

## **HON 201. Inquiry, Discovery and the Arts Course Action Form Documentation**

### Course Justification

This course is directed to students who are at the very beginning of their participation in the University Honors program with its emphasis on inquiry and research. HON 201 is the beginning of a trajectory that has a culminating project in the student's last year. Accordingly, the course is designed to help students think about the nature of inquiry and discovery, and to enable them to experience inquiry as involving risks, creativity and ethical issues, and to become inquirers. The course involves the relation of art and inquiry on three levels:

- \* The artist as a model of an inquirer: How did the artist inquire into his or her theme?
- \* The work as suggesting something about the nature of inquiry: What does this work's treatment of inquiry tell one about inquiry?
- \* The student as one inquiring into the meaning of the work of art: How does one inquire into the meaning of a particular work of art?

In order for the course to meet its goal of launching students into an academic program of inquiry and research, it is necessary that it also meets its goal of helping students to understand the particular works of art studied in the course and learn to articulate that understanding in oral and written form. In other words, the course is both an arts course examining works that treat a common theme and also an inquiry course that uses works of art as particular examples of inquiry and particular proposals about the nature of discovery.

The course syllabi change from year to year, incorporating different works of art. New works will always be selected for their ability to address the course objectives stated above and help students think about inquiry and discovery and attendant issues of creativity, risk-taking, and morality. For example, another syllabus might focus on works of art that treat inquiry and discovery with respect to Darwinism. Or Shakespeare's *Tempest*, with its emphasis on the promise and limits of science and pressing to new scientific discoveries, might be the focus of a syllabus.

### Proposed Revisions

The proposed revision is the creation of new learning outcomes and means of assessing those outcomes to meet the new GER objectives as set forth by the CUE.

### Enrollment For The Past Five Years

Spring 1999	0
Summer 1 1999	0
Summer 2 1999	0
Fall 1999	0
Spring 2000	0
Summer 1 2000	0
Summer 2 2000	0
Fall 2000	0
Spring 2001	0
Summer 1 2001	0
Summer 2 2001	0
Fall 2001	0
Spring 2002	0
Summer 1 2002	0
Summer 2 2002	0
Fall 2002	0
Spring 2003	0
Summer 1 2003	0
Summer 2 2003	0
Fall 2003	95

Resources Statement: N/A

Consultation With Other Departments: N/A

### Course objectives

1. Students will learn the basic principles of analyzing a work of art: the role of its historical context, the work's internal structure, and the impact of that structure on the work's particular treatment of its theme.
2. Students will learn the impossibility of final and definitive statements regarding a work of art. To the extent that a work of art resists reductive statements, students will see how disagreement among critics and continuous discussion is grounded in the work of art itself. Students will experience an inquiry that is open-ended and a discovery that is ongoing.
3. By studying several different works that treat the theme of inquiry and discovery, students will learn several different ways to think about the risks, creativity and ethical dilemmas involved in inquiry.

4. By learning how to inquire into works of art that are complex, ambiguous and challenging, students will learn the practice of inquiry and discovery.
5. By studying several artists who have delved into the nature of inquiry and discovery, students will learn different approaches to the question, how shall I inquire into this theme?

### Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to analyze the historical, cultural and aesthetic dimensions of the works of art studied in the course and combine these dimensions in a synthesis of the work as a whole.
2. Interpret and make critical judgments about a work art by analyzing its structure, form and style.
3. Evaluate a work of art based upon techniques and standards appropriate to the genre.
4. Grasp the impact of the style and structure of a work of art on its theme.
5. Judge whether an interpretation is more or less valid, more or less compelling, while understanding that no interpretation is so definitive that further interpretations are impossible.
6. Evaluate the different concepts of inquiry and discovery that are embodied in the various works of art analyzed in the course.
7. Know the process of inquiring into the unique significance of a work of art that is ambiguous, complex and challenging.

### Enrollment for the Last 5 Years

### GER Category Objectives: Visual and Performing Arts

The course will help students to:

1. deepen their understanding of aesthetic, cultural, and historical dimensions of artistic traditions; and
2. strengthen their ability to interpret and make critical judgments about the arts through the analysis of structure, form, and style of specific works; and

3. strengthen their ability to create, recreate, or evaluate art based upon techniques and standards appropriate to the genre.

### GER Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to analyze the historical, cultural and aesthetic dimensions of the works of art studied in the course and combine these dimensions in a synthesis of the work as a whole.

2. Interpret and make critical judgments about a work art by analyzing its structure, form and style.

3. Evaluate a work of art based upon techniques and standards appropriate to the genre.

### Means of Assessing GER Outcomes

Students will demonstrate their achievement of the outcomes through:

1. Team presentation and write up of the team presentation.

2. Paper on the Heisenberg principle and the structure of *Copenhagen* as theatre and as film.

3. Daily and weekly writing assignments

### Sample syllabus

## **HON 201, Inquiry, Discovery and the Arts: *Copenhagen***

### Course objectives

1. To learn how to inquire into works of art, using an analysis of their form, style and historical context as the basis for interpretation.

2. To learn what a selected group of works of art have to say about the nature of inquiry and discovery

3. More specifically, learn the questions with which the play *Copenhagen* confronts its audience, the extent to which it offers answers to these questions, and how one can live with the ambiguities uncovered by the play without lapsing into despair or cynicism.

GER Objectives (objectives for courses meeting the requirement for a course in the visual or performing arts)

The course will help students to:

1. deepen their understanding of aesthetic, cultural, and historical dimensions of artistic traditions; and
2. strengthen their ability to interpret and make critical judgments about the arts through the analysis of structure, form, and style of specific works; and
3. strengthen their ability to create, recreate, or evaluate art based upon techniques and standards appropriate to the genre.

Course Outcomes. At the end of the course, students will be able to

1. analyze the historical, cultural and aesthetic dimensions of the works of art studied in the course and combine these dimensions in a synthesis of the work as a whole;
2. interpret and make critical judgments about a work art by analyzing its structure, form and style;
3. evaluate a work of art based upon techniques and standards appropriate to the genre;
4. grasp the impact of the style and structure of a work of art on its theme;
5. judge whether an interpretation is more or less valid, more or less compelling, while understanding that no interpretation is so definitive that further interpretations are impossible;
6. evaluate the different concepts of inquiry and discovery that are embodied in the various works of art analyzed in the course;
7. know the process of inquiring into the unique significance of a work of art that is ambiguous, complex and challenging.

Class meetings: topics and assignments

### **Introduction to the Course**

1. Preliminary discussion of some key concepts:  
inquiry                      work of art  
discovery      theater

2. Discuss Act One of *Copenhagen* by Michael Frayn  
Assignment: read Act I of the play (bookstore)
3. Discuss Act Two of *Copenhagen*  
Assignment: read Act II of the play
4. Guest lecture by Jon Pheloung, Department of Communication, on problems and opportunities in staging the play
5. An in-class reading of selected passages
6. Discussion of the video of *Copenhagen*  
Assignment: view the video in its entirety (D.H. Hill Media Center)

### **The Physics Question**

7. Guest lecture on the Heisenberg principle, Prof. Steve Reynolds, Department of Physics  
Assignment: Paper on *Copenhagen* as film and as theatre is due. Topic is given in the course requirements section.
8. Discussion on the Heisenberg principle and its role in the play.
9. Discuss Dürrenmatt, *The Physicists*.  
Assignment: read the entire play (bookstore)
10. Discussion of *The Physicists* continued

### **The Historiographical Question**

12. Guest lecture on historiography. Prof. David Zonderman, Department of History  
Assignments: read handout on Frayn's sources and watch the first act of *The Ghosts of Versailles* by Hofman and Corigliano
13. Discussion of the applicability of Zonderman's ideas to *Copenhagen*  
Assignment: watch the second act of *The Ghosts of Versailles* by Hofman and Corigliano

14. Discuss Hofman and Corigliano, *The Ghosts of Versailles* (opera). When art rewrites history.

Assignment: finish watching video of the opera

15. Continue discussion of *The Ghosts of Versailles*

16. History as a source for art. The “docu-drama”

Assignment: watch the video of Shakespeare’s *Henry V* (Media Center)

17. Compare the relation of art to history in *Copenhagen*, *Henry V*, and the works of Peter Shaffer

Assignment: watch video of either *Equus* or *Amadeus*

### **The Hermeneutical Question—Understanding and Communication**

18. Kantian aesthetics

Assignment: read the first two moments of Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (bookstore)

19. Twentieth-century critiques of Kant: Arthur Danto

Assignment: read chapter four of Danto, *Transfiguration of the Commonplace* (on reserve)

20. The postmodern critique of the possibility of meaning and interpretation.

Assignment: work on final presentation

21. Discussion of the film, *Rashomon*.

Assignment: watch the film in the media center

22. Continue discussion of *Rashomon*. Compare to *Copenhagen*

Assignment: work on final presentation (class meetings 27, 28 and 29)

### **The Ethical-Religious Question**

23. Ethical issues in making and criticizing works of art and in doing scientific research

Assignment: work on final presentation

24. Discuss *Dr. Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe. When the thirst for knowledge becomes boundless

Assignment: read Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus* (bookstore)

25. Discussion James Watson, *The Double Helix*, Ethics and Aesthetics in DNA research.  
Science writing as  
literature  
Assignment: Read Watson, *The Double Helix*

26. In-class reading and discussion of selected passages from Goethe's *Faust* (handout)  
Assignment: work on final presentation

### **Synthesis of the play**

27. Student teams presentations I: Define the ethical issues involved in inquiry as these issues are raised (1) in AND BY the conversations among Heisenberg, Bohr and Bohr's wife about their research in Frayn's play; (2) by the uncertainty about what took place in the war-time meeting of Bohr and Heisenberg (eg. is one ever in a position to make an ethical evaluation of other people's actions?); and (3) by the impossibility of certainty that one has fully understood someone else or been understood by the other. Two four-person teams will each make a presentation.

28. Student teams presentations II: Paying attention to issues of uncertainty, incomplete understanding and the historical context in which Bohr, Heisenberg and Frayn did their work, offer a new understanding of the nature of creativity in inquiry and discovery on the part of Bohr and Heisenberg in their scientific research and on the part of Frayn in his playwrighting. Two four-person teams will each make a presentation.

29. Student teams presentations III: Paying attention to issues of uncertainty, incomplete understanding and the historical context in which Bohr, Heisenberg and Frayn did their work, offer a new understanding of risk in inquiry and discovery on the part of Bohr and Heisenberg in their scientific research and on the part of Frayn in his playwrighting. Two four-person teams will each make a presentation.

### Course requirements

1. Complete all assignments before class on the day for which they are assigned.
2. Salient idea reported every day, reflection on salient idea reported once a week beginning in third week, and critique of reflection reported once a week beginning in fifth week  
(Takes the place of a mid term) 20% of final grade.
3. Paper on *Copenhagen* as theater and as film. 20%. Topic:  
"The Heisenberg uncertainty principle not only is the theme of much of the dialogue in *Copenhagen*, but also it informs the structure of the play." Evaluate this statement both with

respect of the film version and to the theater presentation. Is the statement more applicable to one or the other? Which aspects of the two versions lead to this evaluation?

4. Participate fully in developing and delivering the team presentation during the last three class meetings. 20% of final grade.
5. Write up of team's work for the final presentations. 20% of final grade
6. Final exam. 20% of final grade

### Texts

Michael Frayn, *Copenhagen*. 2000. \$9.80  
Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Physicists*. 1992. \$9.60  
Christopher Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus* 1994. \$1.50  
Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment* 2000. \$8.00  
James Watson, *The Double Helix*. 2001. \$11.20

**Academic Integrity:** Students will be expected to do their own work or to agree on the amount of work done by each member of a group in a group project. Acceptance of academic responsibility will be according to the University policy on academic integrity as defined by the Honor Pledge.

**Disability Policy:** The seminar will be conducted according to the University policy for students with disabilities. Students with hearing, visual, motor, learning, or other disabilities are asked to make any needs known at the beginning of the term so that appropriate adjustments may be made.