

**HUM-C201-DL1 – The American Dream
IDEAL PROGRAM
COURSE SYLLABUS**

Dear Student,

Please read the following course syllabus carefully, especially the course expectations and activities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to communicate with the IDEAL office, your academic advisor, or the instructor.

The IDEAL degree-completion program is designed with the adult learner in mind. Adult learners approach learning with specific goals, want to be able to directly apply new learning to their work and personal lives, and tend to learn best when the coursework is problem-centered so that they are actively engaged in the learning process. In addition, adults bring rich and varied experience to the classroom, which becomes a valuable learning resource for other students.

The IDEAL Program assumes joint responsibility in the learning process. The activities and assignments in our courses build on the shared experience of all learners in each class. This is why each student's preparation, participation and interaction in class activities and discussions are critical to the success of each course. The accelerated format of each course requires a significant amount of time outside the classroom to prepare for and complete the course assignments. This varies between students and courses; however, students typically spend a minimum of ten-twelve hours per week on course material.

To participate in the IDEAL Program, it is expected that you will do the following:

1. Participate in and complete the online orientation prior to your first online course.
2. Obtain the required course materials prior to the course start date.
3. **If you do not participate during the first week of the course, you will be dropped one letter grade. If a student doesn't participate for two or more weeks a grade of "F" will be entered for a final grade..**
4. Login to your course a minimum of three times per week.
5. Complete all assignments to the best of your ability.
6. Participate in the class discussions and demonstrate respect and consideration to the instructor and other students when they express themselves in discussion.
7. If you have any technical difficulties, you must contact the Office of Distance Education immediately at ubonline@bridgeport.edu.

Cheating and Plagiarism

It is the student's responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with and adhere to the standards set forth in the policies on cheating and plagiarism as defined in Chapters 2 and 5 of the Key to UB <http://www.bridgeport.edu/pages/2623.asp> or the appropriate graduate program handbook.

E-mail correspondence

It is imperative that you check your UB e-mail on a regular basis. All written correspondence, to include IDEAL and the University will be sent to you through his e-mail. **The University can no longer correspond to your personal e-mail account(s).**

Have questions about taking an online course? Go to:

http://www.bridgeport.edu/Media/Website%20Resources/documents/continuinged/dl/Taking_online_classes.htm

If you cannot perform these expectations, it is recommended that you drop the course. **If you do not participate during the first week of the course, you will be dropped from the course.**

UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT
Fall 2013
HUM-C201-DL1 – The American Dream
October 21 – December 14, 2013

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Email: jstashen@bridgeport.edu

Office Hours: Email at any time, online “live” office hours and phone conference by appointment. My cell phone number is 860.309.8999.

Biography: I earned a Bachelor of Science degree in English from Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut, and a Master of Arts degree in American Studies from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. I have also done extensive graduate level liberal studies work at SUNY Stonybrook online, which was a revelation regarding online teaching and learning.

I taught both English and History at Granby Memorial High School for several years before retiring this June to pursue college level teaching. While in Granby, I taught American Studies in the UCONN ECE program (AMST 1201), as well as, UCONN US History (HIST 1501, 1502), and Advanced Placement US and Comparative Governments courses. The study of America--its culture, its philosophy, and its politics-- has been my main interest. Writing has always been an interest of mine and a feature of my courses.

In addition to teaching Composition and Humanities at The University of Bridgeport, I am teaching Composition II on ground at Tunxis Community College.

Required Textbooks: (any version of these novels is fine, not just the ones suggested)

The American Dream: A Cultural History, Lawrence R Samuel, Syracuse University Press, 2012. (ISBN#0815610076)

Ragged Dick: Or, Street Life in New York With the Boot Blacks, Horatio Alger, Signet Classics. (ISBN#0451529839)

Black Boy, Richard Wright, Harper Perennial. (ISBN#0-06-092978-2)

O Pioneers! Willa Cather, Dover Thrift Edition. (ISBN#0-486-27785-2)

The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Scribner Paperbacks. (ISBN#0-684-80152-3)

In addition, please read *Self Reliance*, Ralph Waldo Emerson, available in full on the Internet.

I will also ask you to see Director Ron Howard’s 2005 film *Cinderella Man*, starring Russell Crowe, Renee Zellweger, and Paul Giamati.

Many of these books are available used, at the library, or online. It doesn't matter which published version of the novels you purchase as long as you read them. Samuel's The American Dream is a new, hard cover text, and that will have to be gotten at the bookstore or online.

To order textbooks, go to the bookstore website at <http://bridgeport.textbooktech.com/> Select IDEAL Campus and login to the bookstore. Select the course and follow instructions..

Course Description

This is an interdisciplinary course, which employs history, literature, film, and philosophy to examine and explain the cultures and values of a civilization over time and place. Works studied include primary historical and philosophical texts, as well as literary and artistic creations. Currently, the course looks at the civilization of the United States, focusing on — the American Dream, its origins, growth, significance, and future.

Prerequisite Courses: ENGL 101

Goals

Humanities C201 is an interdisciplinary course exploring the concept of the American Dream from the perspectives of literature and the social sciences. The course is designed to help students understand and interpret the culture of the American Dream and its evolution through the insights of history, as well as develop rhetorical, analytical, and writing skills. Interactive discussion and debate will take place on the message board — therefore, participation is an important part of your grade.

A few of the questions we will be exploring are:

What is the American Dream? How has it been defined?

Is the Dream for every American? Are some people left out?

What is the price of this Dream upon the culture and upon individuals?

How does the dream today differ from a hundred years ago?

Is the idea of the American Dream still important to us? Is it still viable?

Response Essays

There will be a three-page response paper due every other Sunday by midnight. That means you will be writing a paper every two weeks. The response paper should answer some question about the text, which you can ask yourself or get from the discussion board. Your answer should be supported by quotes from the readings. You must reference Samuel's *The American Dream* as well as whatever work of literature we are working. The response should be uploaded in the module where it was assigned and should be about 750 words in length (approx. three double-spaced pages).

These 3 essays are worth a combined 60% of your grade.

Discussion Postings

The discussion boards are the “heart and soul” of an online course. Postings will be evaluated for effort, thoroughness, understanding of the assignment, spelling and grammar, and timeliness of posting. Late discussion postings will not be accepted. Timely online class participation is essential to this course.

Each student must post **at least twice** a week – once (**by midnight on Thursday**) to explore an idea based on the week’s reading assignment (a “thread starter”) and once (**by midnight on Sunday**) in detailed response to a peer’s posting. It is expected that postings will demonstrate a close reading of and a thoughtful reaction to the assigned texts. This writing must be your own work and must not be taken from outside sources. Late work cannot be accepted as this is a community forum which depends upon participation by all.

Final Exam

You will have 2 hours to take your online final exam in which you will promote and explain what you have come to think about the American Dream. This must be your own work and must reference the works we have read and discussed throughout the course. In other words, using what we have read as a “tool box,” explain what you think the dream was, is and will be in the future. This exam will be worth 20% of your final grade.

Course Activities and Grade Weights

Discussion Board Participation	20%
Paper #1	20%
Paper #2	20%
Paper #3	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

94-100%=A (4.0)
90-93%=A- (3.7)
87-89%=B+ (3.3)
84-86%=B (3.0)
80-83%=B- (2.7)
77-79%=C+ (2.3)
74-76%=C (2.0)
70-73%=C- (1.7)
67-69%=D+ (1.3)
64-66%=D (1.0)
60-63%=D- (.7)
Below 60%=F

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

Week 1

Read and annotate American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Self-Reliance*. You will find it easily online by using Google. It's a slow read but rewarding and beautiful in parts.

Read Samuel's The American Dream Introduction.

Discussion Board Assignments:

Introduce yourself in the Discussion Board to the class.

AND

Discuss Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay and connect his work to the ideas about the American Dream that Samuel proposes. What does it take to be a man or woman in Emerson's thinking? Why is living for others not a good idea?

Samuel talks about the American Dream and its evil twin, the American Nightmare. What would be an example of the American nightmare, in Emerson's eyes?

Week 2

Read Alger's Ragged Dick: Or, Street Life in New York with the Boot Blacks.

Read The American Dream, Chapter 1: *The Epic of America*.

Select a topic, write, and submit **ESSAY #1**.

Discussion Board Assignments:

What is the lesson of Alger's *Ragged Dick*? What values does he promote? Do you think Alger's lesson is still relevant today? Compare Alger's *Ragged Dick* and its values with those of Emerson.

Samuel notes James Truslow Adams, the original author of the notion of the American Dream, wrote in 1931 that

“The dream is a vision of a better, deeper, richer life for every individual, regardless of the position in society which he or she may occupy by the accident of birth. It has been a dream of a chance to rise in the economic scale, but quite as much, or more than that, of a chance to develop our capacities to the full, unhampered by unjust restrictions of caste and custom.” (qtd in Samuels 13).

How important is class and rising in class to our idea of the American dream? Do we see *Ragged Dick* rise in class in this book? Are there rigid classes in America?

Week 3

Read Cather's O Pioneers!

Read The American Dream, Chapter 2: *The Status Seekers*.

Discussion Board Assignments:

According to Emerson, would we consider Alexandra an example of a self-reliant person? What is Alexandra's American Dream, exactly? By the end of the book, has she realized it? What is the key to Alexandra's success? Is Alexandra a "Status Seeker?" What does this book say about women, their status, and their opportunities? How important is and has gender been in pursuing and seizing the American Dream?

Week 4

Read Wright's Black Boy: Part one.

Select a topic, write and submit **Paper #2**.

Discussion Board Assignments:

Compare the protagonist's experience with that of Ragged Dick. What does this book say about the American Dream? Is it viable? Why or why not?

Week 5

Finish Wright's Black Boy.

Read Chapter 3 of The American Dream: *The Anti-Paradise*.

Discussion Board Assignments:

Samuel says, in Chapter 3, the reality was that most children would achieve the same education and standard of living as their parents. Is this the reality today? If so, what is wrong with this picture? Consider Black Boy and this *Anti-Paradise* Samuels sketches out. What are the implications?

If *Rocky* was the feel good movie of 1976, what would be the feel good American film of today, and what would the message be? Do you think we are still obsessed with being number one? Prove or disprove it.

Week 6

Read Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby.

Read Chapter 4 of The American Dream: *Born in the USA*.

Select a paper topic, write and submit **Paper #3**.

Discussion Board Assignments:

In *Born in the USA* we see the American Middle Class struggling under President Reagan. We have folks like Elvis dying in his Graceland Mansion from over-excess (I know, it's not a word. It's redundant!) We see the "me" generation seeking individual dreams that were sometimes not monetary or even class based, but were all about self-realization. And the President of the US was a movie star. Is the American Dream here out of traction?

What is the lesson of Jay Gatsby's experience? What did he hope to attain? Was his a rational and attainable Dream? What is Fitzgerald getting at?

Week 7

Read The American Dream, Chapters 5 and 6: *The Anxious Society* and *The American Idol*.

See Director Ron Howard's 2005 film Cinderella Man, with this course in mind. What is James Braddock's American Dream? How does it change over time?

Discussion Board Assignments:

Extract quotes and ideas from Samuel to tie together the reading of this course in preparation for the final exam.

How does James Braddock's true story exemplify the American Dream? Which Dream is Braddock's? Which chapter of Samuel's book would it fit in? Explain.

Week 8

Read The American Dream, *Conclusion*.

Study the poetry group offered under readings for this last week.

Take your **Final Exam**.

Discussion Board Assignments: Discuss the poems and Samuel's *Conclusion* as you create your own picture of the history and viability of the American Dream. Does it still live? Did it ever? In what form? Why does the American Dream matter to people in this country?

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Ethics Statement of Confidentiality

An integral component of an IDEAL course is student and faculty expression of personal experiences for the purpose of facilitating coursework. Students enrolled in the program are expected to honor confidentiality as it pertains to student disclosure. Shared information, comments, or opinions expressed by another student or the faculty member during the course of classroom discussion should never be used in a manner which is intended to humiliate, embarrass,

harass, damage, or otherwise injure other students in their personal, public, or business lives. In addition, confidentiality must be upheld by not disclosing any information that would identify any particular individual.

Attendance Policy

Course attendance, especially in an online course, is an integral part of the academic experience; therefore, students are expected to be participative in all course activities and discussions. If you do not participate during the first week of the course, you will reduce the final grade by one letter grade. If you cannot participate in all the course activities you should consider dropping the course.

Drop Procedures

To drop a course, you must complete and submit a Schedule Change Request Form. The form can be accessed at the following web page:

<http://www.bridgeport.edu/pages/2595.asp>

Starting Fall 2012

- Drop a course after the start date.....\$30.00 per transaction
- Drop prior to the start date.....100% Tuition Refund
- Drop prior to the second week of the course.....75% Tuition Refund
- Drop prior to the third week of the course.....50% Tuition Refund
- Drop during/after the third week of the course.....0% Tuition Refund

****Please note students will not be automatically dropped for not participating during the first week. Lack of participation for one week will reduce the final grade by one letter grade. If you have to miss the first week of the online course, *you must contact your instructor* in writing before the first week. However, a grade reduction will apply.**

Please print and complete the form and fax the form to the IDEAL Office: 203-576-4537. Prior to dropping a course, the student should contact their IDEAL Academic Advisor to understand the implications to financial aid and/or degree plan progress.

Please review the Academic Calendar to see the fees for a drop and the impact on tuition. The Academic Calendar can be found at: <http://www.bridgeport.edu/pages/2595.asp>

Academic Dishonesty

We are committed to intellectual integrity in our academic pursuits; therefore, the IDEAL program prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is normally defined as, but not limited to, the following two categories:

Cheating – Using inappropriate sources of information in an assignment or on a test. The following are examples of cheating taken from real student experiences:

Case #1: A student is enrolled in an introductory computer-programming course. He has co-workers who program in the same language as his final project. As the end of the term approaches, he wonders how he will find the time to get the project finished, and asks one of his co-workers for help. His co-worker hands him a disk with a complete program similar to the kind required for the course project. The student makes minor modifications to the program, and submits it under his own name.

Case #2: A student enrolled in a religious studies course has never taken a humanities or history course, and is unsure about how to structure a research paper. She is doing research on the World Wide Web, and comes across a paper written by a student from another university. Using her computer mouse, she copies and pastes the document into her word processor. She goes to great lengths to re-word the paper in her own style, but essentially leaves the content and organization the same.

Plagiarism – Intentional as well as unintentional failure to acknowledge sources as well as the use of commercially available so-called “research papers” without full recognition of the source. Presenting as one’s own, the ideas, words, or products of another. The following are examples of plagiarism taken from real student experiences:

Case #3: A student is conducting research for a Civil War research paper. He has reviewed work on the Internet as well as in the library. Finding helpful information, he has summarized his findings without citing his sources. He believes that minor paraphrasing is all that is necessary.

Case #4: A student is writing a paper that requires her to address specific topics and problems in the assigned course textbook. She takes the information directly from the textbook with slight modification, without giving any citation. She thinks that since it is the course textbook, she doesn’t have to use quotations or citations.

Academic dishonesty applies to all courses, assignments or exams completed by students and submitted as their own original work, whether in person or by electronic means. The University does not tolerate cheating in any form. It is a serious breach of conduct with serious consequences. Instructors have the right to determine the appropriate penalty for academic dishonesty in their own classes; generally, however, such acts will result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or the course. The penalty for subsequent acts of academic dishonesty may include expulsion.

More information on how to recognize plagiarism can be found at this site:
http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/plagiarism_test.html

ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

The Academic Resource Center is available for IDEAL students seeking help in their studies. The Center is staffed by writing professionals and peer tutors. More information can be found at: <http://myub.bridgeport.edu/academics/academicrescenter/Pages/default.aspx> The Center is located in the Wahlstrom Library, Room 506. Hours of operation are Mondays –Thursday 9am – 6pm and Fridays 9am – 1pm. Make an appointment or walk-in: Telephone: 203-576-4290. **Online Tutoring** is available at: www.etutoring.org. To use this free service you must have a UBNet account.

Obtaining a UBNet Account

Every registered student should obtain a UBNet Account. The account allows you to access your grades, access library services, access online tutoring, access the computers in computer labs, and provides an email account in which the University sends out information. Go to: <http://www.bridgeport.edu/ubnet> - Click on “New UBNet Account” and follow the instructions.

The @bridgeport.edu email address is the official email the University uses to send information to you. You can have your Bridgeport.edu email forwarded to any other email account you use. Following the activation of your UBNet account (takes 24 hours), login at: <http://www.bridgeport.edu/email> and click on “forwards” at the top of the page. Follow the directions to forward email messages to your other account.

Accessing Your Grades & Schedule Online

The WebAdvisor online information system allows students to search for available classes, check grades, view semester class schedule and verify your personal profile. Grades are generally posted 2-3 weeks following the end of a course. Information on WebAdvisor is password protected and requires you to use your UBNet username and password. To access WebAdvisor, go to: <http://www.bridgeport.edu/webadvisor>

1. Login in with your UBNet username and password.
2. Click on “Student Menu.”
3. Click on “My Grades.”

If you are carrying a financial balance, access to WebAdvisor will be restricted.

Using the Library

You can access the library through the library’s website:

<http://www.bridgeport.edu/academics/magnus-wahlstrom-library/>

Research tools available:

- Search for books held at the library.
- Search the online databases for your academic field; business, counseling, human services, psychology, etc.
- Send questions to the Reference Librarian for assistance in research topics and searching strategy.

To access the online journals for research purposes, you will need a UBNet account (see above).

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Office	Contact	Telephone	Email
Bridgeport Campus Security		(203) 576-4911	ubsecurity@bridgeport.edu
Bursar	Robinson Hernandez	(203) 576-4692	bursar@bridgeport.edu
Cashier	Lana Mistry	(203) 576-4682	cashier@bridgeport.edu
Financial Aid		(203) 576-4568	sfs@bridgeport.eud
Registrar		(203) 576-4642	registrar@bridgeport.edu
Emergency Notification Phone		(203) 576-4159	
Distance Education Office		(203) 576-4853	ubonline@bridgeport.edu
IDEAL Office		(203) 576-4800	idealinfo@bridgeport.edu

CAMPUS CONTACT INFORMATION

Campus	Address	Telephone	Email
Bridgeport	126 Park Avenue	(203) 576-4800	idealinfo@bridgeport.edu

	Bridgeport, CT 06604		
Stamford	5 Riverbend Drive Stamford, CT 06750	(203) 358-0700	ubstamford@bridgeport.edu
Waterbury	84 Progress Lane Waterbury, CT 06705	(203) 573-8501	ubwaterbury@bridgeport.edu
Woodbridge	6 Lunar Drive Woodbridge, CT 06525	(203) 576-4800	idealinfo@bridgeport.edu
IDEAL Office		(203) 576-4800	idealinfo@bridgeport.edu

Directions to IDEAL Campus locations	http://www.bridgeport.edu/pages/2260.asp
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**To fill out your financial aid report to the Federal Government, please go online to www.fafsa.ed.gov. The school code for the University of Bridgeport is 001416.
Federal Student Aid Information: 1-800-433-3243**