ASCI 2000 “Modes of Inquiry & Communication Across Disciplines”

Instructor:  Pat Barclay, Room 3009 MacKinnon, ext. 58247, barclayp@uoguelph.ca
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 or by appointment

TAs:  Tony Berto, location TBA, aberto@uoguelph.ca
Laura Schep, location TBA, lschep@uoguelph.ca
Office Hours: By appointment

Class Time & Location: Mondays & Wednesday 3:30-4:20, Axelrod 100

Course Description and Objectives:

This course will build foundations (further to ASCI*1000 and ASCI*1010) for BAS students to understand the principles, purposes, and contexts of their disciplinary (minors) and crossdisciplinary (ASCI core) degree of study. This course particularly seeks to investigate how researchers’ grounding in their various disciplines shapes what problems they address, how they address those problems (methodology), and what assumptions they bring into their investigation. The primary objective of this course is to enable students to get the most out of the integrative possibilities of both the ASCI core and their Arts and Sciences minors (whether or not one’s minors have been decided yet).

This course also seeks to promote research skills to assist students throughout their academic studies. Research skills are understood to include finding relevant information (“library skills”) and evaluating those materials (critical reading and response to important texts). These research skills will be developed through classroom discussion, take-home assignments, and in-class workshops provided by the Library, Learning Commons, and Writing Services.

Required Texts & Course Materials:
2) Articles posted on Courselink
3) Internet resources, handouts, and lecture slides available on Courselink

Assignments & Evaluation:
1) Presentation Across Disciplines due Wed. Oct. 5th 10%
2) Library Assignment 1 (“Popular Coverage”) due Mon. Oct. 24th 10%
3) Library Assignment 2 (“Annotated Bibliography”) due Mon. Nov. 7th 10%
4) Final Essay: Critical Thinking & Writing (“4 Arguments”) due THURS. Nov 24th (note difference in day) 20%
5) Final Exam. Fri. December 9th, 7:00-9:00PM. Location TBA 25%
6) Participation in tutorial discussions 10%
7) Tutorial Questions 10%
8) E-portfolio assignments (total 5%) 5%

Late Assignments:
All late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 20% per day unless appropriate documentation is provided. See “Rules and Regulations” below.
**Tutorial Participation (10%):**
The tutorials are your opportunity to discuss the course issues in a more “conversant” style than offered in the large lectures. This is also a good opportunity to share your insight, and comments. More information about the format of the tutorials is available on a separate handout and from your TA during the first week of tutorials.

**Tutorial Questions (10%):**
As important as the ability to find information and provide answers, is the ability to ask intelligent, insightful, productive questions. Art begins with questions imagined. Research cannot begin without good questions. Science does not progress if good questions are not asked. As such, a portion of the grade in the tutorial section of the course will be given for asking good questions. For each tutorial, students will be required to write out and send questions based on the week’s topic and readings to their TA prior to the tutorial and bring them to tutorial. Unless otherwise noted, students should write one question on the readings and one question on the week’s topic.

**Schedule of Topics & Readings (subject to change)**

**Part 1: Introduction & Ways of Knowing**

**WEEK 1**
- **Mon Sept 12th** – Introduction & Bookkeeping (no reading)
- **Wed Sept 14th** – Conflict Between Arts & Science
  - **IMPORTANT NOTE:** you do NOT have to read the whole thing. Read a few pages, and if you’re having any trouble with the article, then skip to the next article. Please trust me on this.

**WEEK 2**
- **Mon Sept 19th** – How Do We Know What We Know? Part I
- **Wed Sept 21st** – How Do We Know What We Know? Part II
  - **Reading TBA**
Part 2: Communication

WEEK 3
Mon Sept 26th – Presenting Arguments
Wikipedia entry for “Neutral Point of View”

Wed Sept 28th – Guest Workshop: Library Skills I

WEEK 4
Mon Oct 3rd – Catering to Different Audiences (+ Case Study in How I do Inquiry)
5 short press pieces covering this article for different audiences (U of G, BBC, Business Week, Montreal Gazette, Daily Express)

Wed Oct 5th – Role of Scientific Media
DUE DATE: Assignment 1 (“Presentation Across Disciplines”) due at start of class

Part 3: Other Factors Affecting Inquiry

WEEK 5
Mon Oct 10th – No Class (Thanksgiving), class added on Thurs. Dec. 1st
Wed Oct 12th – Guest Lecture: Scientific Racism (Dr. Andrew Winston)

WEEK 6
Mon Oct 17th – Library Skills II Reading TBA
Wed Oct 19th – Going Beyond the Data: Read: How We Know What Isn’t So; Ch. 2-3

WEEK 7
Mon Oct 24th – Seeing What We Expect to See
How We Know What Isn’t So; Ch. 4
DUE DATE: Assignment 2 (“Popular Coverage”) due at the start of class
Wed Oct 26th – Seeing What We Want

*How We Know What Isn’t So; Ch. 5*


**WEEK 8**

Mon Oct 31st – Construction of Memory


[Link: http://www.slate.com/id/2256089/pagenum/all/]

Wed Nov 2nd – Believing What We’re Told Read: *How We Know What Isn’t So; Ch. 6*

**WEEK 9**

Mon Nov 7th – Video: The System (Derren Brown)

(no reading, but you may want to read ahead – especially for seminar Q’s)

DUE DATE: Assignment 3 (“Annotated Bibliography”) due at the start of class

Wed Nov 9th – Guest Lecture: Do Thoughts Cause Behaviour? (Martin Daly)


**WEEK 10**

Mon Nov 14th – Imagined Agreement Read: *How We Know What Isn’t So; Ch. 7*

Wed Nov 16th – Differing Perceptions & Perspectives Reading TBA

**WEEK 11**

Mon Nov 21st – Case Studies *How We Know What Isn’t So; Ch. 8-11*

**Part 4: Ideas to Unite Disciplines**

Wed Nov 23rd – Evolution Tying Everything Together Reading TBA

Thurs Nov. 24th – ESSAY DUE DATE submit on Courselink by midnight

**WEEK 12**

Mon Nov 28th – Evolutionary Approaches to Politics, Morality, & Arts


Wed Nov 30th – Current Issues (the exact topic to be voted on)

*Reading TBA – it depends on the specific topic*

Thurs Dec 1st – Wrap-up and Review – make-up for Thanksgiving (no reading)
Relevant Rules and Regulations

Communication:
As per university regulations, all students are required to check their uoguleph.ca e-mail account regularly. E-mail is the official route of communication between the university (including your instructor) and its students. We will also be using D2L (formerly BlackBoard) as a means of communication. You are already enrolled in the course’s portal, which be accessed from the University’s home page by clicking “Courselink.” More information on our use of D2L to come.

Late & Incomplete Course Requirements:
When you find yourself unable to meet a course requirement because of illness or personal difficulties, please advise the course instructor in writing. Where possible, this should be done in advance of the missed work or event, but otherwise, as soon as possible. The instructor may request appropriate documentation. For more information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration, please refer to the Undergraduate Calendar: (http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/) or the BAS Counseling Office Website (http://www.uoguelph.ca/baco).

Academic Misconduct:
The University of Guelph takes a very serious view of Academic Misconduct, and it is your responsibility as a student to be aware of and to abide by the University’s policy. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating on examinations, misrepresentation, and submitting the same material in two different courses without written permission. All submitted work is expected to have been done independently by the student.

Anyone suspected of academic misconduct will have his or her case reviewed by the Associate Dean (i.e. it’s out of your instructor’s hands!) and may result in serious penalties, up to and including expulsion from the University. There are no warnings or second chances with respect to academic misconduct.

To better understand your responsibilities regarding appropriate academic conduct, read the Undergraduate Calendar (see link above) for a statement of Students’ Academic Responsibilities; also read the full Academic Misconduct Policy (http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml).

If you are ever concerned about inadvertently misrepresenting yourself, for example, when doing group assignments or quoting from texts, you are advised to make use of the resources available through the Learning Commons (http://www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca/) and to discuss the matter with your course instructor, TA, or academic counsellor.

Drop Date:
The last date to drop one-semester Fall 2010 courses, without academic penalty, is Thursday November 4, 2010. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar. (http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml)

Copies of Out-of-Class Assignments:
Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time. For more detailed information about these and other regulations, see
Chapter VIII Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures of the 2008-2009 University of Guelph Undergraduate Calendar (http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/index.shtml)

Description of Grades:

By now, you are probably familiar with the University’s grading scheme:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>57-59</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
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But how do you get an A in this course?

When grading, I approach each paper with the expectation that it will be average (B-). Grades advance or drop depending on both content and style; for an A-/A-/A+, the paper must impress me with exceptional thoughtfulness, reasoning, and presentation. “A” papers involves hard (but rewarding) work! A solid “B” is a mark of achievement which reflects critical reasoning and/or thorough research and solid writing skills.

As per Chapter VIII of the Undergraduate Calendar:

**80-100 (A) Excellent.** An outstanding performance in which the student demonstrates superior grasp of the subject matter and an ability to go beyond the given material in a critical and constructive manner. The student demonstrates a high degree of creativity and/or logical thinking, a superior ability to organize, to analyse and to integrate ideas, and a thorough familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques.

**70-79 (B) Good.** A more than adequate performance in which the student demonstrates a thorough grasp of the subject matter, and an ability to organize and examine the material in a critical and constructive manner. The student demonstrates a good understanding of the relevant issues and a familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques.

**60-69 (C) Satisfactory.** An adequate performance in which the student demonstrates a generally adequate grasp of the subject matter and a moderate ability to examine the material in a critical and constructive manner. The student displays an adequate understanding of the relevant issues, and a general familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques.

**50-59 (D) Poor.** A barely adequate performance in which the student demonstrates a familiarity with the subject matter, but whose attempts to examine the material in a critical and constructive manner are only partially successful. The student displays some understanding of the relevant issues, and some familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques.

**0-49 (F) Fail.** An inadequate performance.