

CISS 399-02: Liberal Arts, Leadership, and Social Change
Professors Bizzell and Wolfson, Spring 2014, Stein 318

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Wolfson office hours: T 2-3:00, Beaven 330, x 2219; W 11-12:00, Fenwick 114, x 2541; Friday 1-2:00,
Beaven 330; and by appointment; awolfson@holycross.edu .

Course goals:

- To revisit the gender and diversity leadership themes of our 2010-2011 Montserrat seminar;
- To reflect on the nature of liberal arts education and how it has shaped you over four years to become leaders;
- To consider and analyze some of the pressing issues facing higher education today as you prepare to graduate from a Jesuit liberal arts college in May 2014;
- To deepen your commitment to social change through community-based learning projects you design;
- To study what scholarly sources say about your stage of life, its challenges and rewards;
- To prepare you for persuasive writing and public speaking at an advanced level.

Primary Texts (available in the College Bookstore):

- Arnett, Jeffrey Jensen. *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Delbanco, Andrew. *College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Humes, James C. *Speak Like Churchill, Stand Like Lincoln*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2002.
- Levine, Arthur and Diane R. Dean. *Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today's College Student*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012.

NOTE: Excerpts from other books, listed in the syllabus, will be available on our course Moodle site. We are mindful of keeping both the volume and the cost of readings reasonable, while the primary focus of the course will be your own interests and projects. A few copies of these excerpted books, by Smith, Williams, Curry, and Fox, are available in the College Bookstore for your optional purchase.

Assignments:

This course aims to give you practice with different types of informational and persuasive writing and speaking, all focused on developing your leadership skills. Writing assignments comprise a variety of short exercises and four papers that will be graded. Four formal speaking assignments (graded) give you practice in informational, ceremonial (values-related) and deliberative (problem-solution) speaking.

Within the parameters of each assignment, you will have considerable freedom of choice as to topic, so as to maximize the relevance of this work for your own personal growth. You will also be encouraged to incorporate visual materials into your graded assignments, particularly the speeches.

Please note that grading is end-loaded, so as to allow you the maximum credit for improvement throughout the course. Graded papers may be rewritten and resubmitted at any time up to the due date of the next paper (or the last day of class, for the fourth paper). If you improve the paper, we will record for that assignment the average of your original grade and the rewrite grade.

An additional 10% of your final grade will comprise your completion of in-class writing assignments and participation in class discussion. Please see the end of this syllabus for instructions on your interview assignment and community-based learning project. Detailed instructions will be given for all other assignments.

While Professors Bizzell and Wolfson will collaborate on teaching this course, we will take individual responsibility for presenting each unit and grading assignments, as indicated below.

Paper on DelBanco and liberal arts, 5% (Bizzell)

Speech at retirement dinner, 10% (Bizzell)

Paper on “emerging adulthood” and Holy Cross, 10% (Wolfson)

Speech on problem and solution at Holy Cross, 10% (Bizzell)

Paper on your interviewee and diversity leadership, 5% (Wolfson)

Speech presenting your interviewee, 10% (Bizzell)

Paper and “Worcester Connects!” profile on your interviewee and community-based learning project, 20% (Wolfson and Bizzell)

Speech as valedictory address, 20% (Bizzell and Wolfson)

The final exam in this course will be given for the rest of your life.

Syllabus

All reading assignments are due at the first class meeting each week. Paper and speech due dates are indicated. Please submit papers for Bizzell in paper copy, and for Wolfson electronically.

Unit One: “College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be” (Bizzell)

21, 23 January:

Read in Delbanco pp. 1-101; in-class discussion questions to be assigned.

Class Visit from Ms. Michelle Sterk Barrett, Director, Donelan Office of Community-Based Learning, 1/23; discuss questions for interviews with Worcester community leaders.

28, 30 January:

Read in Delbanco pp. 102-177; in-class discussion questions to be assigned.

Read in Humes, Chapters 1, 3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 20; we’ll prepare in class on 1/28 for first speech (due next week); detailed assignment sheet will be given.

Field Trip to the *Worcester Telegram and Gazette* offices in Worcester, 1/30.

DUE 30 January: your first graded paper (3-5 pp., 5%) reacting to the Delbanco reading and arguing for your own vision for what liberal arts education “should be”; **AND a one-page description** (ungraded) of the leader you intend to interview; start making arrangements to interview this person. Please see the interview/CBL assignment description at the end of this syllabus.

4, 6 February:

DUE (your date to be assigned): your first speech (5-8 minutes, 10%), imagining that you are giving a toast at the retirement dinner of a Holy Cross professor, in which you will celebrate this person’s profound impact on your time here (this is a “ceremonial” speech).

Read *Emerging Adulthood*, Chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, and 10; please get as far as you can in this reading for our next unit, since we will be prepping in class on 2/6 for Jeffrey Jensen Arnett’s Class Visit next week.

Unit Two: “Emerging Adulthood and Life Choices” (Wolfson)

11, 13 February:

Read *Generation on a Tightrope*, Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8, and complete the reading assigned above in *Emerging Adulthood*.

Class Visit by Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, author of *Emerging Adulthood*, on 2/11, and you are also required to attend his formal lecture at 4:30 on this date in Rehm Library; further in-class discussion of this work on the life stage of “emerging adulthood,” which many social scientists now believe intervenes between adolescence and adulthood, and which helps to explain why many people in their twenties have more difficulty than earlier generations in making “life-launching” choices, as of career and committed romantic partner.

Read in Humes, Chapters 2, 4, 7, 8; we’ll prepare in class for second speech (due next week); detailed assignment sheet will be given.

Note: Thursday 2/13, “Prophetic Rhetoric in the Public Sphere” lecture in Rehm, 4:30, Professor M. Cathleen Kaveny (lately of Notre Dame Law School and School of Theology): strongly recommended for our course!

18, 20 February:

DUE 18 February: your second graded paper (5-7 pp., 10%), a problem-solution argument in which you argue that the College should do something (you decide what) to respond to some aspect of this research (you decide what). Ask whether Holy Cross, as a Jesuit liberal arts college, takes this research into account in the ways it deals with its students and prepares them for the world beyond graduation.

DUE (your date to be assigned): your second speech (8-10 minutes, 10 %) based on the content of the paper due this week; that is, you will argue about a problem at Holy Cross and your recommended solution, as indicated by the social and behavioral science research (this is a “deliberative” speech).

Unit Three: “Diversity and Leadership” (Wolfson)

25, 27 February:

READ on Moodle: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 from Daryl G. Smith, *Diversity's Promise for Higher Education: Making It Work*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2009; and Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5 from Damon Williams (whom some of us heard speak at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast on 1/21), *Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education*. New York: Stylus Publishing, 2013. (NB: you may purchase copies of these books in the Bookstore if you wish). These sources explore the impact of race, gender, social class and other diversity vectors on leadership.

Please note: you must have completed your Worcester leader interview by the first week after Spring Break.

Spring Break**11, 13 March:****Unit Three readings, continued.**

Read in Humes, Chapters 16, 18; we'll prepare in class for third speech and third paper; detailed assignment sheets will be given.

Class Visit from Ms. Greta Kenney, Diversity Leadership Task Force, on 3/11.

18, 20 March; 25, 27 March:

DUE 18 March: your third graded paper (3-5 pp., 5%) connecting the leader you've interviewed with some aspect of this research, and arguing that his/her experience does/does not confirm its findings. Discuss how you would advise this leader on how to further consider diversity in his/her leadership role.

Due 18 March: your "Worcester Connects!" entry on your interviewee; go to this site on the *Telegram and Gazette* website to see what your entry should look like, but submit it to Prs. Wolfson and Bizzell for review before posting.

DUE 18, 25, or 27 March (your date will be assigned) (no speeches on 20 March, Pr. Bizzell will be away at a professional meeting)): your third speech (10-12 minutes, 10%), reporting on the interview with your chosen leader and whatever interview question responses intrigued you. Also, try to explain how gender and other cultural and demographic factors have shaped and influenced this person's work/career. You should be interpretive, considering this person in light our sources on gender and leadership, even if the person believes that gender has had little impact (this is an "informational" speech). See the assignment sheet at the end of this syllabus.

Unit Four: "Leadership and Social Change" (Bizzell)**1, 3 April:**

Read on Moodle: Chapters 1, 3, 5, and 7 in Constance Curry, et alia. *Deep in My Heart: Nine White Women in the Freedom Movement*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000. (Optional: purchase this book in the Bookstore.) These readings are chapter-length memoirs by White women from varied backgrounds who participated in the Black civil rights struggle of the 1960s. They raise poignant issues of race relations, gender and leadership, and social activist life choices.

DUE on 1 April: your fourth paper (7-10 pages, 20%) reporting on your research into a community issue linked with the work of your interviewee and possibly building on material presented in your third paper and third speech; see the interview/CBL project description at the end of this syllabus.

8, 10 April:

Read on Moodle: Chapters 1, 5, 6, and 7 in Helen Fox, Helen. *Their Highest Vocation: Social Justice and the Millennial Generation*. New York: Peter Lang, 2012. (Optional: purchase this book in the Bookstore.) Via interviews with students at the University of Michigan, Fox finds that many “Millennials” are politically progressive, against economic and political inequality, protective of the environment, and willing to volunteer in record numbers to help make the world a better place. Yet those with an upbringing as entitled high achievers have become unwilling to express unpopular opinions and lack the historical context to see the “big picture” of global inequality and to imagine radical social changes. True or not true? What are Fox’s biases? We will evaluate Fox’s model of Millennial leadership, and consider how her conclusions relate to earlier readings in this course.

Read in Humes, Chapters 9, 10, 14, 15, 19, 21; we’ll prepare in class for fourth speech; detailed assignment sheet will be given.

Passover/Easter Break (no class on 15 April due to Passover)

24, 29 April, and 4, 6 May:

DUE (your date will be assigned): your fourth **speech** (12-15 minutes, 20%), the valedictory address that you would like to give at the graduation of the class of 2014. Use what you have learned in this course about leadership and the challenges it poses to your generation, perhaps in light of gender; use your own experience, perhaps on your CBL project, your future plans, etc. (largely a “ceremonial” speech but “deliberative” to the extent that you urge action).

Present one of your speeches as part of the spring Academic Conference.

The interview and community-based learning project

A major set of assignments in this course will revisit themes from our Montserrat seminars while allowing you to research community service topics of interest to you.

Part One of this project will require you to choose a Worcester community leader to interview. You may choose to interview again the person whom you interviewed for the leader interview project in Pr. Wolfson’s Montserrat seminar. You may choose to interview someone involved with a Worcester service project or CBL project in which you are already engaged. You may ask Ms. Sterk Barrett, Donelan Office Director, to help you identify a person to interview. Ideally, your interview subject will be working in a field in which you would like to work, either professionally or as a volunteer.

Together we will develop questions for this interview that explore themes related to gender and diversity leadership from our reading in this course unit. With these questions, you will explore the path

this person followed to success, the qualities he/she sees in an effective leader, and the extent to which she/he sees gender and diversity playing into leadership functions.

Based on the interview responses, you will write a short paper and present a speech (your third graded paper and speech) in which you explain how this leader's experiences relate to this course reading.

Part Two of this project will have two parts. Principally, **your fourth graded paper** will require you to explore in depth issues related to your interviewee's community service. From your prior work on this project, you will know something about the work your interviewee does. Now, consider these questions:

- What is the mission of the organization in which your interviewee performs his/her professional work or community service? What needs does this organization attempt to meet? What services does it provide? Adapt these questions to the specific site where your interviewee does significant work.
- What do national experts say about how best to address the needs this organization is addressing or the services it is providing? Your research here may look for academic sources, policy statements by political leaders or non-profit/educational leaders, etc. You may want to ask your interviewee to suggest reading to help you understand better what she/he does. The Dinand research librarians, Professors Wolfson and Bizzell, and Ms. Sterk Barrett may also have guidance for you.

It's likely that these questions will point you toward a very large social issue about which there are many opinions and many approaches. Your task is NOT to survey all of them or to come up with the one "best" approach. Rather, you should identify several approaches that you think are reasonable and evaluate them. Our hope is that this work will enable you to develop some expertise in a particular area of social need in which you may want to work in your future career or volunteer service.

Please note that these questions are adaptable to the work someone performs in a business or other organization that is not specifically social-service related. Many corporations consider seriously their relationship with their surrounding communities and have a socially responsible agenda, about which you can ask your interviewee.

Secondly, you will have a special opportunity to present your interviewee briefly on the "**Worcester Connects!**" website sponsored by the *Worcester Telegram and Gazette* newspaper. Your website presentation may place less emphasis on connections with our diversity leadership reading than your third paper and speech do, but may highlight this person's professional and personal service in Worcester and thus help to foster his or her mission in the community. Since you will, of course, be profiling different people, these website posts will be individually tailored and have different emphases depending on whom you are describing.