UF 200 Civic and Ethical Foundations
“Censorship in Society”
Section 035 (12920)
Spring 2016

Instructor: Dr. Dora Ramirez
Meeting times: TuTh 12:00pm-1:15pm
Location: Interactive Learning Ctr. Rm 404
Email: doraramirez@boisestate.edu
Phone: 426-7081
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:30am-11:30am and by appointment
Office: Liberal Arts bldg., Rm 209D

Course Description

UF200 Civic and Ethical Foundations engages students in discussions of ethics, diversity, and internationalization. Courses include writing assignments and a Civic Engagement component. PREREQ: ENGL 102, UF 100, sophomore status.

The central purpose of University Foundations 200 is to provide students with a foundation for living and learning in a complex and diverse world. The course uses the theme of “with liberty and justice for all” as an anchor, examining the meaning and implications of this phrase for self and for others in a variety of contexts.

Censorship

“Danger in a book lies in the eye of the censor.”

—Alberto Manguel, Forbidden Reading

U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, in Texas v. Johnson, said, “If there is a bedrock principle underlying the First Amendment, it is that the Government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable.” Individuals may restrict what they themselves or their children read, but they must not call on governmental or public agencies to prevent others from reading or seeing that material. —Robert P. Doyle, Books Challenged or Banned, 2010-2011

In a political and global world, censorship often affects what, how, and why we read certain texts, watch certain films, listen to a specific type of music, or search the Internet in a specific way. In keeping with the course’s theme of “with liberty and justice for all,” this course offers students the opportunity to reflect on censorship from a personal (self or micro) perspective, their civic and ethical responsibility for others (meso) regarding censorship, and the individual’s role in and connection to a global community (macro). Students in this course will focus on the censorship of literary texts, films, and music while examining the civic and ethical foundations of censorship cases in the United States.
In “A Framework for Thinking Ethically,” ethics is defined as “standards of behavior that tell us how human beings ought to act in the many situations in which they find themselves” (The Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University). Within that definition, ethics are important when deciding what one reads and what films they watch, what parents allow their children to watch/read, what schools allow on their curriculum, what the film industry deems appropriate for the viewer, what Google allows to be seen by the public, what Facebook/Instagram censors off their feeds, and what information governments allow the public to know. This course will give students the opportunity to explore these questions throughout the semester through writing, discussion, oral presentations, and Civic Engagement activities.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a Civic Engagement Activity from the options available to you (See handout under “Assignments”). This civic engagement experience should help students gain a deeper comprehension of how ethical and civic responsibility has helped push at the understanding of how censorship (at different levels) intersects with our awareness of class, gender, sexuality, and other categories of power and difference.

---

**University Learning Objectives**

UF200 builds on the following three University Learning Outcomes (ULO) as the base assessment for student success in this course:

- **Written Communication (ULO 1)**
  - Write effectively in multiple contexts for a variety of audiences.
- **Ethics (ULO 5)**
  - Analyze ethical issues in personal, professional, and civic life and produce reasoned evaluations of competing value systems and ethical claims.
- **Diversity and Internationalization (ULO 6)**
  - Apply knowledge of cultural differences to matters of local, regional, national, and international importance, including political, economic, and environmental issues.

The assignments, readings, discussions, and activities found in this course align with these outcomes. More information about each ULO can be found here: [http://academics.boisestate.edu/fsp/foundational-studies-program/rubrics/](http://academics.boisestate.edu/fsp/foundational-studies-program/rubrics/).

**After successful completion of the course, students should be able to:**

- Analyze and articulate one’s own biases, privileges, and limitations and how these inform one’s preparation for living and learning in a diverse world (ULO 6);
- Use an awareness of ethical frameworks to consider alternatives, make decisions, and imagine and evaluate consequences (ULO 5);
- Consider and take appropriate actions to engage positively in civic and community life as a citizen of a local and global community (ULO 6);
- Communicate well-reasoned ideas relevant to understanding our diverse and complex world, especially in written form (ULO 1).
Required Reading for the Course

There are a variety of controversial, but important issues and themes that are raised in the texts chosen for this course; therefore, students must engage in the material on a critical and analytical level in their reading, writing, listening, and participation in this course. Dialogue with each other, as well as with these texts, is important in fully understanding and respecting the issues at hand. All the reading is available on Blackboard (Bb) and can be found under “Course Documents.” The rest are links to internet sites. You are responsible for purchasing or checking out the book you choose to write about for the final project (everyone will have a different book).

Webpages:
- Allen Ginsberg’s Howl http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/179381
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTlrSYbCbHE
  - OR- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiFlu_z4dM8
- Preview of “Color of Conscience” http://idahoptv.org/productions/specials/colorofconscience/

Blackboard Articles and Essays:
“The Ethics of Right versus Right” by Rushworth M. Kidder
“A Framework for Thinking Ethically” (can be found both on Bb and at this link: http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/framework.html)

“Us and Them: A History of Intolerance in America”
Mary E. Hull, “Introduction” (pgs. 1-41) In Censorship in America
Charles H. Busha, Ed.. “Freedom in the United States in the Twentieth Century” (pgs. 9-14) In An Intellectual Freedom Primer

“Dynamics of Oppression” by Jarrod Schwartz
Marjorie Heins, “‘The Devil’s Music’: The Oddity of Warning Labels on Art” (pgs. 77-94) from *Sex, Sin, and Blasphemy: A Guide to America’s Censorship Wars*


**Films and Documentaries:**
*Forbidden Reading* (2009) (from the series, Series: Empire of the Word: A Reader's Journey)
*Howl* (starring James Franco)
*This Film is Not Yet Rated* (This film deals with rated X or NC-17 rated films and includes explicit sexuality and some violence. If you are uncomfortable with this, please let me know and we will find an alternative assignment for you to complete. And, yes, I see the irony in that statement since this class is about censorship.)
*A Streetcar Named Desire*
*Pulp Fiction*

**GRADING**

If at any time you have questions about the coursework or your grade, please do not hesitate to contact me through email, phone, or come by and visit me in my office.

**Your grade will be based numerically as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Right versus Right Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial Post-Class Reflection (300-500 word essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>Civic Engagement Activity (100 points) and Reflection (100 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Final Essay (Draft work—including presenting your idea and summary of paper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Digication Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350</td>
<td>Final Essay (8-10 page researched essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Discussion Participation/Active Participation, In-class activities and attendance (this includes Writing Workshops, turning in completed drafts on-time, in-class writing activities, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1000 = Total Points**

Attendance is required in this course. Please familiarize yourself with the Attendance Policy under “Policies” in order to gauge what is required of you in this course.

**Grading Scale**

- A+ = 100 points
- A = 95-99 points
- A- = 90-94 points
- B+ = 89 points
- B = 84-88 points
- B- = 80-83 points
- C+ = 79
- C = 74-78
- C- = 70-73
D+ = 69
D = 64-68
D- = 60-63
F = 60 and below

COURSE REQUIREMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Blackboard
Blackboard is an important component of this course. That is where you will find the syllabus, assignments, readings, and where you will check your grades.

Digication: We will share current events in regards to censorship, as well as post articles, events, and artifacts that help us understand what the issues are surrounding censorship. For more information on Digication, go to: http://ctl.boisestate.edu/eportfolios/digication-support-faculty/getting-started-with-digication/

Written Assignments: The due dates for assignments are found on the Daily Schedule. If there are any changes, the most up-to-date information will always be on Blackboard, under “Announcements.” I will always provide an updated Daily Schedule. You are responsible for being aware of these changes, so be sure to check Blackboard daily.

Late Assignments: I do not accept late assignments. If you have a medical concern or university-sponsored event that you must attend, discuss this with me prior to turning in any late work.

Civic Engagement (CE): The CE component requires three (3) hours of time outside of the classroom. Please see handout titled “Civic Engagement” on Bb.

POLICIES

Class Attendance: I take attendance very seriously because it is essential for effective learning and for the conversations that we will have during class. Due to the nature of the course and the fact that we will be working in small groups and as a class, attendance is an important aspect of your final grade. I expect you to attend every class and be on time for both class and any meetings we have scheduled to attend outside of class. After four (4) absences, I will lower your grade by one letter grade. From this point on, each absence will lower it another letter grade. If you are tardy to class more than three times, I will count those three as one absence. I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. If you are on your second absence, you will need to discuss your absences with me. If you are missing classes for medical reasons or for university-sponsored events, you need to let me know before the event.

Active Class Participation: Because we will be focusing on censorship, we will be engaged in some very interesting and at times controversial material that some of you may have prior knowledge of, while others of you are new to the subject. We are here to listen to differing opinions and everyone’s voice is part of the classroom community and dynamic, so please do not
allow this to hinder your performance during classroom discussion. Every student is expected to participate in class discussions, small groups, writing workshops, and outside research activities. Active participation includes being prepared for class, coming to class on time, and taking part in the class activities. For each text you read, I encourage you to take notes while reading and write down two to three things you wish to discuss in class. I will draw on exercises that ask students to contribute during every class period. This is worth 100 points.

**Academic Integrity:** It is academically dishonest, and often illegal, to present someone else’s ideas or writing as your own. Presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own is a serious offense and can result in penalties as severe as dismissal from the university. Often students plagiarize because they fear trying out their ideas, run out of time as the due date approaches, or they simply don’t understand how to credit a source. Academic dishonesty may result in course failure or dismissal from the University. If you are concerned about this issue, please talk to me. We will discuss this further in class. For more information about plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty, see the following publication: *Boise State University Student Code of Conduct*, http://osrr.boisestate.edu/scp-codeofconduct-article6/. For more on Student Rights and Responsibilities, please see their website: http://osrr.boisestate.edu/.

**Boise State University Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy:** Boise State University is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment that is free of unlawful discrimination and harassment and in which every employee, student, contractor, vendor, customer, and visitor is treated with dignity and respect. The University strives to create an environment that supports, encourages and rewards career and educational advancement on the basis of ability and performance. Accordingly, the University prohibits to the extent permitted by applicable law, discrimination and harassment against an individual on the basis of that person’s race, color, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, physical or mental disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local law.

We will value diversity in this class, and discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. For more information, see the university's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy: http://policy.boisestate.edu/governance-legal/nondiscrimination-antiharassment/

**RESOURCES**

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**
To request academic accommodations for a disability, contact the Office of Disabilities Services, located in the Lincoln Garage. Their phone is (208) 426-1583. Students are required to provide documentation of their disability and meet with a Disability Specialist prior to receiving accommodations. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. For further information see: http://drc.boisestate.edu/

**The Writing Center:**
The Writing Center is a free service open to all students at Boise State, a place where you can find support for your writing efforts in any subject, at any stage of your writing process:
brainstorming, revising, editing. To schedule a consultation, stop by Liberal Arts, Room 200, or call 426-1298. You may also make an appointment online: www.boisestate.edu/wcenter. To make the best use of the Writing Center, bring the piece of writing that you are working on and a copy of the assignment (if possible). If you cannot come in to the Center, they do offer e-mail consultations for writers. Visit their web page for more information on their hours and how to send them your paper.

**UF 200: Daily Schedule**

Browse the following websites throughout the semester:
- American Library Association: http://www.ala.org/bbooks/
- Banned Books Week: http://www.bannedbooksweek.org/
- A Brief History of Film Censorship: http://ncac.org/resource/a-brief-history-of-film-censorship/
- Film Censorship: Noteworthy moments in History: https://www.aelu.org/files/multimedia/censorshiptimeline.html

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Have completed before class:</th>
<th>Due dates/Reminders/Homework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 01/12</td>
<td>Syllabus / Introductions&lt;br&gt;Begin <em>Forbidden Reading</em> (2009) (from the series, Series: <em>Empire of the Word: A Reader's Journey</em>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**January 18th: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No classes. University offices open)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Two</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Week Three**<br>Tuesday 01/26 | Visit the **Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial.** It is located by the Boise Public Library and The Cabin on Capitol. Class will be held at the memorial. Watch the following before visiting the memorial: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTrSYbCbHE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTrSYbCbHE) - OR- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiFl_u_z4dM8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiFl_u_z4dM8) Preview for the “**Color of Conscience**” [http://idahoptv.org/productions/specials/colorofconscience/](http://idahoptv.org/productions/specials/colorofconscience/) | Assignment (Due on Thursday 01/28) Write a 300 - 500 word essay which considers the ethical impact of a quote from the wall with which you personally connect. Bring a hard copy to share with the class. Please ensure that you answer the following questions in your 300 – 500 word essay.  
  • What is the quote and who said it?  
  • What is the historical context of this quote/person? Research the conditions in which the quote originated or why it resonates with so many people even after the event or moment in history.  
  • Why did you personally connect with or respond to this particular quote?  
  • How does the quote relate to the state of human rights in your experience of the world? |

### Censorship and Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Week Four</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tuesday 02/02</th>
<th>Discuss the “Introduction” (pgs. 1-41) to Mary E. Hull’s, <em>Censorship in America.</em></th>
<th><strong>Due:</strong> Civic Engagement Assignment and Final Essay Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 02/04</td>
<td>View and Discuss “Sherman Alexie’s Young Adult Novel Pulled From Curriculum in Idaho Schools” <a href="http://billmoyers.com/2014/04/08/sherman-alexies">http://billmoyers.com/2014/04/08/sherman-alexies</a></td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Civic Engagement Assignment and Final Essay Assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week Five  
Tuesday 02/09  
Watch *Howl* (starring James Franco)

Thursday 02/11  
Discuss Allen Ginsberg’s *Howl*  
http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/179381

Week Six  
Tuesday 02/16  
Discuss Charles H. Busha, Ed.. “Freedom in the United States in the Twentieth Century” (pgs. 15-70)  
In *An Intellectual Freedom Primer*

Thursday 02/18  
Discuss “Dynamics of Oppression” by Jarrod Schwartz  
(found on Bb)

Week Seven  
Tuesday 02/23  
**Bystander Training (Meet in regular classroom)**

Thursday 02/25  
Individual Reports on Book Censorship/Post to Google Doc.  
Choose a text that has been censored. Each student will share what text they will be writing on for their final essay and the reasons why. Share your thesis. Post, on our Google Doc, a summary of what your paper will cover (thesis and main points), along with historical, social, and political artifacts from the years the book faced censorship. Should be about 500 words in length.

Censorship and Film

Week Eight  
Tuesday 03/01  
Watch *This Film is Not Yet Rated*

Thursday 03/03  
Watch and discuss *This Film is Not Yet Rated*

Week Nine  
Tuesday 03/08  
Discuss Tom Pollard’s, Chapter One: “Introduction to Movie Censorship” (pgs. 1-10) and Chapter Four: “The McCarthy Code” (pgs. 89-115) from *Sex and Violence: The Hollywood Censorship Wars* (2009)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday 03/10</th>
<th>Library Instruction. Meet in Library, Rm TBA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week Ten</td>
<td>Writing Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 03/15</td>
<td>Bring 3-4 copies of your Final Essay draft. One for me!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Eleven</td>
<td>Discuss Tom Pollard’s, Chapter Five: “The Valenti Code” (117-150) from <em>Sex and Violence: The Hollywood Censorship Wars</em> (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 03/29</td>
<td>Spring vacation, March 21-27. (No Classes. University offices open March 21-25).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 03/31</td>
<td>Watch and Discuss <em>A Streetcar Named Desire</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Twelve</td>
<td>Begin <em>Pulp Fiction</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 04/05</td>
<td>Civic Engagement Reflection Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 04/07</td>
<td>Watch and Discuss <em>Pulp Fiction</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Thirteen</td>
<td>From Marjorie Heins, <em>Sex, Sin, and Blasphemy: A Guide to America’s Censorship Wars.</em> “The Devil’s Music: The Oddity of Warning Labels on Art” (pgs. 77-94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 04/14</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Fourteen</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 04/19</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 04/21</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Fifteen</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 04/26</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 04/28</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final's Week</td>
<td>Final Essay due (8-10 page researched essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(May 2-5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***Readings should be completed for the day they are listed. **Syllabus is subject to change with notice.