

Freshman Seminar 2015: The Examined Life
LAS 118: The Best Authentic Selfie: a Networked Self in the Digital Age
 Class Days and Times: T/TH 1:00 – 2:15 pm
 Classroom: Crown 202

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Course Overview
Dominican University’s Seminar Program

Dominican’s four-year interdisciplinary seminar program is centered on questions that are both universal and urgent, and that engage the whole person throughout life. The seminars are also designed to be integrative, helping students see and articulate connections between information and ideas originating in other courses; between their coursework and their lives beyond the classroom; and between their own lives and the lives of others—past, present, and future.

	Freshman Seminar¹	Sophomore Seminar	Junior Seminar	Senior Seminar
Title	The Examined Life	Life in Community	A Life’s Work	The Good Life
Guiding Questions	<p>What is the self?</p> <p>Who am I? How did I become who I am? Who will I be in the world?</p> <p>What does it mean to live mindfully and reflectively? What helps and hinders that process?</p>	<p>How are personal identity and group membership interrelated?</p> <p>What are the causes and effects of inequality among and within groups?</p> <p>What does it mean to live in diverse communities and cultures?</p>	<p>What is the place of work in the life of the individual and in society?</p> <p>How do technology and leisure shape our lives?</p> <p>What part does making a living play in making a life?</p>	<p>What does it mean to be good, to lead a good life?</p> <p>How does one reconcile self-interest with a sense of social responsibility?</p>
Common Text	Thich Nhat Hanh, <i>Living Buddha, Living Christ</i>	Diana Eck, <i>Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Banaras</i>	Pope John Paul II, <i>On Human Work (Laborem Exercens)</i>	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>

¹ The freshman seminar includes an advising component, with the seminar instructor serving as the student’s academic advisor until he or she declares a major.

LAS Seminar Overview

While liberal arts and sciences seminars are taught by instructors from various disciplines representing alternative approaches to the general topics, they share several features. As seminars, they are courses in which students, led by an instructor, investigate problems, design projects, explore resources, and share findings. They are, that is, courses in which students learn with and from each other.

Students will “take” from their seminars no more and no less than they “give” to them. By engaging actively the materials encountered and the ideas of classmates, by first informing themselves, then participating thoughtfully in class discussions, and by completing diligently their portion of the work of the group, students gain new information, new insights, and new perspectives. More important, though, is that they gain a “new” way to learn and new respect for the power of the mind that they will carry with them into their lives beyond the classroom.

In addition to their course specific learning goals, LAS Seminars at all levels will help students: engage texts from diverse fields of study; connect ideas and experiences across contexts; assert a defensible response to the questions under consideration; communicate effectively in oral forms; and communicate effectively in writing.

LAS Seminar Learning Goals and Outcomes

As they engage texts (e.g. written, visual, oral, or experiential) from diverse fields of study, students will be able to:

- identify and explain the main idea or ideas within the texts;
- discern distinct positions within the text or between and among texts; and
- make judgments about the text in relation to the guiding questions for each seminar level.

In connecting ideas and experiences across contexts, students will:

- draw on relevant examples of personal experience to explore the guiding questions under consideration at each seminar level;
- demonstrate an awareness of diverse responses to the guiding questions for each seminar level; and
- make connections across disciplines in ways that illuminate the guiding questions at each seminar level.

To assert a defensible response to the guiding questions under consideration, students will:

- articulate a clear response;
- situate one’s response in relation to others’ responses; and
- defend the rationale for one’s responses.

To communicate effectively in oral forms, students will:

- demonstrate attentiveness to the oral contributions of others;
- contribute to discussions in ways that build upon or synthesize the ideas of others; and
- foster a constructive class climate.

To communicate effectively in writing, students will;

articulate a clear, specific, and complex thesis in response to the questions

- support the thesis with appropriate evidence; and
- demonstrate correct syntax and mechanics.

Description of Our Seminar:

This seminar takes you to the journey of examining self-representation in the networked digital world. You will explore answers from ancient wisdoms to modern research for the unknown questions: What is the self? Who am I? How did I

become who I am? Who will I be in the world? What does it mean to live mindfully and reflectively? And what helps and hinders that process? You will also learn how to use social media tools to invent or reinvent yourself.

Required Text

Nhật Hạnh. *Living Buddha, Living Christ* /. 10th Anniversary Ed. New York : Riverhead Books, 2007. Print. ISBN 978-1-59448-239-7 (Freshmen Seminar common text)

Rainie, Harrison, and Barry Wellman. *Networked: The New Social Operating System*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012. Print. ISBN 978-0-262-01719-0

Graded Activities and Assignments:

Class attendance and participation 100 points

Individual Assignments:

- Letter to Self (2) 50 points
- Discussion Board Postings (5) 50 points
- Selfie Stories/Presentations (4) 200 points
- DU Events, Short Reflection Essays (4) 100 points
- On-campus Mini Field Trips (5) 50 points
- Reading Assignments (10) 100 points
- Common Seminar Assignment 150 points

Team-based Assignments:

- Seminar In-class Projects (4) 200 points

Total 1000 points

Grading Scale

A = 930-1000 points
A- = 900-929
B+ = 870-899
B = 830-869
B- = 800-829
C+ = 770-799
C = 730-769
C- = 700-729
D = 600-699
F = 599 and below

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is mandatory. Class instruction and discussions are integral to the course, and you cannot successfully complete this course without attending class regularly. You are allowed **three** absences, excused or unexcused, over the course of the semester. Absences beyond three, whether excused or not, will lower your grade. Four absences will result in the lowering of your *overall course grade* by one full letter grade (e.g., a “B” would become a “C”). Five or more absences will likely result in a failing grade for the course. Two late arrivals or two instances of leaving class early equal one absence. If you are late for class, you must speak with me to make sure you are marked tardy and not as absent for that class. If you miss a class, you must contact me or a *reliable* classmate to find out

what we did in class and what homework, assignments, or reading you need to complete for the next class. You will also need to photocopy a reliable classmate's notes for that day.

Since this course is structured as a seminar, the majority of our class time will consist of class discussion. Thus, your participation in class is a crucial part of your course grade and your overall performance in the class. Your participation grade will be assessed on the basis of your verbal participation in class and small group discussions. The effort you show in contributing to class discussions and the quality of your contributions will help determine your final participation grade. You must complete the readings *prior* to the class for which they are assigned and bring the assigned texts to class. Generally, the following grading scale for verbal participation and engagement with the class will be used:

A range = frequent meaningful contributions to class discussion, excellent engagement with the class

B range = occasional meaningful contributions to class discussion, very good engagement with the class

C range = infrequent contributions to class discussions, pleasant demeanor, attentive presence

D = little or no contributions to class discussions, poor attendance, may exhibit the following behaviors: surly attitude; frequent staring out of window or into space; doodling; reading the newspaper or other extraneous material during class; napping in class; talking to friends during lectures/discussions; leaving room during class for non-emergency reasons; disrespectful attitude towards class, instructor, or other students

F = no contributions to class discussions, excessive absences

Your participation grade may also be assessed on the basis of your completion of homework, in-class writing, peer review, or other activities/assignments for the class.

The “Seminar” Format: Since the format of this class is defined as seminar style, each class will involve the active participation and engagement of ALL members of the class. Readings and assignments have been selected and designed to promote discussion and exchange amongst members of the class. As active participants instead of passive recipients, students will help guide and focus discussion and shape the direction of the class.

Preparation for Class: As a general rule, for every hour spent in class each week, you are expected to spend two hours on homework outside of class. Thus, since this class is worth 3 credit hours, you are expected to spend 6 hours each week studying and preparing for class (this includes completing the reading, writing essays, and working on other projects and assignments).

Essay Submission: Essays are due at the *beginning* of class on the due date. Unless explicit arrangements are made with the instructor at least one day before the due date, any paper submitted after that date will be docked one full letter grade (e.g., from “A” to “B”). Late papers must be submitted **within seven days** of the original due date. Papers will not be accepted after this deadline, and the student will receive an “F” for the assignment. You must back up your essays on a jump drive, Google Drive, Dropbox or N drive on the DU network in case they are lost.

Assignments must be submitted online via Canvas LAS 118 by the due date.

Learning Resources: Tutors in Learning Resources in the Academic Enrichment Center are available to help students improve their essays for this class. You can make an appointment to see a tutor by going to Parmer 010 or calling 708-524-6682.

Academic Integrity: According to the University Bulletin, “[s]tudents of the university must conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity” (29). Plagiarism and academic dishonesty are unacceptable and will be penalized according to University guidelines. Violations of academic integrity include cheating and using or paraphrasing someone else's words or work (including internet sources) without proper citation. It is the student's responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism and to avoid it. Please ask me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism. In addition, you may not turn in work completed for another class. If you are

interested in building off work submitted for another class, you must discuss the possibility of revising and adding to your work with me and the other relevant professor(s).

The University policy on Academic Integrity can be found on pages 30-31 in the Dominican University 2015-2016 Undergraduate Bulletin. The Bulletin can be found online on the “myDU” page (click on “Schools” at the top, click on “Rosary College of Arts and Sciences,” click on “Undergraduate Bulletin” at the bottom of the page).

Technology Requirements: I will communicate with you at times by email, so you must check regularly your Dominican e-mail account. I will post materials and student grades on Canvas. You can find a record of your attendance, tardiness, and absences on your Canvas page under this course.

Students with Disabilities: Students who request reasonable academic accommodations or services for learning, psychological, or physical disabilities must have documentation on file at the Dean of Students Office. At the beginning of the semester, please give me documentation about the disability and make an appointment to discuss with me reasonable accommodations/services you may need. For questions about documentation, accommodations, and services, contact the Dean of Students Office by phone (x6822) or visit the Dean’s office in Lewis 132.

Student-Athletes: It is important for students who are members of Dominican University athletic teams to maintain excellence both in their academic work and athletic performance. Student-athletes should notify me in advance if they need to miss a class because of a game and contact me or a reliable student to find out what we covered in class. The student-athlete needs to make-up work from the missed class and turn in any homework or assignments that were due.

Building Community and Disruptive Behavior: We are all important members of the community of our classroom and need to show mutual respect for one another. There are certain behaviors that disrupt the optimal level of teaching and learning in the classroom for the instructor and students. Ringing phones and texting during class are distracting, so please make sure your phone is on an appropriate setting when you enter class. If you have a critical situation and need to receive a call/text or make a call during class, please discuss this with me before class if possible or tell me discreetly during class.

Students who are not respectfully participating in class will have points subtracted from their Attendance and Participation grade or be asked to leave the class (and will be marked absent for that day). Behaviors that hinder class participation and building community and create distractions include sleeping; frequent or prolonged unrelated side conversations with friends while the instructor or other students are talking; eating large meals; leaving the room for non-emergency reasons (please make necessary arrangements so you do not normally need to leave class); listening to headphones; or reading materials or doing other work unrelated to the class. You may use laptops to take notes in class as long as they are not too distracting. If I find you are frequently using the laptop for activities that are unrelated to the class that day (such as Web surfing, using Facebook, playing computer games), you may lose the privilege of bringing your laptop to class.

Difficult Dialogues: We will discuss controversial issues related to politics, nationalism, culture, race, gender, class, language, immigration and other topics. While I encourage you to express your opinions and viewpoints, you must also respectfully listen to perspectives different from your own. Students who exhibit disruptive and disrespectful behavior or language will be asked to leave the class. If you have concerns about particular topics or discussions raised in class, please come speak with me in my office hours.

Course Evaluation

Near the end of the semester you will be asked to evaluate this course in an anonymous online form on myDU. Participating in the course evaluation is an important aspect of being a member of the Dominican community. We all,

students and instructors alike, rely on feedback so that we might grow and improve. Dominican instructors are always looking for ways to improve student learning and we can't do it without your feedback and comments. Since the course evaluation is electronic, it can be completed at your convenience, outside of class. Although it is accessed using your Dominican username and password, all responses are submitted anonymously. Course instructors are not provided access to their course evaluation reports until after final course grades have been submitted to the Registrar's Office, so you should feel confident in providing candid feedback, knowing that your evaluation will not affect your course grade.

Course Calendar

(subject to change as needed)

Please note that assignments will be posted on Canvas with detailed instructions; please check Canvas regularly. Assignments will also always be announced and reviewed in class.

Unit One: Transition to College

Individual and Community Identity/Mindfulness and Reflective Thinking

Week One

Tuesday, September 1: **Introduction** to our seminar; review syllabus; ice breaker activities; Canvas activity – Discussion Board posting 1

Thursday, September 3: **DU exploration:** visit from Peer Adviser, introduction presentation; *Letter to Self* rough draft due in class
Assignment: Read Hanh Chapter One and Two; Complete Reading Assignment 1 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday, September 6; Complete Letter to Self final draft, due midnight Sunday, September 6

Week Two

Tuesday, September 8: **Academic Enrichment Center:** mini field trip; discussing on Chapter One and Two in class; form teams
Assignment: Discussion Board posting 2 on Canvas, due midnight Wednesday September 9

Thursday, September 10: **Stress Management:** visit from Wellness Center staff; discuss mindfulness and reflective thinking; introduction to Selfie Stories/Presentations assignment and Mini Field Trip assignment
Assignment: Read Hanh Chapter Three and Four; complete Reading Assignment 2 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday, September 13; Mini Field Trip 1 and 2 are due midnight Sunday September 13

Student Involvement Fair <https://www.facebook.com/DUbeinvolved>

Week Three

Tuesday, September 15: 2015 Critical thinking Assessment Test (CAT) in class
Assignment: DU Mini Field Trip 3 and 4 are due midnight Wednesday September 16

Thursday, September 17: **Mindfulness and Self-compassion:** visit from Wellness Center staff; **How to study in College/How College is Different from High School:** visit from Peer Advisor
Assignment: Read Hanh Chapter Five and Six; complete Reading Assignment 3 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday, September 20

Week Four

Tuesday, September 22: **Field trip to the Oak Park Buddhist Temple; Class meet at DU Circle drive at 12:50 sharp; Transportation provided.**

Thursday, September 24: **Procrastination:** visit from Wellness Center staff; **Set up Weebly Site for the Selfie Story/Presentation project in class**

Assignment: Read Hanh Chapter Seven and Eight; complete Reading Assignment 4 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday, September 27;

Mini Field Trip 5 due midnight Sunday September 27

Week Five

Selfie Story/Presentation Weebly Site setup due midnight Monday September 28

Tuesday, September 29: **No Class; Caritas / Veritas Symposium!! Details to follow! Attend at least one concurrent session; attend plenary and convocation for extra credit opportunities**
Assignment: DU Event Reflection Essay 1 – Caritas/Veritas Symposium due midnight Wednesday, September 30

Thursday, October 1: **Focus Assessment Workshop:** visit from Peer Advisor; discuss Caritas/Veritas Symposium.
Assignment: Read Hanh Chapter Nine and Ten; complete Reading Assignment 5 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday, October 4

Week Six

Tuesday, October 6: **No class;** Freshmen Assembly, 11:30 -12:45 pm at Lund Auditorium. Assembly speaker Sr. Nancy, who is comedian Bill Murray's sister and an Adrian Dominican nun. More detail about Sr. Nancy at <http://nancymurray.adriandominicans.org/>

Thursday, October 8: **Time Management/Public Speaking:** visit from Peer Advisor; 3-minute Selfie Story Presentation
Assignment: Read Rainie and Wellman Chapter One and Two; complete Reading Assignment 6 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday October 11

Unit Two: Networked Self The Triple Revolution

Week Seven

Tuesday, October 13: **The Triple Revolution:** discussing Chapter One and Two; complete Discussion Board posting 3 in class

Thursday, October 15: **Focus Assessment Analysis:** visit from Peer Advisor; Career Exploration activity
Assignment: Read Rainie and Wellman Chapter Three and Four; complete Reading Assignment 7 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday October 18

Week Eight

Tuesday, October 20: **No Class** *Major Expo 11:30 - 1pm, Social Hall*
Major Expo Event Reflection Essay 2 due midnight Wednesday October 21

Thursday, October 22: **The Triple Revolution:** discussing Chapter Three and Four; complete Discussion Board posting 4 in class; **Focus Assessment Workshop:** visit from Peer Advisor
Assignment: Read Rainie and Wellman Chapter Five, Six and Seven; complete Reading Assignment 8 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday October 25; Letter to Self due midnight Sunday October 25

Networked Individualism

Week Nine

Tuesday, October 27: **Networked relationships, families, and work;** think-pair-share activities; introduction to team-based project and Seminar Common Assignment; start Discussion Board posting 5 in class

Thursday, October 29: **Team project 1 in class**
Assignment: Read Rainie and Wellman Chapter Eight and Nine; complete Reading Assignment 9 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday November 1; Event Reflection Essay 3 due midnight Sunday November 1

Week Ten

Tuesday, November 3: **Networked Creators and Information;** discuss Chapter Eight and Nine; Spring Mock Registration

Thursday, November 5: **Spring Registration Presentation:** visit from Peer Advisor
Assignment: Read Rainie and Wellman Chapter Ten and Eleven; complete Reading Assignment 10 on Canvas, due midnight Sunday November 8

Operating in a Networked World, Now and in the Future

Week Eleven

Tuesday, November 10: **Thriving as a Networked Individual and the Future of Networked Individualism:** start Discussion Board posting 5 in class

Thursday, November 12: Team project 2 in class
Assignment: Common Assignment draft due midnight Sunday November 15

Week Twelve

Tuesday, November 17: Selfie story/presentation 2 in class

Thursday, November 19: Team project 3 in class
Assignment: Common Assignment final draft due midnight Sunday November 22

Week Thirteen

Tuesday, November 24: Selfie story/presentation 3 in class

Thursday, November 26: Thanksgiving **No Class**

Week Fourteen

Tuesday, December 1: Selfie story/presentation 4 in class

Thursday, December 3: Final team project 4 in class; Event Reflection Essay 4 due midnight Sunday December 6

Week Fifteen

Tuesday, December 8: Final team project 4 in class

Thursday, December 10: Final team project presentation due in class

Week Sixteen

December 14 – 19: **Final Exam Week: No Class**