Sci-365  Science and Society
Course Syllabus  Fall 2008

Instructor:  Robert Hermann  email:  Robert.Hermann@cune.edu
Phone:  7447  Office Hours:  MWF 8:30 – 9:20 am; MW 2:10-3:00 pm; R 10:00 – 12:00
Office:  Science 204  F 10:00-11:00 and by appointment (or just stop by)

Text:  None, but there will be required readings.

Course Info:  Credit Hours: 1
Meeting Times:  1:10 am - 2:00 pm Thursday in Sc 115

Description:  Lectures and periodical readings on recent and current science topics of interest to the 'layman'. Science topics chosen for their impact on the individual and on society. Moral and religious implications of ideas of scientific advances are explored.

Attendance:  You are expected to be in class, and you are responsible for the material covered in each class and any work assigned or collected in each class. You will not pass this class if you have more than three (3) absences of any kind. Please notify me about absences beforehand if possible. Problems will be addressed individually.

Grading:  The course is graded Passed-Failed. To pass the course ALL of the following must be completed:
1. Have no more than three absences of any kind, excused or unexcused.
2. Turn in ten or more weekly reports of current science magazine readings. (See "Weekly Reports" below.) You are to read and turn in one report each week.
3. Complete three discussion papers on topics of science and society (to be described) with an average grade of at least 70% for the three.
4. Complete one book report on a scientific topic of the student's choice and instructor's approval. (See "Book Report" below.) Due the last day of classes, December 12, 2008.
5. Read the material each week that prepares you for that week's group presentation.
6. No work will be accepted for any reason after the last day of classes, December 12, 2008.

Weekly Report:  (Complete at least 10)

Weekly reports are intended to develop a habit of reading some exciting current popular science articles written for the layman. You should schedule one hour each week for this purpose. Through your reading you should become acquainted with a variety of magazines in the science field and should cover a variety of topics of current importance. A written summary will help reinforce what you learn in the reading session. Each report must be from a separate issue of a magazine. For the magazine readings, you can use the same magazine title a maximum of two (2) times. Keep track of the titles you use. You may only turn in one report each week unless you get permission from the instructor in advance. Under no circumstances will more than three reports be accepted in any one week.

Each week, you should choose a magazine from the list and peruse the contents. Pick a major article or two and read them. The last few minutes of your hour should be spent writing a report on 8½ x 11 paper. The report should include:
1. Your name (in the upper right corner of the paper).
2. Name and date of the magazine (from the last 6 months).
3. A short list of articles read and perused.
4. Title and abstract of each major article you read. An abstract for this report is a paragraph of your own composition that summarizes the content of the article and your thoughts on it. (Length of no more than half a page for an abstract.)
In order to ensure that readings are done regularly, at least five (5) readings must be turned in by October 30, 2008; the tenth class session. Any number of reports fewer than five that you have turned in by that point will be added to the total required during the semester. No more than three (3) reports will be accepted from an individual in any week.

Reports, legibly written -- ink or typewritten -- are to be turned in at the beginning of the class period or before class. Late reports must have the written approval of the instructor to be accepted. Magazines in Link Library acceptable for the reports are:

- American Journal of Physics
- American Scientist
- Astronomy
- Audubon
- Bioscience
- Chemical & Eng. News
- Discover
- Futurist
- JAMA
- National Wildlife
- Natural History
- Nature*
- New Scientist
- Nutrition Today
- Oceanus
- Physics Today
- Popular Science
- Psychology Today
- Science
- Science and Children
- Science News
- ScienceScope
- Scientific American
- Skeptical Inquirer
- Sky and Telescope

NOTE: Journals in bold face must be included in your readings during the semester. (* Nature readings may be from more than six months past.)

NOTE: Readings must be from the actual magazine in the library. Readings from the magazine's web site are not acceptable.

Discussion Papers (Three required, 2-3 pages each)

Write a 2-3 page (typed, single- or 1 ½ - spaced) report on broad topics of science and society (to be described later). Use appropriate sources (put the reference at the end and include references to the information within the text) for your information. Write the sort of clear, well-reasoned and supported paper one would expect of an upper-level course. Each paper will be graded, and you must receive an average of at least 70% combined for the three papers in order to pass the class.

Book Report (one oral/written, 10 minutes with instructor)

This session provides an opportunity for student and instructor to become acquainted and an opportunity for the student to discuss a book that has been read. This should encourage thinking about what has been read and how topics are related to your life view. Hopefully more is gotten out of the book when it is discussed.

Choose a book from the book list (bibliography is on reserve in the university library) and bring it with you to the report session so the instructor can become acquainted with the book. Books not on the list must have prior approval of the instructor in writing. Prepare an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper to leave with the instructor. It contains the following information on no more than one page legibly typewritten or in ink.

1. Your name and date.
2. Author and title of the book.
3. A brief description of the main themes of the book, or a high point or two in the book.
4. Personal reaction to the book.

ADA Statement: Students with a documented disability, who need reasonable accommodations, should contact ADA & Academic Support. Students should also notify their instructors immediately about any disability-related academic needs they may have. To contact the ADA & Academic Support Director, Tanya Jarchow, please call 402.643.7377 or 800.535.5494 ext. 7377 or email Tanya.Jarchow@cune.edu.

Notice: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor in order to accommodate institutional, instructional and/or student needs.