FYS Journals as Literature, Science, and Personal Reflection
Spring 2016
Professor Burg

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Burg’s Office Hours: Monday and Friday, 12-1
Tuesday, 1-2

Course Description:
In this seminar, students will read excerpts from literary, scientific, artistic, and meditative journals. Selections will include journals like those of Alan Turing, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, George Eliot, Eugene Delacroix, Albert Einstein, Marie Curie, Kurt Cobain, C. S. Lewis, Donald Peattie, Pope Francis, Charles Darwin, Louis Armstrong, Thomas Merton, and Samuel Pepys. Students will do a close reading and analytic discussion of the journal entries they read, and they will write essays that reflect upon the ideas they encounter. They will also discuss the different forms and purposes of journals, consider the value of hand-written journals of various genres, and write journal entries of their own in the manner of the journalists they are reading.

Activities and Learning Objectives:
Students will:
• practice close analytic reading and interpretation of text
• practice persuasive and reflective writing and improve their writing skills
• learn to identify allusions and, if they are not familiar with the things alluded to, learn to track down allusions
• write journal entries of their own, sometimes attempting to imitate the journalistic purposes or goals in the journals they have read
• explore the value of journaling for themselves

Learning Outcomes for all First-Year Seminars
Read increasingly sophisticated texts critically
As one of WFU's Core Competencies, critical reading is defined as: "the process of understanding, extracting, and questioning written text that allows for the comprehensive explanation of issues, ideas, artefacts, and events before accepting or challenging an opinion or conclusion or constructing new meaning."

Pose and respond to complex ideas
This may occur in a variety of formats such as written or oral form, or in class discussion. This maps onto the WFU Core Competency of Inquiry and Analysis defined as: the systematic process of exploring issues, objects, or works by collecting evidence, deconstructing that which is complex, and developing informed conclusions or judgments."

Identify, analyze, interpret and evaluate different points of view
Again, this may occur in a variety of formats. This corresponds to the WFU Core Competency of Critical Thinking defined as: "the ability to explore ideas comprehensively, to ask relevant questions, to evaluate evidence, to imagine and test alternative points of view before accepting or formulating a conclusion."

*Construct cogent arguments in both written and oral form*

This supports the WFU Core Competency of Communication defined as: "the ability to express ideas clearly, exchange knowledge, foster understand, and/or persuade one's audience in written and oral form."

**Required Book:** Please get a copy of *An Almanac for Moderns* by Donald Culross Peattie. You can get a used copy pretty inexpensively from Amazon.com or another online bookstore. Other readings will be provided for the students. Here are some journals we may explore:

**Scientific, Naturalist, or Exploratory**
- *An Almanac for Moderns* by Donald Peattie
- *Walden Pond* by Henry David Thoreau
- Marie Curie's diaries and lab notebooks
- Alan Turing's handwritten journal
- Albert Einstein's scientific journals
- Samuel Pepys' diary
- Charles Darwin's Beagle diary
- Thomas Jefferson's *Garden Book*
- *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*

**Literary or artistic:**
- The journals of George Eliot
- Louis Armstrong's diary
- The personal journals of Kurt Kobain
- *Virginia Woolfe: A Writer's Diary*
- *Fyodor Dostoevsky: A Writer's Diary*

**Meditative, Faith-Based, Personal, or Reflective**
- *Seeds of Hope* by Henri Nouwen
- *All the Road Before Me* by C. S. Lewis
- *The Diary of Anne Frank*
- *Gift from the Sea* by Anne Morrow Lindbergh
- *The Diary of Malcolm X*
- *The Journal of Major George Washington, 1754*

**Course website:** The course has a website on Sakai where handouts and other documents will be stored. The site is on Sakai under the course name and section.
**Basis for Grade:**
Class attendance and participation 30%
Papers 70%