School of Professional Studies

University of Bridgeport ONLINE
Capstone 390
CAPS-390-IDDLA-2018SP: Senior Seminar
SPRING 2018    15 Weeks
Timeframe: January 8 - April 21, 2018
Instructor: Peter Chepya

1. Where to contact me:
   pchester@bridgeport.edu
   AND, in the same e-mail,
   ALWAYS Cc me at:
   pchester@gmail.com

   Explanation:
   • One e-mail address backs up the other and we need to have more than one
     address for email communication in case one goes down unexpectedly.
   • Also, I have a Gmail App on my phone, there is no App for UB email;
     therefore, I see your email on my Gmail more quickly if you include by
     Gmail when you email me.
   • You can email me through or within Canvas, but this email will not go to my
     Gmail, it will go to my UB email and this might delay my response.
   • Do not hesitate to email me, keeping the above information in mind, and I
     will be very pleased to help you.

2. My availability:
   • I am online Monday – Friday, and not 24/7 Mon - Fri.
   • I am usually able to reply to you within 48 hours if not sooner -- not counting
     weekends.
   • If I am going to be offline for more than 48 hours during any Mon – Fri, I
     will let you know.

3. How to contact me:
   REQUIRED for the Subject line of all e-mail you send to me:
   • You must put ALL of the following in the Subject line of ALL e-mail you send to me:
     CAPS 390 IDDLA SP 18
   Then add what the e-mail is about, e.g., Question about the Course.
   e.g., of correct Subject line:
   CAPS 390 IDDLA SP 18: Question about the Course
For ALL technical assistance:
Help Desk phone number:  203-576-4606
email:  helpdesk@bridgeport.edu

Course Description: (from the UB catalog)
“The Capstone Seminar is the culmination of learning in the Core Curriculum. As such, it
reflectively builds upon learning from the various liberal arts. The course is conducted as
a seminar and thus requires substantial reading and informed participation. All students
write an original essay that integrates themes raised in course readings and discussions.”

Outcomes:
To expand comprehension through a series of challenging and interrelated texts and
materials. To improve the understanding of, and potential for, creative verbal and written
expression as the scholarly capstone of undergraduate experience.

Course Theme:
The Theme of this Capstone Seminar is: “A Meaningful Life”

Orientation to how we will be thinking about “A Meaningful Life”.

In our Course we will juxtapose our materials by the thinking about them in groups of
two, as follows:
  - Radio Days; and, The Philosophy of Andy Warhol;
  - THX 1138; and, You Are Not a Gadget;
  - What I Saw; and, What’s Going On

… while enjoying and discussing the DVDs, Books, and CD for two weeks each.

There is a relationship between all of the materials under our overall Course Theme of “A
Meaningful Life” and the groupings of two throughout our Course helps us focus on
aspects of particular meaning(s) of life as understood from the perspective of each film
maker, author, or musical artist.

Here are some brief examples:

“Radio Days”; and, “Warhol”
In Radio Days the story is of a close-knit family and the impact the radio has on them.
In Warhol, we encounter a writer who seems to be removed from the context we
experience in Radio Days and is a solitary figure observing life from a distance.
By comparing and contrasting we are able to think about the elements of **A Meaningful Life** in either context.

**“THX 1138”; and, “You Are Not a Gadget”**

Both the movie (*THX 1138*) and the book (*Your Are Not a Gadget*) describe the reality of an “always-on” technology. We are led to wonder how we define our identity now and how is use of technology affecting our behavior? How is our willingness to share personal information altering our sense or our Self and of that of others? Is our “expectation of immediacy” impacting our understanding of knowledge (as opposed to “information”) and our respect for others? For example, we can find what we think is an answer to anything on Google; we expect someone to reply to our texts or e-mail immediately, if not sooner.

Is personal technology so pervasive now that it actually *inhabits* our Self and thereby changes our concept of **A Meaningful Life**? We can’t seem to be without it or do without it. It is as if it has become a physical appendage to our bodies, and our Self. How do we understand what is happening to us and how do we describe what we have become as we try to understand how to lead **A Meaningful Life**?

**“What I Saw”; and, “What’s Going On”**

Both the book (*What I Saw*) and the CD (*What’s Going On*) deal with impressions and memories, from many decades ago.

How did we remember events now and did the quality, and even type, of our memories differ before personal technology and the Internet?

Has our continuous “screen-gazing” (my term), and the constant use we make of personal technology, changed the way we remember and what we remember? Do we remember any of the text messages or any of the e-mail we read and send all day long, each and every day without let up? How does this continuous, texting, e-mailing, and posting (e.g., on Facebook) affect our ability to remember anything?

How do all these activities impact our ability to have **A Meaningful Life**?

The book and the CD re-introduce us to the atmosphere of pre-digital times, to some extent the best place to contemplate what we have become.
IMPORTANT: TO AVOID COPYRIGHT VIOLATIONS, ONLY THE SOURCES NOTED TO BELOW ARE APPROVED FOR OUR COURSE/USE OF ANY OTHER SOURCE COULD RESULT IN AN "F" FOR THE MODULE AND/OR ASSIGNMENT. PURCHASE ALL YOUR MATERIALS FROM THE UB BOOKSTORE.

1. _Radio Days_, written and directed by Woody Allen
   (DVD; classic cinema)

2. _The Philosophy of Andy Warhol_, by Andy Warhol (book)

3. _THX 1138_, director: George Lukas
   (DVD; classic cinema)


6. _What’s Going On_  Marvin Gaye
   (CD; a music classic)

Note on Books and DVDs and CD selections:

As you can see from the Reading/Viewing/Listening list, we are using an interdisciplinary approach to the many aspects of our Theme; therefore, we’ll arrive at an understanding of _A Meaningful Life_ through an interdisciplinary multi-media approach using _classic cinema, books, and a CD_.


Discussion Forum Timeframes and Grading

All Discussions are two weeks

Online learning requires regular participation, therefore...

…to ensure an enriched learning experience you are required to post in the Discussions at least 4 times in each of the two weeks, as follows:

- once by Wed of the first week (minus 25% for not doing this)
- once during the 1st weekend of the timeframe (minus 25% for not doing this)
- once during Mon – Fri of the second week (minus 25% for not doing this);
- once during the last weekend of the timeframe (minus 25% for not doing this)
- never only on each Sat and Sun (minus 50% for doing this)
- never only on the last weekend (minus 100% for doing this).

All of the above is required, there is one warning only.

DISCUSSIONS ARE LOCATED UNDER THE “Modules” tab IN OUR COURSE

Helpful pointers for Discussions of the DVDs; Books; and, the CD:

- There are 6 required questions in each Discussion for all Discussions starting with “Radio Days” onward.
- These are all two weeks each in duration.
- You are required to post a minimum of 4 times using the time of posting schedule noted above.
- There are 6 required questions, more than the minimum 4 times for posting.
- Therefore, my recommendation is for you to post additional #4 “Comments” and/or #6 “Answers” at other times in addition to the 4 minimum times for posting. This will make interaction more full and rich.

Glad to help.
DISCUSSIONS ARE LOCATED UNDER THE “Modules” tab IN OUR COURSE

The Discussion Forum Timeframes and Books and DVDs for each of them are as follows:

**Jan 8 – 14**
**ONE WEEK TIMEFRAME**
1. Use this time to view/read/listen ahead, generally plan your time, and familiarize yourself with our Course; ALSO DO THE FOLLOWING...

2. E-MAIL ME THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS THAT I ASKED YOU IN MY FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

3. POST IN THE INTRODUCTIONS Discussion
   This is School of Professional Studies policy

4. Post in the Digital LifeLog Discussion

ALL DISCUSSIONS BELOW ARE TWO WEEK TIMEFRAMES:

**Jan 15 – 28**
Discussion on:
*Radio Days*, written & directed by Woody Allen (DVD; classic cinema)

**Jan 29 – Feb 11**
Discussion on:
*The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, by Andy Warhol (book; classic non-fiction)

**Feb 12 – 25**
Discussion on:
*THX 1138* director: George Lukas (DVD; classic cinema)

**Feb 26 – March 11**
Discussion on:
*You Are Not a Gadget*, by Jaron Lanier (book; non-fiction)
March 12 - 25
Discussion on:

March 26 – April 8
Discussion on:
*What’s Going On*, Marvin Gaye (CD; a music classic)

April 9 - 21
Prof’s Roundtable Discussion and, Researching & Writing Weeks
Time reserved for you to finish researching and writing your Research Paper

-- Course ends on SATURDAY, April 21--

Rubric: Quality of postings in Discussion Forums (50% of Final Grade)
- A one or two sentence comment or observation is **not** sufficient.
- Postings will be graded on quality (insights; writing; spelling; grammar; originality; interactivity with classmates –).
- **No “text message” language**, e.g., lol etc.

Explanation of Critical Essays: (30% of Final Grade)
Writing Rubric is the same as Discussions, and includes:
- **500 min. – 750 max. words** in length (not counting any quotes you use from the Books, DVDs, or the CD) in 12 point font; There is NO Format requirement.
- **UNDER 500 WORDS = F**; include your word count at the end of the Essay

Some examples (these are only examples and not intended as required):
- Is **A Meaningful Life** possible in *THX 1138?* Explain.
- Does the book *What I Saw* help us understand how memory is important for **A Meaningful Life?** Explain.

Do not summarize the work. The Essays will be based on **YOUR** opinion, so YOU MUST state it clearly. Outside sources are NOT permitted.
- Essays will also be graded on quality (insights; writing; spelling; grammar)
Explanation of Research Paper: (20% of Final Grade)

Writing Rubric is the same as Discussions, and includes:
- This will be a minimum of 2,500 words in length (not counting quotes from the 3 outside sources noted below)
- Choose one (ONLY) of the Books or DVDs or CD we have covered in the Course

What does “Research” mean?
Answer: you must use at least three (3) outside sources (books; articles; commentaries) you find anywhere (on the Internet would be a good idea) which express an appreciation (positive or negative, or both) of the book or DVD or CD you choose to research.

Some examples (these are only examples) of how to approach the Book or DVD or CD you choose:
- What do critics, and others, think of the impact of You Are Not a Gadget?
- How did critics react to the album/CD What’s Going On at the time and subsequently, and why?

The Thesis (point of view) of the Paper:
- This Paper should represent a critical defense of a point of view based on the chosen work and outside research.
- You can conclude the Paper with your opinion but the main purpose of the Paper is to find and use the opinions of others and defend one of the points of view.

Paper will also be graded on quality (insights; writing; spelling; grammar)

Schedule of Due Dates and Topics for Papers

DUE DATES:
1. Sunday, Feb 25th (no earlier than Friday, Feb 23rd)
   Critical Essay #1
   - choose ONE of the movies or the book covered ONLY on or before Feb 25th

2. Sunday, March 25th (no earlier than Friday, March 23rd)
   Critical Essay #2
   - choose any ONE book, movie, or the CD covered ONLY AFTER Feb 15th (i.e., Feb 16th onward)
   Can include What’s Going On (required: comment on the entire album/ all the songs)

3. SATURDAY, April 21st
   (can also be submitted on any day April 16th through 21st)
   Research Paper
   - choose ONE book, or movie, or the CD covered in the Course; it CAN be a Book or DVD or CD on which you wrote a Critical Essay.)
Methods of Evaluation

50% Discussion Forum postings:

Note: “ABSENCE” POLICY:
- not posting in a Forum, or any week of a two week Forum, will result in the deduction of one full grade level from your Final Grade each time it happens, after one warning; e.g., “A” becomes “B”.
- There is one warning (only) after which a full grade level will be deducted from the final grade as it appears in the Gradebook in Canvas.
- There can be no more than 2 (two) one week absences.
- The School of Professional Studies’ policy on absences is the policy in this Course: 3 (three) one week absences = F, for the Course.

30% 2 Critical Essays (15% each):
DUE: Feb 25th; and, March 25th
- Must be posted online in Canvas, copy and paste; do not e-mail these Essays.
- Late Essays will receive a grade of “0”

20% Final Research Paper:
DUE SATURDAY April 21st (not Sunday April 22nd)
- (also can be submitted on any day Monday December 4th through Saturday December 9th no earlier/no later)
- Must be posted online in Canvas, copy and paste; do not e-mail this Paper.
- Late Essays will receive a grade of “0”

April 21st is the Last Day of our Course:

-- End of Syllabus --