COURSE OUTLINE

PROFESSIONAL TRANSITIONS

HTH SCI 4XX3 [C01] - WINTER 2018

Instructor: Parmjit Singh, PhD | LearnLink |

COURSE OBJECTIVE AND RATIONALE

This course intends to provide you with an opportunity to explore issues related to your future plans, the uncertainty and fear of stepping into the “real world”, success/failure, choices, expectations, and how to face all those challenges.

By discussing various issues you face during this crucial time in life, this course will be able to highlight what it means to be happy and successful. This might provide you with reassurance and even make you aware of things/possibilities that you hadn’t thought of before. Also, it will give you an opportunity to re-evaluate your learning and readiness to step into the real world.

In addition, a main part of this course will deal with real life challenges of the academic-real-world disconnect, uncertainty, and decision making. We expect that you bring to the classroom various situations a typical student in the last few years of university faces. It can be related to academics or personal issues of competence, choices or social pressures.

By re-evaluating the negative situations you might encounter/experience, we hope that this course will provide you with the means through which you can deal with such issues and remain positive. We will also try to motivate you to keep working hard and continue your journey to achieve the final goal of being happy and successful, in whichever way you see fit.

EVALUATION

1. Video Documentary (40%)
   Final project for the course to be completed in groups
   - Students can pick any topic covered in class which they resonate with and find personally relevant at this point in their life and create a documentary/movie about the process of dealing with it.
   - Marking will be based on:
     - Creativity
     - Effectiveness in relation to the central topic
     - Personal significance of the issue

2. Weekly Class Discussions (35%)—Based on demonstrated knowledge and mastery of assigned readings
   - Each week there will be a new topic covered in class
     - First half of every class will involve discussion
     - Second half will be the practical component
       - Practical Component
In pairs, students will be responsible for preparing a one page hand-out for the class regarding the organized activity to be distributed to the class before the start of any activity. Pairs will be assigned during the first class.

3. Open Reflections (25%)
   - No attachments—copy and paste your reflections into the email itself. Keep each reflection within 250-350 words. Exception could be a final reflection which can run up to 500 words
   - To be submitted to LL SEND ONLY folder every three weeks
   - This could be based on the process of metabolizing the material covered and putting it into a proper personal context
     - Students can also complete online questionnaires to determine their character strengths and reflect on these throughout the term.
     - Questionnaires can be found at [http://www.authenticity.sas.upenn.edu/questionnaires.aspx](http://www.authenticity.sas.upenn.edu/questionnaires.aspx)
     - Complete once at the beginning and once at the end to see any difference, if any.

READINGS

Three required texts:


Additional Reading:
*A book of your choice, shared with students and woven with course material*

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Jan 4  
Introduction of the course, its material and setting up the context

**Part I – The following topics will be discussed in the context of your reading and understanding of *Man’s Search for Meaning* by Victor Frankl. [Please complete reading the book *Man’s Search for Meaning* (pages 19-115 & 159-179)]**

Jan 11  
Uncertainty and options/ Choices and consequences
The following topic will be discussed in the context of your reading and understanding of *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom. You are expected to finish reading this book before coming to the class:

Jan 18  
Fear of failure, commitment, & regrets

The following topic will be discussed in the context of your reading and understanding of *Beneath the Wheel* by Herman Hesse. You are expected to finish reading this book before coming to the class:

Jan 25  
Expectations (personal, social and parental) and our culture of meritocracy

Feb 1  
Talent, hard work, luck and randomness

Feb 8  
Taking stock of *Man's Search for Meaning* and *Tuesdays with Morrie* and its relevance to your own ambitions, coping skills and attitudes.

The following topic will be discussed in the context of your reading and understanding of *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho.

Feb 15  
Success and happiness

Choose a book of your choice for the following topic(s). Your task is to share the salient learning points with the class to build the discussion

Mar 1  
Self-knowledge/awareness/coming to trust yourself

Mar 8  
Following your dreams and facing obstacles

Mar 15  
**Do-it-yourself Session**

Mar 22  
Using all the books, your discussions, reflections, feedback and epiphanies (if any) to build your plan for moving forward in embracing and dealing with transitional angst and issues.

Mar 29  
**Presentations and Video Documentaries**

April 5  
Conclusion and Celebrations

**Important Notes about Final Project—Video Documentary**
Each video documentary should be around 30 minutes long or less. It is the substance within the documentary that matters rather than the length.

The final project in the form of video documentary should be completed and ready for presentation on March 29 in the class. We will randomly select which group presents when.

It is a good idea to start planning your documentary well in advance and booking necessary equipment from the BhSc office and Lyons Media Center.

You are responsible for keeping the date of the project in mind. Please mark your calendars.

If something does not make sense, please talk to the instructor or technical people at the BHSc Office. We will gladly help you sort out any problem you are facing.