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**FYWS 151: FIRST-YEAR WRITING SEMINAR
SPRING 2013**

TOPIC: ADAM SMITH GOES SHOPPING

The present economic crises do not, I would argue, call for a "new capitalism," but they do demand a new understanding of older ideas, such as those of [Adam] Smith . . . many of which have been sadly neglected. What is also needed is a clearheaded perception of how different institutions actually work, and of how a variety of organizations—from the market to the institutions of the state—can go beyond short-term solutions and contribute to producing a more decent economic world.

Amartya Sen, *New York Review of Books*, March 26, 2009

In the aftermath of a recent financial crisis, now is a better time than most to give careful consideration to the work of Adam Smith, one of the first and still most insightful theorists of capitalism. In this course we will consider the major questions Smith discussed from the vantage point of our own twenty-first century society: Do consumer goods improve our lives? Does the division of labor make us smarter or dumber? Does capitalism promote virtue? Does free trade promote political freedom? Our focus throughout will be on the philosophical and ethical questions that Smith emphasizes in his work. We begin by reading substantial portions of Smith's two major books, *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *Wealth of Nations* (1776). We then consider works by later writers who take up aspects of Smith's argument.

COURSE MATERIALS

A. Smith *The Essential Adam Smith*, ed. Robert Heilbroner
J. Williams *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace* (10th ed.)
(R. Finlayson) *A Guide to Effective Paper Writing* (Rhodes College, 2007)
Additional materials on Moodle and online.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Careful Preparation: Writing well is much more a matter of daily hard work than of inspiration. If you want to improve your writing, work hard at considering the ideas that come up in readings, in class, and while you're writing. Try to see how they might apply to your own experience of the world. Develop ideas and arguments that energize you, and commit to writing and rewriting them until you've worked them out in their full complexity.

Informal Writing: The activity of writing is most difficult and intimidating when it is foreign to your regular experience. Part of the purpose of this course is to help you develop an engrained habit of writing, and to do this I will ask you to write in preparation for many class sessions. These writing exercises might take the following forms:

- Notes on a reading
- Responses to a reading
- An exercise from Williams
- Comments on another students draft, etc.

On some days I will collect informal writing and grade it √, √+, or √-.

Class Discussion: Speaking is often the beginning of writing; when you sit down to draft an essay, you'll know where to start if you've talked through some ideas beforehand. But this only works if you are committed to developing your own ideas, not just saying what everyone else is saying. Always bring your own copy of each assigned text to class, marked with your notes.

Decorum: I require an atmosphere of respect, in which we can disagree and discuss disagreements without insult or silent sneer. Disagreement and difference are the very core of writing; indeed if all perceptions were the same, there would be no need for writing, no need for language at all. In all your communication with peers and professor this semester, including email, maintain a high level of respect and decorum.

Writing Assignments: All writing for this course must be submitted in hard copy, double-spaced and carefully proofread. Email attachments are not accepted unless cleared in advance. All writing submitted for this course must be original work, written by you in accordance with all provisions of the Rhodes Honor Code. You may not submit work done for other courses. There are four major papers for the course:

1. A short analysis of Adam Smith's theory of moral judgment (5 pages)
2. A longer analysis of Smith's idea of economic behavior (5 pages)
3. A longer paper on some aspect of Smith's thought, with outside reading on your part (10 pages)
4. A final reflection drawing from debates encountered this semester (5 pages)

Grades:

Paper 1	15%
Paper 2	20%
Paper 3	30%
Paper 4	15%
Informal Writing (reading notes, responses, etc.)	10%
Engagement (preparation for and participation in class, respect for your work and the work of your peers, commitment to assignments and discussions, etc.)	10%

Late work: Writing assignments must be turned in complete and on time. Late papers will be marked down one third of a grade for each day they are late. (E.G. a B paper that's 1 day late would become a B-, 2 days late a C+, etc.) If I have to return a paper to you for proofreading, it will be considered late until I get it back. If you fail to turn in any assignment entirely, you will not be able to pass the course.

Attendance: You may miss three classes during the semester without penalty or excuse. Further absences will affect your final grade for course engagement. If you miss more than six classes, for any reason, you will not be able to pass the course. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to keep up with any work you may have missed. If you're repeatedly late or unprepared for class—no book, haven't done the reading—don't expect to be counted as present.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

(Expect some adjustments and additions as we go forward. Readings not contained in *The Essential Adam Smith* or in Williams's *Style* will be available on the course Moodle site.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Writing</u>	
Part I: <i>The Theory of Moral Sentiments</i>			
Fri	Jan 11	Fish (M)	---
Mon	14	Smith 65-6 (2ndry Reading: Biographical Intro 1-11)	Rough Reading Notes
Wed	16	Smith 69-76	Reading Notes
Fri	18	Williams Ch. 3	---
Mon	21	<i>Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday: No class</i>	
Wed	23	Smith 78-88	Response to Smith
Fri	25	---	Sentence Exercise
Mon	28	Smith 113-117	Reading Notes
Wed	30	Smith 118-123	Response to Smith
Fri	Feb 1	Williams Ch. 5	---
Mon	4	---	Draft of Paper 1
Wed	6	Foley	---
Fri	8	---	Paper 1 Due
Part II: <i>The Wealth of Nations</i>			
Mon	11	Smith 161-68	Reading Notes
Wed	13	Smith 168-75	Reading Notes
Fri	15	Williams Ch. 7	
Mon	18	Smith 252-58	Reading Notes
Wed	20	Smith 264-67	Response to Smith
Fri	22	---	
Mon	25	Smith 290-301	Reading Notes
Wed	27	Smith 302-12	Reading Notes
Fri	Mar 1	"The Giant Pool of Money" Listen at http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/355/the-giant-pool-of-money	---
Mon	4	---	Draft of Paper 2
Wed	6	Folbre	---
Fri	8	---	Paper 2 Due

MWF 11/13/15 *Spring Break: No Class*

The Research Paper			
Mon	18	(Discussion of Research Assignment)	---
Wed	20	(Idea Workshop in Class)	Draft Research Proposal
Fri	22	(Research Session: Meet in Barret 034)	Revised Research Proposal
Mon	25	(Research Conferences)	---
Wed	27	<i>TBA – Bigelow Attending Conference</i>	
Fri	29	<i>Easter Holiday: No Class</i>	
MWF	Apr 1-5	(Research Presentations in Class)	---
Mon	8	(Workshop in Class)	Research Paper Draft
Wed	10	(Working Session in Class)	---
Fri	12	<i>TBA – Bigelow Attending Conference</i>	Research Paper Due by 5pm at Palmer 319

Final Reflections			
Mon	15	McCloskey (M)	Response to McCloskey
Wed	17	McCloskey (M)	---
Fri	19	Sandel (M)	---
Mon	22	Sandel (M)	Response to Sandel
Wed	24	Williams Ch. 12	---
Fri	26	<i>URCAS: No class</i>	

Final Paper due during course exam period

Department of English Expectations and Policies

A college course is more than simply a set of assignments; it is an intellectual process, one which requires active engagement from beginning to end in order to achieve its intended results. With this in mind, the Department of English has formulated a number of expectations and the policies that support them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to the syllabus for a particular course, you should address them to the instructor.

Attendance: The success of a course depends to a significant extent upon the presence of students alert and prepared to address the subject under discussion. Unavoidable absences should be discussed with the instructor, ideally before they occur. Excessive absences will result in a lowering of grade, in some cases to an F.

Deadlines: Writing assignments, test, etc., are carefully scheduled as stages toward the fulfillment of the course's goals and cannot be indefinitely deferred without frustrating those goals. Brief extensions for good reasons may be permissible with the instructor's prior approval; otherwise, late assignments will be penalized and may result in their not being accepted for credit.

Submission of all work: All major assignments are integral to the goals of the course.

Failure to complete any major assignment will result in a grade of F for the course.

Intellectual honesty: All work is assumed to be the student's own and produced exclusively for the course in which it is submitted. Papers written for one course, even if revised, are not to be submitted in another without the instructor's prior approval.

Borrowing of ideas or language from other sources (including published material, other student papers, the internet or other electronic resources, etc.) must be carefully documented. Students are advised against posting their work on the internet since doing so may lead to suspicion of plagiarism. Students are advised to maintain drafts of their work to verify its originality. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Honor Council, and the student if convicted will receive a grade of F in the course in addition to sanctions assigned by the Council. Carelessness in documenting sources, even if not technically plagiarism, will be penalized as the instructor deems appropriate. If you are uncertain about how or whether to document sources, consult your teacher.