

# **LAS 401 Pre-Assignment**

**Due at beginning of first class meeting**

***Pre-assignment:***

Read all introductory material and Chapters 1,2 and 3 in Stephen R. Covey's *The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit*. Watch the segments on the DVD appropriate to the assigned chapters

Write a brief essay (around 300 words) on the reading and videos.

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**Course syllabus follows . . .**



## LAS 401

Siena Heights University

Session: Fall, 2009

Class Dates: 9-9-09 to 10-28-09

Instructor: Dale L. Reuss Classroom: TBD Day/Time: Wednesdays/6 – 9:00 p.m.

Contact Info: Home Phone: 269.556.9984

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Required text(s): **The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit; Stephen Covey  
Man's Search for Meaning; Viktor Frankl**

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### University Mission

#### **The mission of Siena Heights, a Catholic University**

*founded and sponsored by the Adrian Dominican Sisters, is to assist people to become more competent, purposeful, and ethical through a teaching and learning environment which respects the dignity of all.*

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### Department / Division Learning Outcomes

**Liberal Arts Learning:** Students will be conversant with the ideas, content and methods of various disciplines.

**Religious Traditions:** Students will reflect on the wisdom of religious traditions in understanding the meaning of life.

**Creativity:** Students will engage in the creative process.

**Critical Thinking:** Students will think critically.

**Communication:** Students will communicate effectively.

**Technology:** Students will demonstrate effective use of technology.

**Ethical Integration:** Students will examine personal and professional decisions in light of ethical principles.

**Diversity in Community:** Students will understand the diversity and interdependence of cultures.

**Social Responsibility:** Students will realize the importance and demands of social responsibility.

## **PROGRAM OUTCOME STATEMENT**

Graduates of Siena Heights University will develop skills and attitudes necessary to continue developing as self-respecting professionals. They will be:

- Capable of making sense out of their daily work and personal lives
- Willing to take action when appropriate
- Aware that their search for final answers must be lifelong

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course represents a community of scholars engaged in free, open, and intellectual inquiry. The primary goal of the seminar is to enable students to integrate their undergraduate education along the lines of inquiry established by the instructor. The seminar will engage students in a significant learning experience that will call upon them to articulate their personal philosophy of life, ethics, social consciousness, and life/career aspirations and commitments.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Students will analyze their chosen discipline and present one aspect of that analysis to the class. Students will listen to presentations from other disciplines with regard to the ideas, content and methods of those areas.
- Students will work within a team to develop an original presentation on a subject of common interest requiring research, critical thinking, cooperation, and effective communication within the group and to the class as a whole.
- Students will look within themselves to reflect upon their existence and experience as a spiritual being and to apply their insights towards a continuing development of their philosophy of life and search for meaning.
- Students will seek out a professional within their discipline whom they consider successful to interview for the purpose of exploring what it means to be competent, purposeful, and ethical within that profession.
- Students will reflect upon their educational and life experiences thus far in an effort to bring a focus to their efforts up to this point in life and to look in a forward direction as to their goals and aspirations for the future.

## **COURSE METHODS**

Journal writing

Class discussion

Small group discussion

Reading and analysis

Appropriate movies/videos

Student research

Student classroom presentations

## **METHODS OF EVALUATION**

1. Weekly Reaction Papers: 20 pts. each
2. Journal (final form): 50 pts.
3. Presentation from within Discipline: 50 pts.
4. Presentation of Article: 50 pts.
5. Spiritual Journey: 50 pts.
6. Professional Interview: 50 pts.
7. Synthesis Paper: 50 pts.
8. Other items as semester progresses
9. Attendance and Participation: 20 pts./class
  - a. Attendance is expected for the entire class period
  - b. Excessive absences (2 or more) may be grounds for failure or dismissal.

## **Grading Scale**

- A (100-90%)
- B (89 – 80%)
- C (79 – 70%)
- D (69 – 60%)
- E ( 59 – 0%)

## **PLAGIARISM STATEMENT**

Plagiarism is offering someone else's work as your own. This is not acceptable. Plagiarized work may result in consequences up to and including failure for the class. The incident will be referred to the Siena Office for any further action the University may deem necessary.

## **DISABILITY STATEMENT**

If a student is in need of an accommodation based on the impact of your disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Siena Heights University Office for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. Please make your request within the first two weeks of the course. Just a reminder, requests for accommodations are not retroactive

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

As a courtesy to everyone in the classroom, please turn off or silence all cell phones, pagers, handhelds or anything else which goes beep in the night.

## **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS / PROJECTS**

You will be involved in 6 major projects through the course of the semester. Each will be worth 50 points towards your final grade.

***\*\*\* In all of your writings, Student/Teacher confidentiality is strictly maintained \*\*\****

A description of each project follows:

**Present an idea from your discipline. (See schedule for presentation dates)**

In a 10-15 minute presentation, explain an idea from your discipline. This can be a relatively abstract or general idea (like the concept of left brain/right brain organization) or a more concrete “how-to” idea (like how to secure a crime scene). Your presentation should include three elements:

- the idea itself
- how or where the idea fits into your discipline
- how or why the idea is important in the big picture of things

Be ready to answer questions or lead a discussion.

**Present an article for class discussion. (See schedule for presentation dates)**

**Group project – 2 to 3 members per group, depending on overall class size**

Select an article (3 – 8 pages) from a magazine, journal, internet, etc., which deals with ideas suited for a broadly educated readership. Avoid highly technical journals which are accessible only to specialists; and avoid highly popular magazines which aim at the lowest common denominator. The article should deal with some idea which is at least mildly controversial and which has connections to several disciplines. On your presentation day, lead the class in a 20-minute discussion of the article.

Mildly controversial means that there are opinions that can be generated. Your goal in your presentation is to present the facts and issues in the article and then try to bring out those opinions in the minds of the people listening to you. Generate thinking in the minds of each person listening to your presentation - raise questions; present ideas, thoughts, and analysis; promote discussion; get people to interact with your topic. Generate thoughtful and meaningful dialogue within your presentation time.

**Write a paper on your spiritual history. (See schedule for due date)**

In a 3 – 4 page paper, present your spiritual/religious history/journey. What events or experiences have directed you on this journey? How does the “God question” fit into your overall philosophy of life? What challenges to religion are presented by contemporary society, especially science and popular culture? What do you think is the future for religion/spirituality?

**Interview a professional in your discipline. (See schedule for presentation dates)**

Spend 15 to 30 minutes with a professional who is currently working in your discipline. Explore what it means to be competent, purposeful, and ethical within your discipline. What are the expectations of employers and clients for the professionals working in your discipline? What directions might your career take? What ethical or moral dilemmas are likely to arise within your discipline? Is there a code of ethics for your discipline? Summarize the content of your discussion in a 2 page paper and be prepared to present this summary orally to the class.

**Final Journal (See schedule for due date)**

The Final Journal will be a representation of your semester's work in LAS 401. Everything we do or discuss can be reflected in this document. In addition, you may add anything else which you would like to include that demonstrates your thinking process throughout this semester.

Think of this as being the presentation of a final report/project to an employer who has requested you to research a particular topic. The topic in this situation is you!

You will be graded on the content, neatness and orderliness of presentation, ease of finding information, evidence of self-reflection and overall effectiveness.

**Synthesis Paper (See schedule for due date)**

The final paper (about 1000 words) should be a summation and a synthesis of all the processes that have influenced you so far, the impact four years of college have made on you, and the direction you see yourself taking. The essay should include in a comprehensive way, the ideas and subjects this course covered, including the impact upon you of *The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit*, *Man's Search for Meaning*, *Affluenza* and any other material addressed during the semester.

**Siena Heights University at Lake Michigan College  
LAS 401 Assignment/Class Activity Schedule (subject to change)**

**1. Sept. 9**

Introductions and discuss syllabus

In-class writing (every class will begin with writing)

- *Pre-assignment reaction writing due tonight (8<sup>th</sup> Habit: Ch. 1,2,3)*

Next Week:

Journal assignment

Reaction paper to *8<sup>th</sup> Habit* (approx. 300 words)

**2. Sept. 16**

In-class writing

Writing assignments from previous week

Next Week:

Journal assignment

Reaction paper to *8<sup>th</sup> Habit*

*Presentation from Within Your Discipline*

**3. Sept. 23**

In-class writing  
Writing assignments from previous week

- *Presentation from Within Your Discipline* – Due Tonight

Next Week:  
Journal assignment  
Reaction paper to *8<sup>th</sup> Habit*

**4. Sept. 30**

In-class writing  
Writing assignments from previous week

Next Week:  
Journal assignment  
Reaction paper to *8<sup>th</sup> Habit*  
*Presentation of Articles*

**5. Oct. 7**

In-class writing  
Writing assignments from previous week

- *Presentation of Articles*

Next Week:  
Journal assignment  
Reaction paper to *Man's Search for Meaning*, approx. pages 1-64 (include prefaces)  
Spiritual Journey Paper  
Professional Interview Paper/Presentation

**6. Oct. 14**

In-class writing  
Writing assignments from previous week  
*Spiritual Journey Paper due*  
*Professional Interview Paper due*

Next Week:  
Journal assignment  
Reaction paper to *Man's Search for Meaning*  
Final Journal due

**7. Oct. 21**

In-class writing

*Final Journal* due tonight

Writing assignments from previous week (include within the Final Journal)

Next Week:

Synthesis Paper

**8. Oct. 28 – Final Class Session**

Synthesis Paper Due

Class discussion/activities

**Projects Due**

Week 3: Presentations from Within Discipline

Week 5: Presentation of Articles

Week 6: Spiritual Journey Paper, and  
Professional Interview Paper

Week 7: Final Journal

Week 8: Synthesis Paper