

FOCUSED INQUIRY: FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS DISCOVERING THE MODERN AND POSTMODERN

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Abstract

This essay describes the Focused Inquiry Program's pedagogy at Virginia Commonwealth University's University College. The intent, purpose, and handling of the two-semester, themed, first-year-level, core courses are explained. Students focus on two words from their popular definitions to various disciplinary definitions. Freire's teaching style, Jerome Bruner's 'spiral curriculum,' and workshop strategies from Bard College's Thinking and Writing Institute are made into a transparent pedagogical foundation to teach ideas of the absurd and empathy. The writer demonstrates how in conjunction with a graphic novel, literary fiction, and film first-year students may move from rudimentary understanding to a more nuanced perspective by giving them language. The writer contends that the process may be used to give students 'footholds' for disciplinary reading and writing.

Keywords: Freshman writing, liberal arts

INTRODUCTION

For the last four years, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has been implementing programs that will make up University College. It has meant re-creating core courses and putting together an interdisciplinary major. Focused Inquiry is a two-semester, first-year course (UNIV111 & 112). The course is designed to merge academic skills with student services and advising. All faculty members teaching Focused Inquiry use variations on a theme for three consecutive years. University College's 100 and 200 level courses attempt to bring services and teach skills to the university's large constituency of first generation

students. Focused Inquiry works closely with student services and adopted the “spiral curriculum” to teach thinking, reading, writing, and a host of other skills.

The shared syllabus for Focused Inquiry explains that “FI applies the notion of the ‘spiral curriculum’ in that students will repeat activities that allow them to revisit analytical concepts and practices, building upon these until they have grasped and internalized the steps of the analytical process. Each ‘level’ of this ‘spiral curriculum’ will be more complex and involved, so that they will sharpen their skills as they move through the course.” The “spiral curriculum” idea is as Jerome Bruner (1997) outlines in his early book *The Process of Education*: “A curriculum as it develops should revisit . . . basic ideas repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them” (p. 13). This paper outlines the use of Bruner’s curriculum by way of sequenced reading, journaling, and writing assignments particular to my syllabi over the course of my four years at VCU’s University College. While this paper reports on my teaching two FI three-year themes (Cultural Identities and then History, Memory, and Possibility), it also explains how the classes learned some of the elements that go into Modernism and Postmodernism while making inquiry into a variety of disciplines: Empathy as a metaphoric tool that unifies readers in a preparation for the masculine sublime, and the absurd as a tool of repeated fragmentation that creates aporia, irony, and the feminine sublime with each break. One is the tool of the modernist and the other is the tool of the postmodernist.

The progression in Bruner’s spiral is obvious when the syllabus moves from broader understandings of concepts to the more refined or complicated definitions of concepts that I choose to focus the reading and writing. However, there are also smaller progressions along the way. Students are taught to use the reading strategies. Those strategies encourage students to (as David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky put it on page one of the 2005 edition of *Ways of Reading*) “push and shove” the year’s texts (p. 1). Students are encouraged repeatedly to use the writing-to-learn strategies that they practice in this course in their other courses across the curriculum. I include “sequential journal assignments” to compose the “spiral curriculum” in an effort to ensure regular writing and repetition of the course’s ideas in new ways, only taking time out to help everyone stay on board (Bruner, 1997, p. 13).

TYPICAL YEAR

From the first day, I explain to students that I will not waste their time with busy work, but I will challenge them. Stating this prepares them for the sequential, process-respecting, and spiral nature of the course. If they are comfortable, then I am *not* doing my job; they are in familiar territory and not learning. The three strategies I have mentioned above have made classes collaborative, partici-

patory, and focused. The approach also brought appreciation from students who often become frustrated and impatient with the apparent random nature of teaching in skills courses.

The idea of a spiral curriculum is an old idea and was made familiar to me in my early years at Bradford College as was the idea of sequential assignments. However, in VCU's new two-semester, first-year course the spiral curriculum has proved to be even of greater value to this faculty member. I took the three-year theme, found disciplinary concepts related to them and broke the concepts down into popular notions during the first semester of the course. Included in the sequential assignments during the second semester of the course when students read from the disciplines is a reading and discussion strategy called "Writing about Texts: Dialogue with the Author" that has been demonstrated at the Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking (IWT). The strategy attempts to solve the problem of writing "an essay that addresses an author's argument in a natural voice, on your own informed authority" (Appendix A). The whole strategy is not used in my course. (I make use of various tools that IWT uses as scaffolding toward formal papers.) However, some of it has been instrumental for students intimidated by difficult texts so that they begin to feel at ease with and begin to understand the text. The instructions on Bard College's Institute for Writing and Thinking's (1990) handout are as follows:

1. Read the text at least twice, silently and aloud. Hear the voice of the text and begin to form an oral interpretation.
2. Before and during class, render parts of the text aloud with various purposes: (a) for basic, clear understanding; (b) to reinforce what you take to be the author's intended emphasis; (c) to dramatize the power of the text; (d) to exaggerate or parody the voice. ("Writing about Texts: Dialogue with the Author")

The first part of the assignment is done at home (1) and the second part is done in class (2). The Bard Institute's strategy is embedded into my spiral, sequenced semester. (See Appendix B for the first six meetings of a typical FI 111 that meets Tuesdays and Thursdays.) To some first-year students disciplinary texts seem overwhelming and unmanageable. The exercise assisted in easing the texts down to size.

During the first semester of my first academic year at VCU my FI 111 classes used the concepts in Paulo Freire's essay "The Banking Concept of Education" (in *Ways of reading*, pp. 256-271). The class used Freire's idea of oppression when looking at the world by way of national historic documents and international news via newspapers. The second semester of FI (112), the students and I explored the early feminist ideas of Marilyn Frye ("Oppression," 1983) and Simone de Beauvoir "from Second Sex" (in Jacobus' *A world of ideas*, pp.173-185). I used basic feminist thought because I had a personal interest in the movement, hav-

ing been revising a collection of poems that worked with feminist ideas. Second semester we got familiar with the notion of the sublimines and discovered connections between masculine and feminine sublime. Indeed, while the masculine sublime attempts to overwhelm one with experience, we found in de Beauvoir's "feminine mystery" (p. 179) Jean-François Lyotard's "feminine sublime" (as cited in Freeman, 1997, p. 162). In FI 112, the same lenses/concepts/themes are used and given definitions as a member of an academic discipline might use.

My hope was that the lenses became language for students to use in discussions and on papers and that the connections between Freire's notion of oppression and de Beauvoir's feminine mystery would be made. Concepts are chosen to suit my interests for my research and writing, but of course they must be able to be found by students. Having concepts that I am interested in is important so that students intuit my interest. So I try to choose concepts that seem rudimentary or banal but are able to reveal interesting notions with closer scrutiny. I have taught upper-level courses for several years and am aware of what one might expect from freshmen. During the second semester, we built on what we examined first semester, reading *The Dew Breaker* (2005) and watching "Thelma and Louise" (1991). Students found themselves examining the difference between Modernism and Postmodernism via masculine and feminine sublime.

To be certain that students understand the concepts and their contexts, they perform close reading of an essay that contains or better yet defines the concept. Students are going to read the essay at least twice under my supervision and then write a paper on it or take an essay exam. (The reading, journaling, and demonstrative writing here is transparent so students may model it in other courses that may have difficult readings.) Appendix B is an example of class times during the reading, journaling, and writing using the sequential and spiral curriculum. Appendix C includes the fall FI 112 semester schedule. However, though the sequential and spiral curriculum is modeled here, the particular lesson is for the reading of Paulo Freire and continues toward a paper on his concept.

Semesters' Progression

In the year 2010-2011, History, Memory, and Possibility made up the theme for Focused Inquiry. In the spring of 2011, my FI 111 classes began working with four concepts (utopia, memory, empathy, the absurd) that allowed me to use the absurd and empathy as concepts in the fall in FI 112. Even in skills courses, I am always interested in creating a unified course with outcomes I can measure and outcomes that reach beyond the expectations of a skills curriculum. I am attempting to reach students who are seeking acceptance in majors from all the disciplines. Narrowing the number of concepts in FI 112 allowed the students to do justice to the concepts' definitions and to bring tighter focus to the course's direction.

I taught FI 111 in the spring and 112 in the fall. My last year teaching Focused Inquiry 111, the popular notions for the four terms were used as lenses by small groups to challenge them to find evidence of the notions or related ideas in various texts. In my effort to empower students, my courses are as transparent as I can make them, and students are informed of my interest in the concepts as well. (My interest pays the dividend by way of my enthusiasm in the classroom that seems to be infectious to many.) They knew I was writing this paper.

I wanted the students to demonstrate for themselves how these concepts help define modernism and postmodernism. In the beginning of the semester, I explained to the classes where I thought we would end up, but didn't clearly map the terrain for them. Along the way as we came across important moments in the course, I asked them to make note of the moment for later discussion or discussed the issue at that time. However, first, students in FI 111 were to define the difference between the popular notions of these concepts and then in FI 112 the way a philosopher and sociologist or social neuroscientist might use them. The results that I have had in attempting to bring an understanding of disciplinary concepts to students have been little victories, footing for later courses perhaps.

In the introduction to the course of the FI 112, we returned to the ideas (empathy and the absurd) from FI 111 in Bruner fashion to complicate or problematize them so that students add to their once simpler understanding of the concepts. For homework we read closely and then performed classroom exercises around each concept during one class session via two essays: Daniel Batson's essay "These Things Called Empathy" (2009) and Albert Camus's "The Myth of Sisyphus" (1991). Early in the semester when discussing Batson's essay, we talked about mirror neurons, empathetic accuracy and other issues the essay puts forth or intimates. We discussed empathy from the view-points of philosopher, neuroscientist, sociologist, psychologist, and literary writer. We also discussed how empathy implies that one person is in a more advantaged position than another, so that power dynamics play a role. The discussion complicated earlier notions and sparked suspicion that enriched later discussions on an author's reliance on or mastery of the tool of reader empathy for characters. When discussing Camus's essay, we discussed the relation of the absurd to humor and irony and paradox.

In FI, the students were expected to read a book related to the greater FI theme each semester of their first year at university. I use the books not as requirements to discuss one day in class but as texts worthy of the class writing about all semester. *Maus* by Art Spiegelman (1992) was the book for all FI 111 courses, and *Flight* by Sherman Alexie (2007) was chosen for FI 112 students. In FI 112, I split the class in two, and half the class adopted empathy as a lens and the other half adopted the absurd. Students read and took notes using their lens/concept to understand half of the novel *Flight* for class discussion. Their notes were shared in small group work with other students reading for the same concept. The groups

would alternate spokespersons and report to the other students in the class what they found and to what conclusions they had come. The partial reading of the novel allowed me to point out to them the hermeneutic cycle with which each student was involved. (I was attempting to bring consciousness to their interpretive processes.) The notes taken turned into thesis statements and the chaos of notes and homework were shaped into papers through individual writing and small group workshops.

After students had also finished reading and discussing the novel *Flight*, they discussed how people with different backgrounds may have a more difficult time being accurate with empathy. We discussed the subject, just as we had done with empathy after reading *Maus*. We took the second half of the same class and we explored Camus' "Myth of Sisyphus" and his idea of absurd. The discussion led us to the implications for each student and humanity as a whole. We also attempted to understand how the absurd works in the essay and in our lives. Students returned to the idea of paradox and irony, and I added aporia to finish the linkage of ideas that proved helpful later. In particular, I pointed out Camus' idea of meaning as an illusion was the idea of aporia. Students came away not only relating to Sisyphus but understanding what Camus meant in suggesting that humor and new consciousness help us with putting things in perspective. I also suggested that aporia is powerful in defamiliarizing us with our surroundings. These class discussions gave students confidence in what they knew for the upcoming formal writing assignment.

Because we would be spending so much time on each novel each semester, I also assigned a film for each semester: "Hotel Rwanda" (2005) and "Children of Men" (2006) respectively. We watched the films in class (using two classes to do so) and took two class periods for discussion of the films, and then I posted the movie scripts on Blackboard and put the films on reserve in the library. Some lights were left on when watching in class so that students could take notes on the movie or at least mark places to which they might want to return. The students found the concepts, empathy and the absurd, in the novels and films we watched. The concepts also assisted me personally when making up the threshold between modernism and postmodernism in my own writing on poetics. The students finding the use of the concepts allowed me to lead the students to the difference as they discover the concepts in novels, and films for themselves.

In FI 111 students wrote their first papers on the popular definition of a concept and then used the concepts as they defined them to write on *Maus*. Finally, after presentations on findings, students used the concept to write about the graphic novel and film "Hotel Rwanda" together. In FI 112, students given Camus' "Myth of Sisyphus" and Batson's "These Things Called Empathy" took an essay exam on both essays. Next students used more nuanced understandings of the concepts to bring insight to *Flight*, and then used the concepts on the novel

and the film “Children of Men” in a hypothesis paper. Working in this way allowed students to see for themselves the process of reading, writing, and the initial way one often builds a research project. It also allowed them to take what may have been useful from an old paper and repurpose it for the next. Many students used the hypothesis paper as a leaping off point to an independent research paper in their areas of interest. In FI 111 the popular concept, the novel and the movie were the only texts to which they would need to refer in their papers. In FI 112, three texts (Camus’ or Batson’s essays, novel and film) would be the beginning of an eight-plus page research paper.

Each paper was work-shopped twice: once for its thesis and once for the whole rough draft. I made myself available via email, office hours, and sometimes Wimba to comment and advise students who had specific questions on a sentence or a paragraph or two. The questions were important because they foster student consciousness around the student’s writing and didn’t swamp me with students wanting me to “correct” their work. Along with the formal writing assignment, former student papers were posted on Blackboard as examples of good writing on a similar paper. I encouraged the use of the various writing services available to all students and allowed students receiving a C- or lower to rewrite if they desired to do so.

When the research paper was assigned, I posted on Blackboard journal articles and essays as one might put books and materials on reserve in the library. However, students needed to come up with three sources on their own during and after a class with the reference librarian who familiarized them with data bases as well as the library shelves. As stated earlier, the course allowed for repurposing student writing from journal assignments to papers, and earlier papers often inform later papers. Up until final draft time, students were encouraged to collaborate and share perspectives, information, and reading and writing advice.

During the course of the semester in FI 111 through the graphic novel *Maus* and the movie “Hotel Rwanda,” the class discussed the dilemma that the Holocaust brought to Europe and the dilemma it presented to the idea of the Enlightenment. However, it was not until FI 112 that the class focused closely on the concepts and the concepts’ relationship to art and culture. During FI 112, I looked for opportunities in either entire class times or in the remainder of class times to bring in points that would lead the class to discuss relevant modernist and postmodernist ideas and basic concepts. The first points I made for class discussion were how empathy was limited, how it was a metaphor, a unifier, a tool for the author to manipulate the reader toward the masculine sublime -- or in other words, empathy as creating power differentials between author and reader and protagonist and other characters. The other points I made were regarding how the absurd’s relationship to irony, as fragmentation, as the no-passage of aporia, and as the feminine sublime. We then discussed whether metonymy could be

a whole, in itself complete, a unit. I presented examples of the masculine sublime as overwhelming and of metonymy as a whole, e.g. the five flights of Michael (Zits) in *Flight* as mini-narratives.

The graphic novel *Maus* was valuable because of its subject matter and its pop-culture delivery made it easier to explain why thinkers challenged the Enlightenment assumptions. “Hotel Rwanda” continued the theme of genocide that happened in their lifetimes. The class discovered empathy and its inaccuracies, limitations, and feigned gestures within and among ethnic and religious groups. It also found paradox, irony and fragmentation in these works. However, in FI 112 after reading the essays for definitions, students were more able to bring nuance to their points for discussion. They recognized the five flights in Alexie’s novel as gestures of empathy as explained in Batson’s essay and recognized the relationship between the author and audience as one that relies heavily on empathy, even when the author seems to attempt to make it difficult.

The flights were rich resource for identifying the various definitions mentioned in Batson’s essay. Each of the flights that Zits takes were also understood as a fragment that broke up plot so that it was difficult to reveal with certainty. Irony was identified from the opening sentence’s reworking of Melville’s opening sentence for *Moby Dick*, and it became more and more easily recognized. Alexie’s demand that the reader suspend disbelief in the protagonist’s gestures of empathy and self-discovery were seen as absurdities that assisted the students in understanding the fragmentation. Some students identified Zits with Sisyphus in Camus’ essay. Others claimed that each body he entered in search of his identity was a new effort at pushing the rock up the mountain.

The film “Children of Men” allowed students to recognize Camus’ absurd hero in the character Theo. Students who visited YouTube brought to the discussion Slavoj Žižek’s claim in his 2006 YouTube review of the movie that the background competes with the foreground and its leading characters for the attention of the audience. That was called ironic, paradoxical, absurd. The film was a wealth of evidence for Camus’ absurd. It was also action-packed with Batson’s definitions of empathy. Because it is a film, students looked for evidence of ‘mirror neurons’ at work in actors’ faces and body movements and believed they found it. Again, they also found the relationship between the author and audience one of manipulation by the author.

During the last full class when I “wrap-up” the semester, I braided the loose ends of the various ideas related to modernism and postmodernism. I spent the class marking areas that could help them identify modern literature from post-modern literature. Beginning with empathy as a tool to lead the reader to the masculine sublime, I explained that modern literature attempts to ensure unity of emotion and of point of view through which the author then attempts to give the reader the experience of the main character’s situation. In contrast, postmodern

literature uses each fragment or no-passage found in irony or aporia to remind the reader of the author's and readers limited resources in language and thought. I used Camus' absurdity to draw out the terms of the postmodern that ends modernist thought, the playful and humorous side of life as meaningless: As a leaping-off point for postmodernism and as a tool for momentary play against reason.

When discussing these topics in other class hours, I attempted to organize a list of terms and related ideas on each side of the board to give the class a clear picture of the foothold available to them. Perhaps most of the students will never come across these concepts again. After all, prior to this course some had never read a novel and others only two or three. Others are heading into the business, pre-med, and engineering programs. However, even if these students begin to read novels regularly, they will be reading more and more novels influenced by postmodern approaches to the novel. There is even a chance they won't know any other kind, just as Jean Francois Lyotard in his 1992 book, *The Postmodern Explained*, suggests is true about a postmodern / modern cycle of art (p. 13).

CONCLUSION

The Focused Inquiry Program is interdisciplinary in its approach to teaching and learning. Faculty members are hired from a variety of disciplines and then teach from their disciplines bringing in ideas, concepts, and texts from other disciplines, thus my use of sociology, psychology, and philosophy to understand literature and film. Though it is made up of two courses for all university students, it is also the first of an interdisciplinary major in the Core Education and Interdisciplinary Studies Department. The program and VCU's new University College as a whole is receiving attention from academic journals for its innovative reorganization of university departments and for its writing intensive, student-centered courses such as Focused Inquiry. Though there are areas that needed to be developed and limitations that needed broader horizons when I left, VCU's University College is a nimble model.

APPENDIX A

Bard College Center Institute for Writing and Thinking "Writing About Texts" Dialogue with the Author

Problem: To write an essay that addresses an author's argument in a natural voice, on your own informed authority.

"Plato's thought does not work from out of itself in the manner of a monologue, but springs continually from the living tensions which arise between master and disciple, between the pioneer and his opponents."

Romano Guardini, The Death of Socrates (1948)

Procedure:

I. Reading:

1. Read the text at least twice, silently and aloud. Hear the voice of the text and begin to form an oral interpretation.
2. Before and during class, render parts of the text aloud with various purposes: (a) for basic, clear understanding (b) to reinforce what you take to be the author's intended emphasis (c) to dramatize the power of the text (d) to exaggerate or parody the voice
3. Discussion: Let one or more students play the role of the author, and invite other students to enter into a dialogue with this "author," to clarify and extend possible understandings of the text.

II. Writing:

1. In an opening paragraph, imagine the text's author vigorously explaining and defending its themes, beginning "What I have said here is ..."
2. In response, imagine a critical reader questioning the meaning and merits of the text, beginning "But ..."
3. Develop now a dramatic dialogue that defines two credible positions. Proceed from initial disagreement towards mutual understanding—even agreement, at least as to how and why the speakers disagree.
4. Try to extend the argument until it reaches some genuine resolution in the discovery of common values which the speakers can agree upon.
5. In closing the conversation, let each speaker acknowledge some change from the initial viewpoints. Throughout, let the speakers talk to one another, rather than exchanging speeches.

NOTE: Two students might now perform a dialogue, reading the two parts.

III. Revision:

1. Read your dialogue to a friend, inviting the friend to become a third party to the conversation.
2. Try now to find common ground with this third party—points where you agree or agree-to-disagree.
3. Revise based on how you now see your dialogue, considering insights gained from the response of your listener.

APPENDIX B

First Homework From First Class

Read the essay and underline words or phrases you understand and admire, don't understand, or strike you for some reason. Underline three words or phrases from the first third of the essay, three from the second third, and three from the last third. That is homework. I know that it is difficult reading but so are other readings you will have at university, and I want to show you how you can adopt or adapt strategies to read those assignments. Transparency is important to my teaching so if you don't witness it, please question me.

Second Meeting

In the next meeting: One by one going around the room, read a chosen word or phrase from the first third of the essay. If a person has read your phrase, it can be said again anyway, perhaps in a different tone. The reading will go around the room three times, once for each third of the essay. You are doing this to feel comfortable with the words that we are going to discuss. (We then will spend the class trying to figure out what the words and phrases mean via context. Freire does define many of his terms and students come to see that and see that the ideas behind the terms interlock or are connected.)

Second Homework

Homework: Define the nine words and phrases you chose after rereading the essay and writing a summary of it in three paragraphs. Post your words and definitions on the discussion board in an effort to share and refine definitions for assistance at paper time. Be experts on the words and phrases you chose. You can do this with other readings that appear difficult. (I remind them that I am trying to be as transparent as I am able so that they can use the strategies elsewhere.)

Third Meeting

Third class: Discuss the nuances of the essay. Students not only see its relevance to their education but how the idea reaches into society. This class discussion is usually a lot of fun and one of the richest of the semester. There are those who are still foggy by the end of the class, but they are clearer by paper time. The

students now understand many of the basic concepts Freire is using and how those concepts relate to them.)

We are moving toward a paper, but for next class I am interested in how you put together a thesis statement. (We discuss thesis statements and what they look like etc.)

Third Homework

For homework I ask you to now “identify what you consider to be the most significant idea or passage in Freire’s essay and explain why you believe it is the most significant. To do this, you will need to locate two or three passages elsewhere in the essay and connect each to the idea you have chosen. (You will need to persuade the reader that each of these connections is strong and meaningful.)

(Notice that the words and phrases of the first homework are going to help them with the assignment of connecting concepts.)

Fourth Meeting

(The members of the class have an opportunity to write their thesis statements on the board, and we go over them as a class to see whether they pass the thesis test and suggest alternative wording to make the theses more powerful. We discuss strategies for theses and for organizing the body of the paper.)

Fourth Homework

Polish your thesis and write a rough draft of the paper’s body for work-shopping in the next class. (Reminder: I am and have been available for students with problems and questions via in-person or email. The assignment is written and posted to Blackboard.) I tell them if I am doing my job right, I move from coach to cheerleader, urging them on. The writing center and the language resource center are excellent resources to be used.

Fifth Meeting

(Class is spent work-shopping the rough draft in groups of threes with a guide sheet that keeps students focused on the task. We then discuss problems, concerns, issues. I then explain in more detail the functions of and introduction and conclusion are.)

Fifth Homework

Use the physical description of one of your lecture classes, perhaps the one written about the first day of class in some way as your introduction and/or conclusion. Come to class with both written and ready for work-shopping. Polish the paper’s body paragraphs.

Sixth Meeting

(Class is spent work-shopping introductions and conclusions, writing transitions to assist in composition of the whole paper, and troubleshooting writing issues.)

Sixth Homework

Paper Due: To foster a habit of mind, your paper will include a Works Cited Page that will consist of the documentation of Freire's essay. A version of a rough draft needs to be stapled to the back of your essay or it will not be accepted as on time. You are also going to need to save this paper for portfolio use and for rGrade, a process that we will discuss and through which you will be guided. Voila.

(As part of the spiral learning, my classes returned to Freire's concepts later in the semester to examine oppression in the good old USA today and then in the world using Chief Seattle and MLK's letter and in open letters from Iran, Singapore, and somewhere else. Needless to say these students are experts on Freire, and they know it. The wonderful part is their seeing the oppressive authoritative paradigms (the lecture) in their lives and how it is their responsibility to subvert the paradigm to get an education. Then see how the authoritative paradigm works in the world around them. We used it in paper 1, 3, 4. Becker's cultures was used in paper 2; all with strategy.)

Becker may be returned to again in the second semester an entrance into feminist thought. Marilyn Frye could then lead to De Beauvoir, Hooks, Spivak.

APPENDIX C

UNIV 112 Calendar: TTH Fall 2010

| Tuesday | Thursday |
|--|---|
| | Aug. 26 Introductions |
| 31 Lenses = Language Camus and Batson | September 2 Round Robin Exercise “The Myth of Sisyphus,” by Albert Camus “These Things Called Empathy,” by C. Daniel Batson. Discussion |
| 7 Lens discussions The most significant passages. Why is your passage most significant? Essay Examinations Introduction Exploring implications of empa- thy and absurd | 9 <i>Essay Examination: in-class</i> |
| 14 <i>Flight</i> Chapters 1-10 Discussion: Empathy and its manipulative powers in art and art and justice | 16 <i>Flight</i> Chapters 10-21 Discussion: Your Lens in <i>Flight</i> , Absurd and suspen- sion of disbelief |
| 21 Your Lens in <i>Flight</i> Discussion: When is a fragment a whole | 23 Thesis Workshop Class Discussion |
| 28 Complete Draft workshop UNIT II BEGINS | 30 Paper Due Let’s consider lenses, <i>Flight</i> . |
| October 5 Watch <i>Children of Men</i> | 7 Watch <i>Children of Men</i> |

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|---|--|
| <p>12 Movie Discussion; The background distracting empathy The background/absurd won't behave</p> | <p>14 <i>Flight, Children of Men</i>, (and <i>Maus</i> perhaps). Hypothesis</p> |
| <p>19 Hypothesis Thesis Workshop</p> | <p>21 Hypothesis Paper Workshop</p> |
| <p>26 How To Perform Research. <i>Hypothesis Paper Due</i></p> | <p>28 Trouble Shooting Research</p> |
| <p>November 2 Research Clean Up UNIT III BEGINS Presentations Introduction: Hubble's masculine Sublime</p> | <p>4 Presentations: Annotated Bibliographies</p> |
| <p>9 Presentations: Annotated Bibliographies</p> | <p>11 Presentations: Annotated Bibliographies Respecting the enigma, other, and feminine sublime for what it isn't</p> |
| <p>16 Research Paper Thesis workshop</p> | <p>18 Research Paper: Incorporating quotations</p> |
| <p>23 Research Paper: Body Paragraphs Workshop</p> | <p>25 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</p> |
| <p>30 Workshop on Whole Paper</p> | <p>December 2 Research Paper Due</p> |
| <p>7 Review and Cleanup The differences between modernism and postmodernism</p> | <p>9 Portfolio</p> |

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