Chapman University

**ECON/ENG/PHIL 357 -- Topics in Humanomics**

**Diversity: What is it and why does it matter?**

Fall 2023 Tuesday / Thursday 1 – 2:15pm Wilkinson 220

Instructors: Dr. Kyle Hampton  
 [hampton@chapman.edu](mailto:hampton@chapman.edu)

Dr. Keith Hankins  
[hankins@chapman.edu](mailto:hankins@chapman.edu)

Office Hours: TBD

**1. Overview**

*Description*

This course explores economic, epistemic, and ethical issues related to diversity with an emphasis on the role that diversity plays in business, science, and politics. Drawing on texts and media from a range of sources including economics, law, philosophy, psychology, film, television, and literature, we will ask questions like: (1) What is diversity?  (2) How do we measure it?  (3) What kinds of diversity matter?  (4) What distinguishes the kinds of diversity that matter from the kinds that don’t?  (5) What are some of the challenges associated with diversity?  (6) What are some of the benefits?  (7) How can we capture the benefits while mitigating the associated costs/challenges?  
Having asked these questions we will also reflect on how these issues are represented in popular culture, and how artistic engagement with the issues deepens our understanding of them.

***Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Requirement***

This course addresses issues arising from intolerance and/or exclusion due to one or more of the following: race, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, age, and/or disability and aligns with Chapman University’s mission: helping students to lead inquiring, ethical and productive lives as global citizens.

***Prerequisites***

Instructor approval.

***Course Learning Outcomes***

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Challenge and deconstruct the perceived tension between economics and the humanities.
2. Ask cogent, thought-provoking questions based upon critical engagement with works across a range of genres and disciplines — e.g., literature, film, social science, and philosophy.
3. Demonstrate thoughtful rhetorical choices in creative and expository prose.
4. Identify and articulate different ways in which diversity manifests itself in individuals and groups, and how these vary across social and institutional settings.
5. Describe how diversity generates benefits for groups, why it can also present challenges for them, and explore ways in which groups navigate the tension between these.
6. Deepen understanding of ways in which the identity or other distinguishing characteristics of certain individuals and groups have led to discrimination and other forms of disadvantage, and of the role that public policy and social norms have played in both exacerbating and ameliorating these forms of disadvantage.
7. Reflect upon how various aspects of diversity and normative issues associated with it are represented in popular culture, and how artistic engagement with the issues deepens our understanding of them.

***GE Learning Outcomes***

**AI/Artistic Inquiry:**​ Students compose critical or creative works that embody or analyze conceptually an artistic form.

**SI/Social Inquiry:**​ Students identify, frame and analyze social and/or historical structures and institutions in the world today.

**VI/Values/Ethics Inquiry:​​**  Students articulate how values and ethics inform human understanding, structures, and behavior.

***DEI Learning Outcomes***

1. Interpret identity as multifaceted and constituting multiple categories of difference, such   
as race, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socio-  
economic background, age, and/or disability as operating by individual and group.

2. Analyze and communicate the consequences of elements of intolerance and exclusion   
based on categories of difference on a local, national and/or global scale

3. Communicate how sociocultural status and access to (or distribution of) resources are   
informed and impacted by one or more cultural practices within historical, social, cultural, and   
economic systems

**2. Course Logistics and Materials**

***Instructional Methods***

This course uses a combination of individual engagement with texts and films, shared inquiry through Socratic discussion, written inquiry in the form of three essays, and an oral final exam that assesses the ability of students to reflect on ideas in a conversational setting.

*Course Schedule and Topics*

Readings and assignments for the course will be posted on the course’s Canvas page. Below is a tentative and incomplete list of topics and texts we will cover. We expect to spend about 2 weeks on each of the topics, although we may adjust this depending upon how quickly we are able to get through things and your interest in pursuing things further. The films and literature will be interspersed throughout the semester as they’re primarily meant to reflect the course’s general theme and not any particular topic. Note that the list is tentative and incomplete by design. We will be spending the semester talking about diversity. Taking that topic seriously requires exploring it from different perspectives. We have tried to construct a syllabus that does so. Nevertheless, the readings and films we’ve assigned reflect our interests and perspectives on the topic. To provide a counterweight to this we want to draw on the diversity in the classroom to help fill out the syllabus. In addition to the topics listed below we will spend time on at least additional one topic of your choice if there is interest in doing so, and we hope to supplement the list of films and literature with additional works chosen by you.

Models of Diversity and Its Impact on Groups

* *The Difference*, Scott Page

Identity

* *The Lies that Bind*, Kwame Anthony Appiah
* *Toward a Connected Society*, Danielle Allen

Affirmative Action

* Majority and Dissenting Opinions in the *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* and *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina* cases
* “Affirmative Action and Its Mythology,” Roland Fryer and Glenn Loury

Speech

* *Kindly Inquisitors*, Jonathan Rauch

Community, Role Models, and Education

* “Segregation That No One Seeks,” Muldoon, Smith, and Weisberg
* Selected papers by Raj Chetty e.g. “Social Capital and Economic Mobility,” “Who Becomes an Inventor in America?” and “The Opportunity Atlas”
* TBD papers on redlining
* TBD papers on education

Psychology

* “Liberals and conservatives rely on different sets of moral foundations,” Graham, Haidt, and Nosek
* TBD papers on big five personality traits

Additional Topic(s) Selected by Students

* TBD

Films and Literature

* *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. Directed by Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert. A24 Films, 2022
* *Junebug*. Directed by Phil Morrison. Sony Pictures, 2005
* *Get Out*. Directed by Jordan Peele. Universal Pictures, 2017
* *The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings*. Directed by John Badham. Universal Pictures, 1976.
* *No One Is Talking About This: A Novel*, Patricia Lockwood. Riverhead Books, 2021.
* Selected Short Stories by Alice Munro, “Red Dress,” “The Office,” and “The Shining Houses”
* Additional work(s) to be selected by students

*Required Texts*

There are several required texts for this course. These are available through the bookstore and can also be found through Amazon and other major booksellers (possibly for cheaper). It doesn’t matter to us where you buy your books from, however, to facilitate our discussions of these texts you should purchase the editions listed below (which correspond to the editions available through the bookstore). Note that we’ve tried to identify the best editions of the texts that are both widely available and affordable. In addition to these books we will be also be reading numerous papers and watching several films. Copies of papers will be posted on Canvas, while students will be expected to rent, buy, or stream the films we will be watching.

* Scott Page *The Difference* (New/Revised Paperback Edition, Princeton University Press)
* Kwame Anthony Appiah *The Lies That Bind* (Reprint Edition, Liveright)
* Patricia Lockwood *No One Is Talking About This* (Riverhead Books)
* Jonathan Rauch *Kindly Inquisitors* (Expanded Edition, University of Chicago Press)

**3. Assessment**

1. Participation in class discussions (20%)  
   The course is primarily organized around Socratic discussions of the texts, films, and other works assigned in the syllabus. This method of shared inquiry encourages students to think reflectively about the works they engage with and provides them with the opportunity to explore their ideas through dialogue with peers. Class discussion fosters the flexibility of mind to consider problems from multiple perspectives and the ability to analyze ideas critically. A consequence of the open-ended nature of these discussions is that students have both the freedom and responsibility to shape what they get out of the course, and the success of the format demands that every student comes to class prepared to fully engage in these discussions.
2. Discussion questions (10%)  
   To help foster lively discussions, before each meeting students will be required to generate a discussion question to be posted in the online discussion forum on Canvas. ***Posts must be made by 9am on the day of the meeting for which they are intended***. Note that asking a good question is often harder than providing a good answer. A good question will critically engage with the source material by probing things that the student finds surprising, unsettling, or otherwise interesting.
3. Expository Essays / Creative Projects (3 x 20%)  
   Students will write three essays over the course of the semester addressing the following prompts:

Identity and diversity: how does diversity manifest itself in the identities of individuals and/or groups?

Janus face of diversity: explore how one (or more) aspect of diversity generates both benefits and challenges that individuals or groups must grapple with.

Diversity in popular culture: critically explore how one or more issues related to diversity are treated in the films/literature that we discuss.

Within the confines of these prompts, students will be given broad latitude to define the precise aims and content of their papers. In place of one of the first two expository essays, students may (but need not) produce a creative project provided that it suitably engages with the prompt. Because of the broad latitude students are provided to work within they are strongly encouraged to review their ideas for the papers with professors at an early stage in the writing process.

1. Oral final exam (10%)  
   In lieu of a traditional final exam, we will instead meet as a group during the assigned final examination period for an oral final examination. During the examination each student will be asked to respond to questions posed by the professors that reflect the course objectives for the course. Questions will be developed over the course of the semester and will draw on questions raised during class discussion and in the online discussion forum. The goal of the assessment is for students to demonstrate in a conversational setting that they have critically reflected on the ideas and material covered in the course over the semester. The questions posed to each student will be selected through a random process that still provides the students some control over the questions they are asked to answer.

**4. Policies**

***Attendance***

Because of the discussion based nature of the class, attendance is an essential component. Excessive tardies constitute absences; six or more absences may result in failure (Undergraduate Catalog 2022-2023, “Academic Policies and Procedures”). Missed discussions cannot be made up for in other ways. However, we recognize that illness and other circumstances sometimes require a student to miss class. If you have to miss a class it is essential that you discuss your situation with us at the earliest possible opportunity. Unless your absence is the result of a sudden emergency or unforeseen circumstances this means that you need to inform us before the class in question if you want your absence to be excused. In cases where students have excused absences you are still expected to submit your discussion questions based on the day’s reading, but the in-class component of your participation grade will only reflect your participation in the classes which you were able to attend.

*Students with Disabilities*

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services.  If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or ([www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services](https://exchange.chapman.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=8e4d797b235f40aa83dfa375e35ae0b7&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.chapman.edu%2fstudents%2fstudent-health-services%2fdisability-services)) if you have questions regarding this procedure, or for information and to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options.  The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.  
  
*Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy*

Chapman University is a community of scholars, which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the university Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University’s policy on Academic Integrity at www.chapman.edu/academics/academicintegrity/index.aspx.

If you ever have any questions about what this policy requires of you please discuss the issue with us *before you turn in the relevant work*.  
  
*Equity and Diversity*

Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy: <http://tinyurl.Com/CUHarassment-Discrimination>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the Dean of Students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.