

**LAR 202: INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR: DEMOCRACY AND DIVERSITY
THE THRESHOLD OF DEMOCRACY: ATHENS 403 B. C.
SPRING 2017
DOANE OMAHA
MEETING MONDAY 6:00-10:30 P.M.
WITH
DR. BEAHM**

Required Texts:

***The Threshold of Democracy: Athens 403 B. C.* 4th Ed. Josiah Ober, Naomi J. Norman & Mark C. Carnes, W.W. Norton & Company, ISBN-13 978-0393938876**

PRE-SESSION ASSIGNMENT: It will be helpful to you to read as much of the Ober, Norman and Carnes game book, *The Threshold of Democracy: Athens 403 B. C.*, as you can before our first meeting. A great deal of the readings for this class are heavily frontloaded to the first three meetings of the class. So, the earlier you start reading the game book the easier it will be for you the first three weeks of the class.

Any other readings will be provided by the professor.

Office Hours: I will be happy to meet with you on the Doane-Omaha campus at a mutually agreed to time upon request.

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Course Description: This course delves into the democratic crisis occurring in Athens in 403 B. C. You will be taught the workings of Athenian Democracy by replicating it in the classroom. The course involves role playing that is done along with lectures, presentations, debates and group activities. The game will recreate two Athenian institutions, the Assembly and *dikasteria*. While the class explores a democracy and a world much different from our own it also will reveal many of the same issues and problems related to democracy, equality, social/economic justice, and fundamental rights. Information will be drawn not only from the student packet but also *Plato's Republic* to provide a time relevant theoretical background for the class activities. We will be addressing issues such as: What is democracy? What are the strengths and weaknesses of democracy? What are the rights and responsibilities of people who participate in democracies? Are democratic states more prone to imperialism? Should men and women have different roles in governance? These discussions will help students develop the critical thinking and communication skills necessary for intellectual inquiry, the empathy for differences in human conditions that help them develop appropriate values for a meaningful personal life, and the knowledge of the issues faced by democratic societies that can help them develop as an engaged citizen.

Keep in mind, the game will seem confusing at times. This is appropriate because democracy is complicated and that was particularly true of Athenian democracy.

This course on Debating Democracy is being taught as a Liberal Arts Seminar 202 and provides an important component of the liberal education called for in Doane's mission statement.

Doane College's mission is to provide an exceptional liberal arts education in a creative, inclusive, and collaborative community where faculty and staff work closely with undergraduate and graduate students preparing them for lives rooted in intellectual inquiry, ethical values, and a commitment to engage as leaders and responsible citizens in the world.

Doane Core Curriculum description for LAR 202: Integrative Seminar: Democracy and Diversity

In a collaborative setting, students will apply and integrate knowledge and experiences to examine complex questions related to democracy and diversity from multiple perspectives. This course can address far-reaching issues that are enduring or contemporary in areas such as culture and values, science and society, global interdependence, citizenship, or human dignity and freedom. (Sophomore status, and successful completion of LAR 101 or equivalent, 3 credits).

The course will be taught using a pedagogy known as "Reacting to the Past." "Reacting to the Past" seeks to introduce students to major ideas and texts. It uses a role-playing format to replicate the historical context in which these ideas acquired significance. The course will provide diverse learning activities including collaboration, oral presentations, research opportunities and student-led discussions. This section of Debating Democracy will deeply explore the diverse qualities of the emerging American society through one game.

LAR 202 Program Learning Outcomes:

Students will work to:

- Connect the methods and research of more than one field of study to address complex issues. In Debating Democracy students will be asked to analyze varied sources – history, political philosophy, economics, and sociology – to make reasoned arguments supported by relevant evidence. Students will read and critically analyze several issues related to democratic decision-making. They will be asked to confront historical debates using classic texts and then come to their own reasoned conclusions on the promise and dilemmas of establishing truly democratic societies. They will be required to write persuasive essays and make oral presentations that develop the rational analysis called for the Doane Core Curriculum's critical thinking and communication rubrics.
- Recognize multiple social, political, religious, cultural or global perspectives on complex issues. Each game will ask students to research and communicate roles that engage them in understanding diverse political, religious, social, and ethnic groups.

Assessment of the Reacting to the Past games has demonstrated that they help students develop empathy for differences in human conditions that can help them appreciate the issues faced by democratic societies and the demands placed on responsible global citizens.

- Develop collaborative skills, which may include research and presentation of knowledge. Students will be grouped explicitly in factions or parties that collaborate to develop research and presentations on key issues as well as inform other students of their own unique identities within the context of the games. With the use of role-playing games, students will share the responsibility for establishing course learning goals, collaboration, and teaching each other for significant sections of the course and will receive further training in critical thinking and persuasive writing. They will be able to explore critical issues of leadership, dialogue, and collective responsibility through reflection on their roles in the games.
- Use reflection to examine their distinctive voices and to explore how they will

connect knowledge across disciplines and experiences to shape their values and goals. Students will engage in several active learning techniques including goal-setting, group presentations, and role-playing debate. During the course of each individual game students are re-enacting democratic processes and researching powerful roles that immerse them in the vital issues of democratic debate. Thus the class activities simulate ways citizens participate in democracy today. These include discussing the interpretation of direct democratic elements, considering if changes in law are required to promote issues of justice, voting, discussing policy concerns with those with whom one has a sense of shared interest -- and with those with whom one does NOT feel one has a sense of shared interest, etc. These are not only classroom activities but model ways in which citizens can share orally and in writing their public concerns with others and with the government. Each game will lead to a detailed post mortem in which the instructor leads the students in an examination of the historical and philosophical issues raised in the game as well as a review of the key skills in research, argumentation, written and oral communication, and/or multicultural competency developed during the game. The course can be framed by student reflective essays using the Doane Core Curriculum rubrics on integrative and reflective thinking in order to make the learning more explicit.

This course will have these specific Learning Outcomes:

Students who take responsibility for full participation in the class will enhance their abilities to:

1. Analyze important texts and ideas (demonstrated through research in primary documents as well as secondary interpretive works as documented for written essays)
2. Understand the historical context surrounding significant debates on the fundamental principles of democracy (demonstrated through written essays and oral in-class presentations)
3. Display improved skills in persuasion and argumentation both in speaking and in written form, particularly through establishing clear claims, reasons for belief in the claim, and evidence to support those reasons (demonstrated through written essays and oral in-class presentations)
4. Enhance leadership and collaboration skills through group discussions and teamwork on strategy and presentations (demonstrated through the functioning of factions/groups in course sessions).
5. Demonstrate an increase in empathy – an understanding that key questions have multiple human perspectives (demonstrated through reflective writing and the final essay examination)
6. Discuss the problems and possibilities in establishing democracy, and indicate the impact of that knowledge on their own perception of their role in a democratic system (demonstrated through reflective writing and the final essay examination)

Student pursuit of these course outcomes will continue their development of the Doane Core Curriculum's habits of an intellectual and balanced life to communicate effectively, use information wisely, and to examine their own attitudes.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

March 13th: Introduction to the course. I hope you will have begun to read the Game Packet on *Athens 403 B.C.*, but don't panic if you haven't. You do need to read as much of it over the next week as possible. During this class we will do three things. We will go over the syllabus,

discuss questions you will be answering related to democracy, and provide you with a brief introduction to Greek history in the fifth century B.C. (500-400 B.C.). The questions for the first reflection paper are listed on page five of this syllabus. Please write your answers in essay form. This paper will be graded and is due next week.

March 20th: Discussion of Game Packet. You should have completed reading of the Game Packet including Ober's essay on the Peloponnesian War and the rest of the Documents Section. We will assign roles at the end of class including assignment of leaders.

March 27th: Discussion of *Plato's Republic* Books I-V. VI and VII are also worthwhile. (I know this is a ton to read but do the best you can and finish what you can this week and do the rest next week) Factions and Indeterminates will meet with the game master. Assembly President should post agenda for next week. Leaders for the week will also be posted (by posted I mean that you will post this to Blackboard but also be prepared this week to post it for the class before they leave). RTTP papers for the following week should be written based upon agenda and Victory Objectives.

April 3rd: Public Sessions 1 and 2. Speeches are made based on papers. Someone from each faction should speak each Session whether you wrote a paper or not. You can use your papers this one time (after this, only brief notes or no notes if you want to impress me). Reconciliation Agreement debated. Courts may now meet any time.

April 10th: Sessions 3 and 4. Speeches made based on papers. Consult Victory Strategies.

April 17th: Public sessions 5. Speeches made based on papers. Consult Victory Strategies.

April 24th: Final meeting of the Assembly, Session 6. Final speeches made based on papers. Finish debate on all foreign actions, wars, trials, or coups.

May 1st: General discussion on the State of Athens. Post-Mortem. **It is important you attend this final class in order to do well on the final Reflection paper.**

Speaking at the Podium:

Presentations at the podium should not be read, though notes may be used. References to other texts and authors should be used as often as possible. If you want to speak form a line at the podium. It is expected that Citizens will speak at each Assembly meeting.

Papers: All papers (this includes Reflection and RTTP) **should be no less than three full pages in length** double spaced. When citing the Game Packet or *Plato's Republic* just use author and page numbers, e.g. (Plato, 48). If using other outside sources or recommended readings please use either APA or MLA style citations.

Questions to answer for your first reflection paper:

1. To what communities do you belong and how have those groups helped to shape your sense of self? What do you contribute to those communities?

2. To what new communities, groups, and worldviews have you been introduced at Doane? What have they contributed to developing or challenging your own sense of self and purpose?
3. When have you encountered beliefs that differ or contradict your own?
4. How have you dealt with ideas and beliefs that contradict yours; how have you reconciled those challenges?
5. What do you now believe the value of community and diversity and why do you believe it?
6. How has your understanding of diversity shaped your own sense of responsibility to engage with the world? To the extent possible cite the specific academic and cocurricular experiences that have helped to shape your beliefs.
7. What group of people represents your in-group? In other words, what kinds of people do you identify with the most? What are the characteristics of this group with which you identify?
8. What group of people are obvious examples of your out-group? In other words, what kinds of people do you think you have no connection with? What are the characteristics of this group that separates you from them?
9. How much contact do you have with people who represent your out-group? Where do you get these ideas of similarity and difference between groups? Do you think there are any similarities between your in-group and out-group?
10. Where does information about different groups come from? Do all groups get to represent their images of themselves equally?

Grading: Your grades for the class will be based on the following.

First Reflection Paper – 10%
 Two RTTP Papers – 20% each.
 Participation – 25%
 Final Reflection Paper – 25%

Rubrics for grading persuasive writing and speaking:

A: Paper will introduce a clear claim, reasons for believing that claim, and provide evidence from the primary sources in the texts and developed in library and on-line research. They will be written in a clear style that follows the Writing Advisories posted on Blackboard for the course. They will reflect the voice of the time period and the role assigned to each student.

B: Papers will state a clear claim at some point in the paper and provide evidence from primary materials in class texts. They may show a few errors of style, but by and large are clear and represent the role and the time period.

C: Papers have a weak claim with no reasons for belief, some reference to the time period, and minimal evidence. They may have several stylistic errors.

D: Papers have a weak claim and a little reference to the time period, but have a confused organization and little evidence.

F: Papers have no claim, a confusing organization, and cite no evidence.

Rubric for grading persuasive speaking and game participation:

A: Speeches state a strong claim in the introduction, and provide a clear organization of reasons for belief in the claim and evidence to support the reasons. They will cite evidence from primary sources or examples of events or laws drawn from the time period as developed by research in the library and on-line. They will reflect the voice of the time period and the role assigned to each student. Students will attend all game sessions and participate in informal debates on a regular basis. If a member of a faction, they actively work with the group to achieve its victory objectives.

B: Speeches will state a clear claim at some point in the speech and provide evidence from primary materials in class texts. They may show a few errors of style, but by and large are clear and represent the role and the time period. Students will attend all game sessions and participate in informal debates at least once each week. If a member of a faction they will provide some help in developing the strategy of the group.

C: Speeches have a weak claim and minimal evidence. They may have several stylistic errors, although providing some reference to the time period. Students may miss one of the game sessions, and rarely participate in informal discussions. If a member of a faction they attend some of the group's meetings and provide voting support for its objectives.

D: Speeches have a weak claim with little reference to the time period. They have a confused organization and little evidence. Students may miss 2 game sessions. Students provide minimal support to their group.\

F: Speeches have no claim, a confusing organization, and cite no evidence. They miss more than two class sessions and provide no support to their faction.

Make-up and Late Papers: All make-up papers and written and oral book reports that are going to be late must be pre-approved by the professor unless you are physically unable to perform the work, or there has been an emergency that would justify your missing the scheduled assignment. If you do not have permission to turn in papers, or written and oral book reports late, there will be a one letter grade deduction for every class they are late.

Attendance: You can't participate if you are not in attendance, and 25% of your grade is dependent on participation. Unexcused absences will lower your participation grade.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty has no place in a learning environment because it betrays the reason for being here. Anyone found cheating will receive a zero (not an F, a zero) for the work they were found to have cheated on. Plagiarism is using the words or thoughts of others as though they were your own. This is a form of cheating and it will not be tolerated. I will use TURNITIN.COM to evaluate your book reports for plagiarism.

Incompletes: Incompletes will only be granted if you are medically unable to finish the course, or there has been a family emergency. Incompletes must be completed at the earliest possible date.