

**BHP 150: Honors Seminar: Great Ideas II**

**Spring 2006**

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Hrs: Mon. 3-5, Thurs. 1:10-2:10  
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Hrs: Tues., Thurs. 1:45-3:15  
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TRADITION, DISCOVERY, AND THE EVOLUTION OF GREAT IDEAS

Required Texts:

- 1—Lee A. Jacobus, *A World of Ideas: Essential Readings for College Writers* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.), Bedford/St. Martins
- 2—Sophocles, *Three Theban Plays*, trans. Fagles
- 3—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Harcourt Brace
- 4—Barbara Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible*

Course Objectives:

Building on ideas and themes central to Great Ideas I, to introduce you to some **key literary and expository texts in the Western tradition**, focusing on key developments in modern thought such as the Copernican model of the universe and its implications, beginning in the sixteenth century; Renaissance and Enlightenment humanism (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries); Darwin's explanation of the mechanism of evolution and the idea of survival of the fittest, beginning in the nineteenth century; twentieth century modernism; and the implications of imperialism.

To give you an **historical perspective on how powerful ideas are conceived and developed** and of the social, cultural, and political factors that influence these processes. We will observe, for example, how seminal ideas are used by later writers for their own purposes, and how artists use historical material to prompt audiences to consider important parallels between past and present.

To provide you, through a series of guided and sequenced assignments, with an opportunity to build on the composing skills you practiced in your fall semester freshman writing class. In addition to refining and communicating your ideas in the form of effectively written academic essays using a variety of rhetorical modes, **you will plan, research, and compose a documented paper on an approved topic related to the semester's reading assignments.** Because an important objective of this course is to guide you in completing this project effectively, the process of doing the research assignment will be divided into stages to be checked at each point by the instructors according to the schedule outlined in the syllabus.

To cultivate a **discerning critical perspective** that fosters a climate of thoughtful questioning and encourages consideration of a wide spectrum of ideas. Class discussion and writing assignments will emphasize both close **analysis** of individual readings and **synthesis** of ideas and themes as the course progresses.

Dr. Pamela Brown

Dr. Arlene Wilner

Requirements and Grading Criteria:

1- **Attendance:** Consistent attendance is mandatory, and promptness is expected. No unexcused absence is acceptable, and more than three absences for any reason will be considered grounds for a serious final grade penalty and possibly failure.

2- **Preparation and Participation:** Because this class is a seminar based on reading, writing, and conversation, your attention to daily assignments and participation in class discussion and activities are essential. **Informal written assignments** will be assigned in class to complement class discussion. Your **daily preparation** is critical to your own learning and to the success of the class. There will be occasional **quizzes**.

3- **Formal Writing** In addition to the research assignment mentioned earlier, you will be asked to submit three formal essays, one of which is to be written during the scheduled final exam period. Topics for the final essay will be discussed in class. Late papers will be penalized at the discretion of the instructors. If you anticipate difficulty with handing a paper in on time, see one of the instructors **before** the due date to arrange for an extension. Criteria for grading of formal essays include depth of insight; focus, coherence, and organization; grammatical and mechanical correctness. Additional specifications for the research paper will be handed out.

Final grades will be computed as follows:

Essays 1 and 2, 15% each=30%

Class preparation and participation (including informal writing, involvement in class discussion, and quiz scores)= 20%

The research paper (including timely and satisfactory completion of all stages as assigned)=25%

Final essay=25%

**BHP 150: Spring 2006 Prof. Brown and Wilner**

TUESDAY

THURSDAY

WEEK 1: 1/24 Introduction/ Kingsolver through p. 311 [375]	1/26 Kingsolver through p. 354 [424]
WEEK 2: 1/31 Kingsolver through p. 465 [556] Quiz 1	2/2 Complete Kingsolver Discuss topics for essay #1
WEEK 3: <b>Freedom, Authority, and Historical Process</b> 2/7 Review draft of essay #1: BRING DRAFT TO CLASS	2/9 <u>Ancient Greek Theatre</u> : Sophocles, <i>Oedipus Rex</i> c. 430 B.C.E. Quiz 2
WEEK 4 <b>Paper #1 Due</b> 2/14 Oedipus, cont'd. Intro by Knox	2/16 Intro: <u>The Middle Ages</u> ; Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale" from <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> , c. 1400
WEEK 5: 2/21 "Wife of Bath's Tale," cont'd. plus Fradenburg article (handout). <u>The Renaissance</u> ; Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> , 1600, Act I	2/23 <i>Hamlet</i> , Act II
WEEK 6: 2/28 <i>Hamlet</i> , Acts III and IV	3/4 <i>Hamlet</i> , Act V plus critical article (handout)
WEEK 7: 3/7 1) Cinematic interpretations of Hamlet; 3) Distribute topics for essay #2	3/9 Renaissance, cont'd.: Machiavelli, "The Qualities of the Prince," Jacobus, p. 35. <u>Brainstorm and evaluate questions for research paper based on course syllabus</u> <b>SPRING BREAK</b>
WEEK 8: 3/21 <b>Meet in Library</b> : 1) Introduction to Library resources <b>Paper #2 Due</b> with internal citations and Works Cited page. <u>Research assignment distributed</u>	3/23 Renaissance, cont'd.: The Copernican Revolution Galileo, "Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina," 1615; the Church responds, 1616 (handout);
WEEK 9: 3/28 <b>Research question and working bibliography due</b> <u>Enlightenment tensions</u> : Swift, "A Modest Proposal," 1726 (handout); Bacon, "The Four Idols," Jacobus, p. 541. Exercises from Research Manual as assigned	3/30 <b>Meet in Library</b> to pursue research; <u>bring along materials already gathered plus questions for Library Faculty</u> [First half hour—review of research paper format]
WEEK 10: 4/4 <u>The Darwinian Revolution and ideas of "progress"</u> : "Natural Selection,"* from Jacobus, p. 435. Plus: Nineteenth-century science through a contemporary lens: "Darwin's Middle Road" (handout)	4/6 <u>The Twentieth Century: Modernist Perspectives</u> Arendt, "Total Domination," Jacobus, p. 85
WEEK 11: 4/11 Peer review: Research paper drafts	4/13 Freud, from "The Oedipus Complex"* Jacobus, 469;
WEEK 12: 4/18 <b>Research Papers Due</b> Film: Hitchcock, "Spellbound" (Plan on staying until 5:30)	4/20 Freud, "Femininity" plus response by Margaret Mead (handout); discuss social contexts of Freudian theory in light of mid-20 <sup>th</sup> century uses/critiques
WEEK 13: Bettelheim et al 4/25 Freudian vs. feminist readings of fairy tales (handout)	4/27 Discuss topics for essay #4, due by 1:30 on final exam day.