ARIZONA INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Edwin Clausen


Ed Clausen described the program of Arizona International College, The University of Arizona, as one in which undergraduate teaching and learning to develop global citizenship are at the forefront. The college, newly established in 1996, enrolled 400 students in 1997-1998, and will cap its numbers at 5000 students. Students are divided into interdisciplinary, thematic houses of 250 students and twelve faculty members.

Indeed, interdisciplinary is the adjective that Clausen used frequently to describe the curriculum. Of the 120 units required for graduation, sixty must be interdisciplinary. The service learning component is a further interdisciplinary characteristic, for six credits (forty-five hours of service per credit) of service learning are a graduation requirement. The service learning may take place anywhere in the world, and Clausen asked the audience for overseas service learning recommendations. [Editor's note: Madeline Chu, Kalamazoo College, <chu@kzoo.edu>, has made a similar request for service learning suggestions.]

Students must also complete three credits of career-related internships.

Among the interdisciplinary themes of the AIC curriculum are issues of civic response to global concerns, sustainable development, and the arts and cultures of the world. Clausen outlined the rigorous assessment program including formative and summative evaluations.

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POLITICS, POPULAR CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Barbara Bixby

Barbara Bixby notes that at AIC, faculty members "do everything, from teach to design curriculum to create policy to work with students on a ROPES course." In addition to the politics course described below, Bixby teaches a first year course, "Origins and Problems of the Modern World," which focuses on freedom and civic responsibility, and a team taught course on the political economy of Asia.

This abbreviated syllabus of the course, "Politics, Popular Culture, and Society," (AIID202), a required course for first year students, is an example of how to weave Asia into a politics course, how to incorporate literature into a political science class, or how to keep finding interesting things to share with students. Both the Endo text [Silence] and the PBS Frontline video [Gate of Heavenly Peace] work well for they give students a sense of drama about important issues, introduce some interesting cultural insights, and make use of a variety of written and visual texts. I am especially fond of the video, in part because of the website [http://www.pbs.org]. It is comprehensive and provides immediate resources. I would enjoy suggestions, comments, or questions from this audience.

Texts

Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe, 1959
Free Ireland: Towards a Lasting Peace, Gerry Adams, 1986
Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed, Robert J. Donia and John V.A. Fine, 1994
Silence, Shusaku Endo, 1969
Radical Democracy, C. Douglas Lummis, 1996
Long Walk to Freedom, Nelson Mandela, 1994
I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala, Rigoberta Menchu, 1984

Articles from The New Yorker and the New York Times Videos

This course looks at characteristics of the nation-state, how it is structured, and what makes it sustainable or not. Using novels, autobiographies, discussions
of popular culture, and historical overviews, we will look at a selection of nation-states, some which have successfully negotiated the tensions between groups (South Africa and Japan), others that have come apart (Yugoslavia), and those that are struggling (Ireland). The purpose is to explore how governments have been created, why they did or did not work, and what this might mean as countries struggle for social, political, and economic freedom.

Active, appropriate class participation is expected (25% of grade). There will be an in-class midterm (25%), between eight and ten in-class writes or video responses (10%), the Academic Festival project (15%), and a final research paper (25%).

The research paper is to be no longer than ten pages. The syllabus notes when a topic, thesis statement, draft, or final paper is due. The purpose of this exercise is to have you find an area of interest, create a sophisticated and meaningful thesis question, collect appropriate data, and using your own analysis, respond to the inquiry. We will go over proper form, citation procedures, and how to make judgements on the quality of the data you collect. You will informally present your findings at the end of the semester to the class.

(Only Asian content is reproduced here.)

Week 1
introduction, discussion of syllabus, texts, and video, critical thinking.
America
"On the Pulse of the Morning," Maya Angelou. How do we define ourselves, or what is an American? In-class response write.

Week 2
China
Video, Gate of Heavenly Peace (Frontline) and website (pbs.org)
Please read the website before class with special attention to the chronology and the names of people.

Week 3
Second half of video. What characteristics of Chinese government make it sustainable or not? Using China as an example, generate a list of categories to analyze whether a government is sustainable.

Week 4
Media
How should we analyze the media? Set up media analyses of newspapers and weekly/monthly publications.
Are there additional characteristics of sustainable government to be added to the list? Should a free press be among them? After these discussions, do you see the situation in China in a different light?
Read Radical Democracy, C. Douglas Lummis, pp. 1-78: Big D/little d democrats and beyond the rhetoric

Week 10
Japan
Silence, Shusaku Endo, pp. 1-87
Endo is a modern Japanese Christian. How can he take on the voice of a Portuguese priest in the 1600s? Is he convincing?
Japan and Christianity. Why did the government fear foreign faith?

Week 11
Endo, pp. 88-end.
What does the novel tell us about the political stability of Japan? Can we add more characteristics to our list of those necessary for sustainable government? How does the government resolve tension? Is force sustainable?

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