17 | M | 11/1 | From Nature to Computer to You | Laude | |
| 18 | W | 11/3 | Ideas in the Humanities—and how they matter | Scala | |
| 19 | M | 11/8 | Uncertainty revisited | Laude | Inquiry 3 Due |
| 20 | W | 11/10 | So have you gotten better at creativity? | Laude/Scala | |
| 21 | M | 11/15 | Criticism—why professors have a hard time making friends in the real world | Laude/Scala | |
| | W | 11/17 | Administrative Day--Proposals and portfolios explained | Laude/Scala | |
| | F | 11/19 | Proposal Presentations | Cohorts | |
| | M | 11/22 | Proposal Presentations | Cohorts | |
| | W | 11/24 | Proposal Presentations | Cohorts | Inquiry IV Full Proposals Due |
| | M | 11/29 | Proposal Presentations | Cohorts | |
| | W | 12/1 | Proposal Presentations | Cohorts | |
| | F | 12/3 | Proposal Presentations | Cohorts | Proposal Criticisms Due |
| | T | 12/14 | Final Exam Time | | Portfolios Due by 5 pm |

A LITTLE BIT OF DETAIL I MUST TELL YOU IN THE SYLLABUS TO FOLLOW THE RULES

A CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE FALL 2010 LIFE OF A UT AUSTIN STUDENT

| date | significance |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday, August 25 | Classes begin. Any questions regarding your registration should be brought to my attention ASAP. |
| Monday, August 30 | Last day of Official Add/Drop and Late Registration period. Last day to add electronically. |
| Friday, September 10 | Twelfth Class Day. Official enrollment count is taken. Last day to drop a course for possible refund. |
| Wednesday, September 29 | Last day to drop a course without possible academic penalty. (Q drop deadline). |
| Wednesday, October 20 | Last day an undergraduate may, with Dean's permission, withdraw from the university or drop a course for academic reasons. Last day to change registration in a course between a letter grade and P/F. |
| Friday, December 3 | Last day of classes. |
| Monday, Tuesday, December 6,7 | No class days. |
| Tuesday, December 14 at 5 pm | Final day to turn in portfolio material for this class. |

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office of the Student Dean's Office is charged with assisting disabled students. They estimate that about 2000 students suffer from disabilities including mobility impairments, learning disabilities, visual impairments, hearing impairments, ADD and ADHD, and others. By law, all of these students are guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodation of their disability. As an instructor I am required to provide reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities and I am happy to do so. However it is your responsibility to inform me at the beginning of the semester (by the 12th class day) if you have a disability. I must know this information as soon as possible so that I can make appropriate arrangements.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES AND MAKE-UP EXAMS

It is a University policy that a student may make-up work missed due to observance of a religious holiday. Please notify me by the 12th class day to insure that you can make up missing or late work.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The phrase academic dishonesty is a euphemism for cheating. I really dislike cheating—and so does the University. If you want proof, read the University's Honor Code:

"The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness and respect toward peers and community."

That sounds pretty complicated for what I want in this class, so let me make it simple: don't cheat—in this class, where your work is pretty much a lot of writing, cheating amounts to copying what other people have written (this is called plagiarism.) You know how to avoid plagiarism—JUST DON'T USE THE CUT AND PASTE FUNCTION ON YOUR COMPUTER AND PLAGIARIZING GETS A MILLION TIMES HARDER.

Oh, if you do cheat and get caught, I will make sure you are punished as much as Judicial Services will let me. It is one thing for the intellectually disadvantaged to cheat and quite another for HONORS students to violate the HONOR CODE