

HR 496, Great books
Fall 2013–Spring 2014
Location: TBA
6:30–9:00 alternate W, R

Julian Long
Phone: 314/302-3267
<http://julianlong.net/wordpress>
longj3@slu.edu

SYLLABUS

Texts

- Arendt, Hannah. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. New York: Penguin, 1994 [1963]. ISBN: 0140187650.
- Barenboim, Daniel. *Music Quickens Time*. Reprint Edition. London: Verso, 2009 [2007]. ISBN: 1844674029.
- Eiseley, Loren, *The Unexpected Universe*. A Harvest Book. New York: Harcourt, 1994 [1964]. ISBN: 0156928507.
- Heller, Joseph. *Catch-22*. 50 ANV Edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011 [1961]. ISBN: 1451626657.
- Helprin, Mark. *Winter's Tale*. Reissue Edition. New York: Harvest Books, 2006 [1983]. ISBN: 0156031191. ISBN: 0156031191.
- Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 3rd Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996 [1962]. ISBN: 0226458083.
- Le Guin, Ursula. *The Left Hand of Darkness*. New York: Ace Books; 1st Edition, 1987 [1969]. ISBN: 0441478123.
- Nussbaum, Martha. *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. ISBN: 0807041092.
- Pirsig, Robert. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. HarperPerennial Classics. New York: HarperCollins, 2005 [1974]. ISBN: 0060839872.
- Potok, Chaim. *My Name is Asher Lev*. Anchor Books. New York: Random House, 2003 [1972]. ISBN: 1400031044.
- Rorty, Richard. *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1989]. ISBN-10: 0521367816.
- Schlink, Bernhard. *The Reader*. Trans. Carol Brown Janeway. New York: Vintage International, 1998 [1997]. ISBN: 0375707972.

These twelve books are required. I've listed good, cheap editions for most of them. It isn't necessary that you get the listed editions, but it sometimes helps discussion if we all have the same page numbers.

I've left room in the schedule for you to choose two books, one for fall and one for spring. We'll start talking about these choices at our first fall class meeting, but I'd like to put off making them until we've all had a chance to get to know one another a little. There will be a few rules about choosing these books this year. Each of you will be asked to nominate a book and make a case to the class as to why we should read it. Don't nominate your favorite book or any book you've read previously. If you nominate a genre book, you'll need to be sure it isn't a throwaway. I'll not order these books at the bookstore. You'll be on your own to acquire your copy.

I maintain a class web page on my blog. There will always be a current copy of this syllabus there, if you should need to check changes we make in class or for any other reason. There is a style sheet there, as well, that tabulates the reader's marks I tend to use. You can download these texts and print them with Adobe Reader. If you don't have Adobe Reader, there's a link at the class web site to the Adobe Reader download page. Adobe Reader is a free program. The blog address is: <http://julianlong.net/wordpress/>.

Schedule

August 26: Fall classes begin.
August 28, 29: Organizational meeting.
September 2: Labor Day holiday.
September 11, 12: *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*.
September 25, 26: *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life*.
October 9, 10: *Catch-22*.
October 14–19: Midterm Exams.
October 21–22: Fall break.
October 23, 24: *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.
November 6, 7: **Class choice book**.
November 20, 21: *The Unexpected Universe*.
November 27–29: Thanksgiving holiday.
December 4, 5: *Winter's Tale*.
December 11–17: Final exams.
December 17: 5:00 p.m., **fall semester paper due**.
December 22–January 12: Semester break.
January 13: Spring classes begin.
January 15, 16: *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*.
January 20: Martin Luther King holiday.
January 29, 30: *The Left Hand of Darkness*.
February 12, 13: *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*.
February 26, 27: *The Reader*.
March 3–8: Midterm exams.
March 10–15: Spring break.
March 19, 20: **Class choice book**.
April 2, 3: *Music Quickens Time*.
April 17–21: Easter break.
April 23, 24: *My Name is Asher Lev*.
May 7–13: Final exams.
May 13: 5:00 p.m., **spring semester paper due**.

Overview

Reading assignments include modern and postmodern classics. The course is primarily reading and discussion. One reason for the weekly essays is that they help you prepare something to say in class. Since a part of your grade will be based on class participation, it's important for you to be present and to participate.

Grades, writing, attendance

I'd like you to write a one-page paragraph essay detailing your reaction to each reading assignment and hand it in at the end of each class after the discussion. I want these to be honest, unprejudiced reactions, so generally I'll not accept them late. I'll plan to count ten paragraph essays for each of you over the year—that will give you some flexibility about what to write.

Your essay should engage the books substantively in some way that demonstrates that you have read carefully. Possibilities are to discuss a theme, or the development of a character, to unpack an argument with which you agree or disagree (or not), being sure that you are fair to the argument. There are plenty of other possibilities. Remember to be substantive and include textual references in support of what you say. It's OK to write about why you liked or didn't like a book as long as you give good solid reasons why.

In addition to the paragraph essays, I'd like you to write a more substantial semester essay each term in which you explore some theme that appears in more than one text. These should be original essays and not research papers. We'll talk about these essays at some length in class. At present, I'm thinking I'll base your final grade on class participation (25%), your paragraph essay average (25%), and the two longer essays (25% each).

I expect you to attend class and to be on time. Since there are two sections of HR 406, I expect you can deal with most unexpected conflicts by attending the other class (on Thursday if you are in the Wednesday class and vice versa). But if you must be absent, and you can't attend the other class, please let me know in advance and hand your paragraph essay in early unless you want to skip it. We meet mostly every two weeks. A hint to the wise: I'll not give quizzes as long as people come to class and/or unless I discover that people aren't reading.

The university uses the following grading scale:

3.9 – 4.0	A	2.2 – 2.5	C+
3.6 – 3.8	A –	1.9 – 2.1	C
3.2 – 3.5	B+	1.6 – 1.8	C –
2.9 – 3.1	B	0.9 – 1.5	D
2.6 – 2.8	B –	0.0 – 0.8	F

I will also use the grade of A+, though the university does not allow it in final grading.

About form

Double space your essays, including any notes and references you may include. I have given you a simple style sheet at the class web site as well as links there to other sources of information about style. For questions you can't answer by going to these sources, check the *MLA Handbook*.

Disability Accommodation

If you need disability accommodation, you should contact the Office of Disabilities Services at 314/977-8885 in addition to speaking to me, since some accommodations may require college-wide resources. The College of Arts and Sciences asks that you contact Disabilities Services “as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.”

Academic Honesty

I expect you to conduct your work for this class in a manner consistent with university standards of academic honesty. The university *Policy on Academic Honesty* is available in the library.

Conferences

I'll make appointments for individual conferences within reason. Since I don't have a campus office, I'll use the little coffee lounge in Pius Library as a place to meet you. If you need me at other times, you can call me at my wireless number or at home; leave a message if I don't answer. Generally the best way to communicate privately with me is to write me email.

Helpful Phone Numbers

Campus Ministry	977-2425
Career Services	977-2828
Disability Services	977-3484
Honors Program	977-3951
Julian Long	
Home	773-2876
Wireless	302-3267
Public Safety	977-3000
Student Health and Counseling	977-2323
Student Housing and Residence Life	977-2811

Please report any errors you find in this syllabus.