

The As and Cs of Humanities: 1st Semester Grading Policy



“This I submit is the real freedom of education, of learning to be well-adjusted. You get to consciously decide what has meaning and what doesn’t. That is real freedom. That is being educated and understanding how to think. The alternative is unconsciousness, the default setting, the rat face.” - David Foster Wallace

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The A's and C's of Humanities in a Nutshell

1. Apply your Knowledge
2. Communicate Competently
3. Curiously Connect with Community
4. Commit to Deep Engagement



Part 1: Why? (The Rationale)

If my course mission is as outlined above, traditional grades would fail to objectively measure your success in achieving excellence. If I want you, my students to improve your metacognition and self-awareness, and feel a sense of agency, you have to be active participants in the assessment of your learning outcomes.

Moreover, with online learning, it is even more important that we're in regular communication and that we have opportunities to connect 1-on-1. The conference format of this grading system allows us to do just that. We'll be able to connect as human beings, keeping tabs on each other, and also it will give you, dear student, the chance to clarify your confusions on class content or on my feedback. Lastly, it will allow you the voice and space to express to me the ways in which you are engaging in classwork and striving for growth.

Part 2: Your 1st Semester Humanities Grade

There will be 3 categories in the gradebook for the first semester:

1. **50% of your overall Humanities Grade = Apply yo' knowledge:** For the category of "A, Apply your knowledge", you will see specific assignments entered in the gradebook throughout the semester that reflect your ability to apply content knowledge to the task. These would include the college essay, final writing assignments, justice monologues, and seminars.
2. **30% = A's and C's of Humanities Growth and Reflection:** 30% of your Humanities grade will be based on your ability to demonstrate and reflect upon your growth in the As and C's of Humanities. You will receive a grade (out of 20 points) each time you conference with that includes three things. We will conference 1-2 times a month. These conferences will be graded on:
 - a. The extent to which you are prepared for and authentically engaged in the conference
 - b. The extent to you demonstrate growth and sincere reflection in the As and C's
3. **20%= Are you doing the work?** This is simply whether or not you're turning in completion assignments throughout the semester. You'll receive a completion grade for each assignment in this category. Things like reading notes, seminar prep, discussion questions, etc... will go in this category.

A note on late work: Any late assignments will be ill be docked 20%. You'll have 1 week from the deadline to turn it in for credit, up to an 80% (B-).

What you can expect from me



- **Honest and robust feedback:** I won't beat around the bush and will provide meaningful and substantial feedback on all major writing assignments and project work.
- **Support:** I will provide the appropriate structures and guidance to help you set and achieve your writing goals.
- **Availability:** I will make myself available for conferencing and writing guidance to the fullest extent possible.
- **Tough Love:** I will provide each student with a seasoned recipe of one part loving kindness, one part Carruthlessness.

What I can expect from you

- **Effort:** Try your darndest!
- **Growth mindset:** Be open to improving and seek to create beautiful work through refinement!
- **Communication and Initiative:** Be proactive in asking for help and scheduling conferences
- **Organization:** In order to prove to me that your writing has grown over the semester, you will need to keep an organized portfolio that includes:
 - Any work you think serves as evidence for each category
 - Rubrics/self-assessments
 - Personal reflections

Part 3: A's and C's of Humanities CONFERENCES

You have two choices for conference format based on your learning style/needs.

<p>Choice of Conference Format</p>	 <p>Verbal Conversation</p>	 <p>Written conference and online "discussion" with me.</p>
<p>Requirements</p>	<p>a. To prepare for this, jot-dots are totally fine on the following conference preparation questions!</p> <p>b. At the end of the conference, we'll both reflect on your preparation</p>	<p>a. To prepare for this, you'll need to write substantial written reflections on the following conference preparation questions by your conference deadline. Please share this with me as a google document. I will read your reflections and then comment on them on the same document.</p>

	and follow-through on the conference requirements	b. After I comment on your reflection, you need to read my comments, and respond to questions or ideas I make to show me you are processing my feedback/ideas/answers. This is INSTEAD of the reflection requirements as described below for verbal conference students.
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Before the Conference (Prepare the following):

Before your scheduled conference, please prepare some notes on the following 5 questions. These can be in brief jot-dot form or in full-paragraphs depending on which conference style you choose from the two above options.

1. What is the most important thing, in your opinion, that we've studied thus far? Why?
2. What do you need to discuss with Ashley most right now and/or what questions or confusions do you have about class expectations, reading assignments, or your current justice project or senior project research? *Think about this as creating an outline for our conference-- I want you to guide this conference based on what you think would be most useful for you based on your needs/interests related to Humanities this time.*
3. Which area of the portfolio do you feel like you have the most to say about?
4. What feedback do you have for Ashley about class?
5. Which areas of growth do you need to work on? What guidance or suggestions might you need from Ashley? If it isn't on the following list, that's ok! Specify what it is.

Academic Areas of Growth	Personal Areas of Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thinking and Reading Critically - Writing consciously - Speaking clearly - Identifying bias and assumption (yours and others) - Reading college-level texts - Developing note-taking, reading, brainstorming, outlining, etc.. strategies - Developing better time-management skills - Developing better organizational skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging in class - Finding personal value in assignments - Regulating emotions - Listening Actively, Patiently and Policing your Voice - Leadership skills - Non-judgement - Self-confidence - Think back to your academic mindsets test and the areas of growth you identified there!

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Applying philosophical ideas or other class content to your own life or real world issues | |
|---|--|



Conference Assessment Criteria (Rubric)

We'll go through the 5 questions listed above and I will assess your conference (or your written reflection) based on the following criteria:

0= I do not detect a pulse

1= Pulse is there but your heart's just not in the game

2= You're off the bench, one-foot in the game

3= MVP! Heart rate through the roof!

___/3 Did you take initiative in leading part of the conference?

___/3 Were you authentic in your reflections and thinking deeply about your answers, willing to be prodded by Ashley?

___/3 Did you ask questions that show you care about growing as a student?

___/3 Did you reflect on course content learned thus far and demonstrate you've been engaging in the material? This includes asking questions you might have about readings/assignments.

___/3 Did you provide meaningful and helpful feedback on the course/Ashley's teaching)

___/5 Did you send me a complete reflection within 24 hours of your conference?

After the Conference-- Reflection Requirements

Email Ashley a written reflection about the conference. Some questions to consider addressing in your response include the following. If you're verbally conferencing with Ashley, we may go through these questions in person.

- What new ideas did you get from Ashley?
- What confusions or questions did Ashley help you clarify?
- What direction are you headed now as a result of your conference?
- How useful was the conference to you?



Let's Reflect!



Part 4: The As and Cs of Humanities Unpacked

<p>Apply Yo' Knowledge</p>	<p>Why (is this important?): “Knowledge is not power; it is only potential. Applying that knowledge is power. Understanding why and when to apply that knowledge is wisdom!”- Takeda Shingen</p> <hr/> <p>What (will you need to do?): There will be various assignments throughout the semester where you’ll be asked to take the content we are studying, and apply it to a new task, such as the “What is Justice” debates, the final essay, etc...</p> <p>How (will you document your work?): This will look more traditional! You’ll receive an assignment, a rubric, a deadline. You’ll turn it in. I’ll give you feedback. You may choose to refine it. You will get a grade that will go into the “Apply Yo’ Knowledge” category of the gradebook. BadabingBadaboom!</p>
<p>Communicate Competently</p>	<p>Why (is this important?): You matter. You have unique and brilliant ideas to share with the world and I will be darned if I don’t help you cultivate competent communication skills so that other people take you seriously. Moreover, we’ll be digging into challenging content related to Justice this semester. Silence is not an option.</p> <p>What (do you need to do?)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write Consciously: <i>Be authentic in your beliefs, logical in your reasoning, and intentional about how you organize your ideas.</i> 2. Speak Clearly: <i>Take your time to gather your thoughts, mean what you say, state your main points and provide specific examples to back them up.</i> 3. Read and Think Critically: <i>Question everything. Identify bias and rhetorical appeals. Develop reasoned judgments that are logical and well-thought out.</i> 4. Listen Compassionately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen Patiently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Don’t raise your hand while someone else is speaking</i> ○ <i>The speaker should never be interrupted</i>

- Listen Actively:
 - *Each idea can inspire, inform, and refine another. Thus, ideas should be built upon. To do this, we must engage meaningfully with each other's ideas and thus listen actively.*
- Police your voice (Step up, Step Back)
 - *Make it easier on your classmates to patiently and actively listen to you by being mindful of how much space you are taking up in a conversation, and aim to speak clearly and concisely.*

How (*will you document your work?*)

- Each conference, you'll need to be prepared to share with me the ways in which you've been improving your competence communication skills. Make sure you have documented specific anecdotes or examples as evidence. Perhaps you have an example from a class discussion where you stepped up your listening skills, or maybe you want to share a paragraph from your writing where you demonstrated improvement, etc....

**Curiously
Connect with
Community**

Why (is this important?): Real learning doesn't happen in silos. We have to get outside the four walls of the classroom and connect with the outside world to truly understand the significance and relevance of our knowledge. Moreover, we are asking you to tackle senior projects that serve a purpose beyond the classroom walls, and we want you to be exposed to the myriad of options that REAL professionals and academics are addressing/ the field of study you are interested in pursuing for your senior project.

What (will you need to do?): You will be responsible for meeting with at least ONE professional, stakeholders and/or academics relevant to what you want to study for senior project. The purpose is for you to understand both the nature of the work they do, as well as the broader areas of study/work/questions that are particularly pressing to others in that field. The goal is to try to identify authentic and relevant problems/questions that you can solve/answer for your own senior project.

You could also choose to reach out to a community member as part of your Justice Project final essay research and include evidence of that in this section!

How (will you document your work?) You will document your experience in your portfolio including photographs of your experience, a 1 page reflection of your experience and how the experience has impacted you. Ideally, this reflection will include connections between our course content through the Justice project and your experience (which you can then later use as evidence for the category of "applying your knowledge!").

**Contemplate
Deeper
Engagement**

Why (is this important?): Digging deep applies to both your personal development and metacognitive work we do as well as to your level of immersion with the course content we study this semester. It shows you are engaging with the content!

Personal: “Know thyself and to thine own self be true”- Shakespeare

Self-awareness is critical to being a successful student and human. Moreover, your ability to deepen your knowledge of yourself will positively impact your performance in the classroom as you will be able to reflect more authentically on your interests, strengths and areas of growth and set realistic and meaningful goals for your growth. Moreover, the more self-awareness you have, the better you will be able to perform in relationships with others, and the better leader you can be! All things you’ll need to employ this year at Animas and beyond!

Academic: The philosophies we are studying this semester will make your brain hurt! You need to immerse yourself in the readings, discussions and ideas we explore this semester to fully understand them. You need to really grapple with the philosophies and strive to be both open to new ideas and critical of the various authors and philosophers we study to form your own perspective and squares with your personal values and ideals.

What (will you need to do?): THINK DEEPLY and ENGAGE EARNESTLY!

Personal: You will need to get SUPA’ meta, which means that you need to start to develop a sense of observing yourself and your thinking and use those observations to reflect on your growth. You’ll need to sincerely reflect on your own mind, emotions, and behaviors and to what extent those thoughts/feelings/actions align with your own values and goals in life.

Academic: You’ll need to really grapple with the philosophies we study this semester and show that you are capable of identifying your own biases and assumptions, as well as those of others.

ENGAGE Earnestly: You’ll need to identify ways in which you find yourself not engage as fully as possible and work on stretching yourself. Engagement takes different forms-- engagement in class discussions, with the readings, with the ideas, with small groups, with your teacher in conference, with peer critique, etc....We understand that students have different personalities; some are extroverted, some are introverted. For some, class discussions are hard to engage in, but perhaps for those students, that’s an area of growth. For some, active listening is hard as they really like to verbally process. Perhaps showing engagement through active listening is a goal for those students!