

The Dragon Academy ~ Course Syllabus 2007-2008

FORM 4 ~ English **Instructor: Seth Halvorson, Ph.D. – ENG3U**

This course emphasizes the development of literacy, critical thinking, and communication skills. Students will analyze challenging texts from various periods; conduct research and analyze the information gathered; write persuasive and literary essays; and analyze the relationship among media forms, audiences, and media industry practices. An important focus will be on understanding the development of the English language. Students will be asked to complete a final project, an analysis of a piece of music, literature, or film that is connected in a meaningful way to the themes outlined in the reading. Every two weeks there will be a vocabulary quiz.

Texts: Walden, Emerson, Selected Essays

Unit 1: September-Early November

Nature and Human Being

This unit will focus on the relationship between nature and human being, how the world informs the self and the world of self-understanding of decision-making, morality, and world-views. The Unit will focus on *Walden*, but other contemporary visions of the relationship between nature and humanity will be explored, using a variety of media, including music and film.

Readings:

Nature, Emerson
Walden,

Assessment: Students will be asked to write journal responses to questions in class discussion, as well as research and find a contemporary example from literature or film that addresses the relationship between nature and humanity, write a short paper, 1000-1500 words, and give a presentation on how the vision of the relationship between humanity and nature as reflected in the class texts.

Unit 2: November-December

Humanity and Knowledge

This unit will explore the connection and disconnections between the old and new world-views of knowledge, as explored by Emerson

Readings: *The American Scholar*
Fahrenheit 451

Assessment: Students will be asked to form their own view about the relationship between knowledge, self-knowledge, and others, in dialogue with the text, in the form of an essay.

Mid Term Exam

Unit 3: January

The Essay as Form: *Experience* in Context

This unit will take up Emerson's essay, *Experience*. Students will closely read the essay, discuss the principle themes and then take up one of those themes in a short essay of their choosing. They will also find short stories, films, poems, from the American context, on their own, and give a short report of how experience is treated in the text.

Unit 4: February-June

Transcendentalism: Selves and Society

This unit will unpack the historical, biographical, and cultural background of the transcendentalists. With careful attention paid to the connections between Nietzsche and Emerson.

Readings:

The Over Soul

Self-Reliance

The Transcendentalist

Assessment: Journals

Major paper on a text-based theme of the student's choice. 1500-2000 words

Presentation

Final In-Class Essay Exam