Humanities I
HU 201
3 credits

Dawson Community College
Fall 2003
TTh 11 – 12:30
Rm. 139

Instructor: Dr. Bryan E. Stone
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Course Description
This course is an overview of the forms, themes, and purposes of human expression. While it is not, strictly speaking, a survey of art history or of the history of ideas, we will be very much concerned with these as well. The course will be organized by genre, focusing on painting and photography; sculpture; music; theater; film; architecture; and literature. We will explore how these various forms convey their creators’ meanings, reveal ideas or emotions, tell stories, entertain, instruct, agitate, illuminate, remunerate, or annoy. We will explore the relationship between technique (how a work of art is produced) and meaning (why it is produced), and we will consider how the meaning of art is shaped both by its immediate context (a gallery, a performance, a household) and its general context (historical period, nation, religion). We will learn how to view, discuss, and interpret works in these various genres and how to judge (if, in fact, we should judge) their quality or value.

Audience
Humanities I is open to anyone who is, or wants to be, human. The course is highly recommended for students who plan to major in the liberal arts or social sciences, though students in any field can benefit greatly from the critical and imaginative skills necessary to appreciate works of art. HU 201 fulfills DCC’s Core II requirement (Category A) and transfers to most universities.

There are no prerequisites for the course, though college-level reading and writing skills are required; I encourage anyone who could use some help in these areas to visit the DCC Learning Center. In addition, students will be required to read a number of articles and to view image collections which may only be available on the World Wide Web, so a basic ability to use
computers and to access online materials is necessary. I will be happy to work with any student who needs help or encouragement with this. The DCC library provides free Internet access to students.

**Course Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, you will

1. sharpen your critical and interpretive skills, becoming better and more informed listeners, viewers, and even creators of artistic expression.
2. recognize how art pervades our lives, how we don’t have to go looking for it in theaters, museums, and libraries, but are constantly exposed to it in the mass media, in the buildings we inhabit, in the household products we use, and in our own daily performances of fashion, speech, and song.
3. find that exposure to the ideas and themes that underlie the humanities can expand your thinking, expose you to alternate points of view, and remind you of the extraordinary richness of human experience.

**Required Texts**

The following required texts are available at the DCC bookstore:

- Irving Stone, *The Agony and the Ecstasy*
- Anton Chekov, *Uncle Vanya* (adapted by David Mamet)
- Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*

In addition, we will view three films in class. These are *The Player* (d. Robert Altman), *Amadeus* (d. Milos Forman), and *Vanya on 42nd Street* (d. Louis Malle and Andre Gregory).

Finally, you will need a notebook for your humanities journal (see below). Please purchase a separate notebook for this purpose, as you will have to turn it in several times during the semester.

I will make a number of supplemental shorter readings, image collections, and other materials available online through the class web site; these will also be required “reading.” I’ll provide more information on these throughout the semester.

**Assignments**

Your primary responsibility from day to day will be keeping up with the reading assignments, which are listed on the accompanying schedule. Much of our time will be spent in discussion of these readings, so it is essential that you complete them before coming to class, give them some thought, and be prepared to talk about them. I will give occasional quizzes to make sure you’re keeping up with the readings (see Class and Reading Schedule). Quizzes, attendance, and your general level of participation will comprise your class participation score.

I will supplement the readings with lectures to provide historical background, thematic context, or other material I hope will be helpful and interesting. Since this information will not be available elsewhere, attendance is essential. I will take roll daily, and more than three absences
will count against you in your class participation score. If you are late for class, you will be counted absent unless you notify me immediately after class of your presence.

At the end of the semester, you will turn in a **humanities journal**, a notebook in which you will keep regular entries throughout the semester about your own experiences with art and ideas. I will check your progress on the journal at several points throughout the semester (see Class and Reading Schedule), though these check-ups will not affect your final grade. As a rule of thumb, I will expect to see at least 3 handwritten pages or 1-2 typed (single-spaced) pages per week: you may write as often or as rarely as you wish, as long as you meet this minimum requirement by the turn-in dates. The journal will be a place for you to reflect freely on the course material or to work out ideas inspired by your engagement with the humanities. You may comment directly on issues raised in or out of class; record your own emotional and intellectual responses to arts and ideas; create art (stories, poems, drawings) of your own; or sketch out descriptions of artworks you observe in your daily life. I encourage you to be creative and spontaneous in these entries; I will not grade them for style or grammatical accuracy. I may occasionally provide a question or prompt for you to address in your journals, but for the most part you are free to fill the pages with anything you like, as long as it bears some relevance to this course.

The bulk of your work for this class will consist of weekly **projects** requiring you to think a bit more carefully about each specific genre. Of the seven forms we will study (pictures, sculpture, music, theater, film, architecture, and literature), you will turn in projects on *any four*: you are free to choose which four projects to do. Each genre project is due one week after we complete the unit about it (see Class and Reading Schedule). Details on these projects are on an accompanying sheet and on the course web site.

Written assignments, including the journals and projects, are due **without exception** on the specified dates: you will lose a letter grade (10 points) for each day they are late. A “page” must be typed and numbered, double-spaced, with a 1-inch margin all the way around and in 12-point font (this size). I’ll be more than happy to talk to you about your works-in-progress and to review drafts with you. You may rewrite papers for a better grade, but you must discuss your plans for improvement with me first; any late penalties applied to the original paper will still count against the rewrite. I will grade written assignments, including exams, on the basis of clarity, thoroughness, use of supporting evidence, accuracy, and originality. Using lots of detailed examples is the key to doing well written work.

**Grading**
I will determine your grade as follows:

- 4 projects averaged: 60%
- Journal: 20%
- Class Participation: 20%
  (including attendance, participation, quizzes)

There will be no curve on final grades, but I will take each student’s overall class participation into account to resolve borderline grades.
Classroom Behavior
If you are to succeed in this class, as in the “real world” beyond DCC, certain mature and respectful behavior will be expected of you. My expectations in this class include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. **Arrive on time and remain seated until class is dismissed.** If you won’t be able to stay through an entire class period, please don’t come at all.
2. **Refrain from eating and chewing/spitting in class.** Drinks (non-alcoholic!) are fine with me, but food and tobacco are not.
3. **Complete reading assignments on time.** If you do not do the reading, you will almost certainly fail this class. Please bring your textbooks to class with you, as we may refer to them frequently.
4. **Pay attention.** Listen attentively, take notes, and keep private conversations to a minimum. If you don’t take notes, you’ll wish you had when exam time comes. And if you’re talking, it should be to me or to the class.

Academic Honesty
I encourage you to discuss the course material or project ideas with other students and to study in groups. On written assignments and homework, however, your work must be entirely your own. Cheating or plagiarizing is grounds for automatic failure for any assignment or for the course as a whole. Any time you use another’s words or ideas, either verbatim or paraphrased, you must give them proper acknowledgment. If you are unsure how to document your sources, please feel free to ask me before turning in an assignment. You may also want to take a look at Columbia University’s web site on using and documenting quotations, including those from on-line sources (http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cup/cgos/idx_basic.html).
HU 201: HUMANITIES I  
ASSIGNMENTS FOR HUMANITIES PROJECTS

You must complete any four of the following projects and turn them in by the stated due dates. Late projects will not be accepted without penalty. Follow these directions carefully, but the questions I ask are only suggestions. It isn’t necessary to answer all of them, but they should help guide your thinking as you work on the projects.

PROJECT I: PICTURES (DUE 9/18)

Option A. Prepare an original work of pictorial art (a drawing, painting, or photograph). In a 1-2 page essay, describe your style or technique. Is it abstract or naturalistic? What were you trying to achieve with the image? What is its message? How have you used your knowledge of form, composition, color, light, line, shape, balance, and/or rhythm to convey your message? What do you think are your picture’s strengths as visual art? Its weaknesses?

Option B. Using the links provided on the web site, visit at least two museum collections, examining the work of at least 10-15 artists in each of them. From this experience, select one image that you feel captures the essence of visual art. Describe the work in a 2-3 page essay, making sure to provide the title, artist, and the collection and web site where you found it. Is the picture abstract or naturalistic? What was the artist trying to achieve in the image? What is its message? How has the artist used the principles of form, composition, color, light, line, shape, balance, and/or rhythm to convey his or her message? What do you think are the picture's strengths as visual art? Its weaknesses?

PROJECT II: SCULPTURE (DUE 10/2)

Locate a work of sculpture, either in a public place, a museum, or a private collection. In a 2-3 page essay, describe the piece. Is it naturalistic or abstract? What does it represent? What materials does it employ, and what techniques has the artist used to create it? What is the context of its presentation, and how does this affect its message? How has the artist used the principles of form, composition, balance, rhythm, and shape to produce the sculpture? How do these factors contribute to the meaning and purpose of the piece? What effect does this piece have that a two-dimensional image could not have achieved?

PROJECT III: MUSIC (DUE 10/21)

Option A. Attend a live musical performance of any style in any venue. In a 2-3 page essay, describe the experience. What kind of performance was it, who were the musicians, and what instruments were involved? Was the music composed and arranged in advance, or was it improvisational in style? Where was the performance, and how did the audience behave? What emotions, if any, did the music elicit? Was there a "message" to the performance, and if so how (and how successfully) did the musicians transmit it? Did you enjoy the performance? Why or why not?

Option B. Below is a list of major classical music pieces. Select a piece and listen to it in its entirety. Some works are longer than others – that’s the nature of music – and many will require more than an hour’s worth of careful listening. Listen actively, paying attention to instrumentation, structure, style, rhythm, and the other musical elements we’ve studied. In a 2-3 page essay, describe the experience of listening to the piece. What kind of music is it, when was it written, and who is the composer? How would you classify the type of piece (ie., symphony, sonata, etc.) and why? Was it recorded in a studio or for a live audience, and how does this context affect the performance? What feelings (if any) did it evoke, and did you enjoy listening to it? Did the music have a message – lyrics, perhaps, or a story, or a mood or idea suggested by the title – and, if so, what was it?

All of these selections are available on LP (that’s right – vinyl!) in the DCC library; the numbers following the titles refer to the record number in the DCC collection. I will also place tapes of these pieces on reserve at the library desk for you to listen to in the library.

Selections

J.S. Bach, Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (#14)  
J.S. Bach Inventions (#207)  
Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 5 (#53)  
Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 9 (#44; on three sides of two-record set)  
Ludwig van Beethoven, Sonata No. 21 in C Major ("Waldstein") (#15)  
Hector Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique (#31)  
Claude Debussy, Prelude á Après-Midi d’une Faune  
Ludwig van Beethoven, Inventions (#207)  
Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 5 (#53)  
Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 9 (#44; on three sides of two-record set)  
Hector Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique (#31)  
Claude Debussy, Prelude á Après-Midi d’une Faune
and *Claire de Lune* (#357, sides 3-4)  
G.F. Handel, *Messiah* (#176)  
Charles Ives, *Music for Chorus* (#331)  
Gustav Mahler, *Symphony #4* (#85)  
Moussorgsky, *Pictures at an Exhibition* (#92)  
W.A. Mozart, *Symphony No. 40 in G Minor* (#366, side 1)  
*Puccini, La Bohéme* (#362)  
Franz Schubert, *Trio No. 1 in B-Flat* (#112)  
Igor Stravinsky, *Le Sacre du Printemps/The Rites of Spring* (#118)  
Igor Stravinsky, *The Firebird Ballet* (#119)  
Antonio Vivaldi, *Four Seasons* (#188)

**PROJECT IV: THEATER (DUE 11/4)**

*Option A:* Attend a live theatrical production (play, dance, or musical – but not stand-up comedy) and write a 2-3 page essay describing the experience. What was performed, and by whom? Briefly describe the stage or set design and costumes. Was it a narrative performance (that is, did it tell a story) or some other kind? How did the audience behave, and did they have a role to play in the performance itself? Was the action planned, scripted, and/or choreographed, or was it improvisational in style? How does the experience of seeing a performance in person differ from watching one on television or in a movie theater?

*Option B:* Design either a set or costumes for a new production of *Uncle Vanya*. You may borrow ideas from the performance we watched, but (like any artist) you should try to make the production your own. What will your set or costumes look like? Turn in sketches or drawings along with a brief (1-2 page) explanation of your design.

**PROJECT V: FILM (DUE 11/20)**

Take a look at the American Film Institute’s list of the 100 greatest American films ever made ([http://www.greatestfilms.org/afi100filmsA.html](http://www.greatestfilms.org/afi100filmsA.html)) or at Roger Ebert’s list of his 100 best films ([http://www.suntimes.com/ebert/greatmovies/](http://www.suntimes.com/ebert/greatmovies/)). Choose a film from this list, watch it carefully, and review it in a 2-3 page paper. Briefly describe the film's setting, plot, and characters. Who is the filmmaker, and how has he or she used the techniques of camera angle, editing, music, and lighting to advance the story? Who do you imagine is the intended audience for this film, and how does the filmmaker appeal to the taste of that segment of the population? What is the movie's tone, and how is it established? Finally, why do you think this film made it onto the list?

**Please Note:** Many of the films on these lists will be available at local video stores or at the DCC or Glendive Public Library. In some cases, however, you may need to request a film through interlibrary loan. Look for it in the University of Montana library catalog, then talk with a DCC librarian about making the request. It can take as long as a week for books and movies requested this way to arrive, and even then you may not be able to get your first choice. Select a few possibilities for this project, and PLAN AHEAD to be sure you have time to complete the assignment!

**PROJECT VI: ARCHITECTURE (DUE 12/2)**

Locate a building or other architectural work in your area that you find architecturally interesting. As you search, think about buildings not only as places to live or boxes with roofs, but as works of art. Try to select one that exhibits the elements of architecture we’ve discussed. You may need to do a little research, but try to find out when it was built and why (check the cornerstone!). Who was the architect? Has the building been remodeled or expanded? Closely examine the building's exterior, especially its frontal elevation. If possible, also examine the interior of the building. In a 2-3 page essay, describe the building. What kind of building is it, and what is its function? What principles of architecture does it exhibit? Do its interior and exterior present a unified whole, or do they seem to have different purposes? How does the form of the building reflect its function, and how do you know by looking at this building what its purpose is? Do its details remind you of any of the architectural examples we’ve viewed in class? If so, which ones and in what way? What emotions does the building evoke, and are they the emotions you believe the architect intended to evoke? Would you describe the building as “beautiful”? Why or why not?
PROJECT VII: LITERATURE (DUE 12/16)

Option A. Write an original short story or poetry on any subject. Stories must be at least 4-5 pages in length, and poems at least 50 lines altogether. Your work should reflect the literary principles we've discussed.

Option B: Locate a collection of short stories available on line (such as http://www.online-library.org/fictions/index.html or http://www.angelfire.com/biz2/story/classics.html). Read one story and write a 2-3 page essay describing it. Briefly summarize the setting, plot, and characters. Is the narrative linear, or does it use a more experimental form? What are the story's major themes and how does its form or structure, especially the use of recurring motifs, help convey them? From whose point of view is the story told, and how does the author's choice of narrator affect the story's focus? Is the narrator limited or unlimited in his or her knowledge about the story and its characters – that is, how distant is the narrator from the action? Describe the tone of the story: comic, tragic, journalistic, ironic, intimate, self-consciously "literary," or something else.
## Class and Reading Schedule

### Humanities I

**Fall 2003**

**Introductions**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Th 8/28</td>
<td>Syllabus and Course Introduction</td>
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**Pictures**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Th 9/4</td>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>Read: Sporre, Ch. 1</td>
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<td>Th 9/11</td>
<td>Pictures</td>
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**Sculpture**

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<tr>
<td>T 9/16</td>
<td>Sculpture</td>
<td>Read: Sporre, Ch. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 9/18</td>
<td>Sculpture</td>
<td>Due: Pictures Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 9/23</td>
<td>Sculpture</td>
<td>Read: Stone, The Agony and the Ecstasy, chs. 1, 2, 6, 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 9/25</td>
<td>Sculpture</td>
<td>Quiz: The Agony and the Ecstasy</td>
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**Music**

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<tr>
<td>T 9/30</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Read: Sporre, Ch. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 10/2</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Due: Sculpture Project</td>
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<td>T 10/7</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>View in class: Amadeus</td>
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<td>Th 10/9</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>View in class: Amadeus</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 10/14</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Due: Turn in Journals (check-up)</td>
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**Theatre**

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<tr>
<td>Th 10/16</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>Read: Sporre, Ch. 4</td>
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<td>T 10/21</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>Read: Chekov, Uncle Vanya</td>
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<td>Th 10/23</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>Quiz: Uncle Vanya</td>
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<td>Due: Music Project</td>
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<td>T 10/28</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td><strong>View in class: Vanya on 42nd Street</strong></td>
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<td>Th 10/30</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Sporre, Ch. 5 &lt;br&gt;<strong>View in class:</strong> The Player</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 11/4</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Theatre Project &lt;br&gt;<strong>View in class:</strong> The Player</td>
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<td>Th 11/6</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Theatre Project &lt;br&gt;<strong>View in class:</strong> The Player</td>
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<td><strong>No Class – Preregistration Day</strong></td>
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<td>Th 11/13</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Turn in Journals (check-up)</td>
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<td>T 11/18</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Sporre, Ch. 7 &lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Turn in Journals (check-up)</td>
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<td>Th 11/20</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Sullivan, “The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered” &lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Film Project &lt;br&gt;<strong>Begin reading:</strong> Jane Eyre</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 11/25</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
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<td>Th 11/27</td>
<td><em>No Class – Thanksgiving</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>T 12/2</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Sporre, Ch. 8 with Readings &lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Architecture Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 12/4</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Bronte, Jane Eyre &lt;br&gt;<strong>Quiz:</strong> Jane Eyre</td>
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<td>T 12/9</td>
<td>Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 12/11</td>
<td>Literature/Conclusions &lt;br&gt;<strong>Read:</strong> Stories and Poetry on Web &lt;br&gt;<strong>Due:</strong> Turn in Journals</td>
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<td><strong>Due:</strong> Literature Project (turn in to Rm. 113)</td>
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