

Syllabus Ancillary

This document contains some important information about the course and its assignments that either didn't fit into the syllabus or was changed after it was finalized. Any changes I make to the course will be reflected here first, although I will also update the syllabus as well. I will notify you of any such changes and will make sure to highlight the changes in this document so you can clearly find them.

Getting around the Course's Carmen Site

Most of you should be familiar with how Carmen works, but you may not have taken a completely online course before with the system. For that reason, I've decided to make a little guide in case anyone needs some help navigating the course. For my part, I've tried to make the class as easy to use as possible by having everything linked to either the home page or the weekly lectures. In case I miss a link or you just want to navigate the site on your own, the following tips should help.

The lectures, which are the first thing you should look at each day, are primarily intended to be accessed through the links on the course homepage. Otherwise, you can find them in the "Lectures" module under the Content tab. Links to the primary source readings are provided in the lectures, but you can also access them in the "Online Readings" module. From the Content tab you can also access the "Images" and "Chronologies and Notes" modules when those are included. The "Syllabus and Course Document" module contains a copy of the syllabus and information such as this page to help you better understand the course. The lectures will be hidden until the Friday before, at which point all lectures for the week will be revealed. This assumes, of course, that you've completed the start module. Once revealed, content will remain visible until the end of the course. If you would like to see a lecture (or any other material) before the unlock date, e-mail me and I can open it for you.

All graded activities, including the discussion forums, quizzes, and exams (which Carmen places with quizzes) can be found under the Activities tab. Just select which assignment you want to do from the dropdown menu and the rest is fairly self-explanatory. You will only be able to access an assignment during the window in which it is active, after which it will be hidden, with the exception of closed discussion forums. These will remain visible in case anyone wants to look at previous posts.

Discussion

A common question I get concerns how to find the discussion forums. To find discussion forum for Lecture 2, for example, go to the Carmen site, click on the Activities tab, choose Discussions from the drop down menu, scroll down until you see the Daily Discussions header, and click on the link for Lecture 2. There will be a list of questions, just pick the one you want to answer.

I encourage everyone to participate in discussion beyond the minimum requirements. The best way for you to understand the material is to talk about it with one another, and that will likely

require more than one post each. I will of course be monitoring discussion, but I will only participate in cases of factual error or if the discussion gets too far off track.

I spoke briefly of how discussion is graded in the syllabus, but I will elaborate here. If I find your post acceptable, I will do nothing. If I do not, I will delete it from Carmen and give you the opportunity to repost, if there's time before the topic closes. In other words, if I haven't contacted you about your posts, you're doing fine. I won't calculate discussion grades until at least the last week of class, so please don't ask about it before then.

As a reminder, there are two due dates for discussion every week, Wednesday and Saturday. For Wednesday, you must make at least one post from the lectures delivered on that Monday-Wednesday. If you want to post on all three lectures and be done for the week, feel free to do so. For Saturday, obviously, you will only have Thursday and Friday's lectures to draw from. Once a deadline passes, the forums will automatically be locked and you will have no chance to make a post, unless a previous arrangement has been made.

The basic goals and expectations for discussion have already been laid out in the syllabus and on the forums themselves, so I won't repeat them here. Instead, I offer you a checklist of questions you should ask yourself before you post.

- Have I answered the question asked or at least said something related to the question? (I'm flexible on this because I want the discussions to be organic, but no tangents.)
- Have I fulfilled the minimum requirements as spelled out in the syllabus?
- Am I using evidence from the relevant sources to back up my claims?
- Am I being respectful of my classmates and my instructor?
- Am I saying something that has not been said by someone else? (This means in content as well as phrasing)
- Is my post written in clear and proper English with proper use of punctuation and grammar, and have I spellchecked and proofread it?

Pay special attention to the final point. While I don't want discussion to be overly formal, that is no excuse for poor writing. **If you write something that is incomprehensible or in text lingo, I will delete it, even if it meets all the other requirements.**

Quizzes

Every week, there will be a ten-question quiz covering all the material for that week. You may take the quiz at any time during its window, as noted in the syllabus. You may take each quiz up to three times and each attempt is timed at twenty minutes. While the quiz is open book, I strongly recommend being familiar with all the material before you start. Questions are drawn equally from the textbook and from the primary source reading, and you will not have time to blindly look up everything for the first time during the quiz. Quizzes are automatically graded by Carmen and you should see your grade immediately after each attempt. I will only adjust quiz grades in the event of a grading error in Carmen or if I deem a question was unfairly worded.

Mid-term Exam

The exam will take place in week two, more specifically from 12:01am on May 22 to 11:59pm on May 24. Yes, I know that is Memorial Day Weekend, but that's just how it worked it out this time. You may take the exam any time during that period, although I strongly suggest not waiting until 11pm on the 24th to do it, since the internet and Carmen do not always cooperate. On that note: **You are solely responsible for insuring you have a reliable computer and a stable internet connection before taking the test.** I will not accept any excuses based on technical difficulties, barring a Carmen system failure or power outage on campus.

Once you start the exam, you will have one attempt and one hour in which to complete it. There will be a five minute grace period provided to help prevent anyone from accidentally going over the time limit. Once that limit is exceeded, five points will be taken off the final grade, with another ten points for every additional ten minutes after that. For example, an exam active for 66 minutes will get five points taken off its grade, while one that is turned in at 75 minutes will have fifteen points taken off. Anything after 95 minutes will simply not be accepted.

The test will be divided into two sections. The first will be a short answer section, which will count for forty percent of your grade. The second section will be an essay based on both the primary and secondary source readings in the class. You will have a choice of three questions on the exam, from which you will chose one to answer. I expect a solid essay of at least four paragraphs (I don't particularly care if you have an introduction or not, but I do want a conclusion) that draws on the relevant primary source evidence to answer the question asked. I won't be looking for a particular answer, just one that is well-argued from the evidence.

Both sections will be open-book, but I recommend studying so that you have previous knowledge of the material and won't have to look up everything on the fly. The use of any material outside of the textbook and Carmen content is prohibited and will be punished as cheating. Citations in the essay section are appreciated but not necessary beyond acknowledging the names or authors of the sources you are using for evidence.

I highly, highly recommend writing your essay and short answers in a separate program like Word and then pasting them into Carmen. Doing so will protect you if Carmen decides to reload the page while you are typing, which has happened to me several times while I was making the site for this course. On that note, for whatever reason, Firefox does not allow pasting into Carmen via the right click context menu, but will allow it if you use the keyboard shortcut (Ctrl+V). Dragging and dropping the text also usually works.

Final Exam

The final exam will be divided into two sections of one essay question each. The first essay will be a cumulative one and will draw on material from the whole class. Thus it will be a "big picture" type question focusing on major themes developed throughout the course and will be worth seventy points. The second essay will concern only the material from the second half of the course, that is, starting at Lecture Ten. It will be worth thirty points. For both essays, you'll be given a choice of questions to answer. You will have two hours to take the whole exam, and the late penalties will be the same as for the midterm, adjusted for the longer time limit.

Preventable Problems in an Online Course

The internet can be fickle and Carmen capricious, and this means online classes have some special problems that don't plague those in meatspace. The best way to avoid technical problems in this class and all other online classes is to leave yourself enough time before the deadline to submit your work that you can solve any technical problems that might arise. **The burden to do this rests entirely and solely upon on you, as will the consequence of any failure to do so.** To borrow the old saying, "Your failure to plan does not constitute an emergency on my part." As I mentioned in the syllabus, if you do encounter technical problems that keep you from completing or turning in an assignment on time, please notify me immediately. I may not respond, but at least there will be a record. If you wait until after the deadline to contact me, it will be up to my discretion as to whether or not I accept your assignment.

Grading

Now that I've talked about your responsibilities, I'll talk a little about mine. My goal is to grade all of the major assignments within a week of the due date. Whether or not that actually happens will depend on many factors, several of which are out of my control. Nonetheless, I will try to have the exams and papers graded as quickly as possible. A few notes on how I grade:

- I will not start grading until the deadline passes and all exams are in. This helps me avoid sample bias when I'm working out the grading scheme for that particular assignment.
- I do not use a formal rubric and thus cannot provide you with one. I do have something similar to one that you can find under the "Syllabus and Course Documents" module, however, and I recommend you familiarize yourself with it before the exams.
- All grades, except for quizzes, will be accompanied by feedback to explain your grade (more on this below).
- I will not listen to complaints or questions about grades until the next business day after I have returned assignments. Take the time to read over your answers and my feedback and allow any anger you might have to dissipate. Be civil when you ask about your grade for best results.
- Due to OSU policy, I cannot e-mail you grades. If you want to know how you did on an assignment, please check through Carmen.

The best way to get the grade you want on any given assignment is to read the instructions carefully before beginning and make sure you understand them. I am not lenient when it comes to mistakes caused by failing to follow the directions. Similarly, make sure you answer the question actually asked.

You should be to follow your own progress and grades throughout the course (except for the discussion grade, see above) through Carmen. The system can tell you not only your grades, but also the number of times you've posted in discussion, what pages you've read on the site, etc. I highly encourage you to use these features to your advantage.

Just as all assignments are turned in through Carmen, all feedback will go through it as well. For exams, I will make my comments directly on the exam in Carmen, which you can then view. If you feel that I haven't adequately explained your grade, feel free to e-mail me and we can discuss it that way.