

HON 272 Fall 2024

The Human Event

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To make an office hours appointment: <https://calendly.com/dr-hines/office-hours>

Course description

The Human Event is an intensive, interdisciplinary seminar focusing on key social and intellectual currents in the development of humanity in its diversity. Students examine human thought and imagination from various perspectives, including philosophy, history, literature, religion, science and art. Coursework emphasizes critical thinking, discussion, and argumentative writing. Exploring texts from approximately 1600 to the present, HON 272 is the second half of a two-semester sequence that starts with HON 171.

Course objectives

1. To improve the student's ability to reason critically and communicate clearly.
2. To cultivate the student's ability to engage in intellectual discourse through reading, writing, and discussion.
3. To broaden the student's historical and cultural awareness and understanding.
4. To deepen awareness of the diversity of human societies and cultures.
5. To instill intellectual breadth and academic discipline in preparation for more advanced study.

Course texts

The following texts are required in hard copy (**not** the electronic versions). They are available at the ASU bookstore or from online vendors. Be sure to purchase according to ISBN, since **it is required that you use these editions in order to facilitate collective discussion.**

1. Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (Penguin, 2004) ISBN 9780140439885
2. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Rousseau: the Discourses & Other Early Political Writings* (Cambridge 2018) ISBN 9781316605547
3. Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (Oxford 2009) ISBN 9780199238293
4. Octavia Butler, *Wild Seed* (Grand Central Publishing, 2020) ISBN 9781538751480
5. Apostolos Doxiadis and Christos Papadimitriou, *Logicomix: An epic search for truth* (Bloomsbury, 2009) ISBN 9781596914520

Additional readings will be available in pdf form on the [course website](#).

Course grades and requirements

The final grade for the course will be calculated as follows, based on the following requirements:

Participation	50%
Essays	50%

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following cutoff values: A+ 97%, A 94%, A- 90%, B+ 87%, B 84%, B- 80%, C+ 76%, C 70%, D 60%, E below 60%.

Requests for a grade of incomplete (I) or a withdrawal (W) must be made in accordance with university policies which are available at:

students.asu.edu/forms/incomplete-grade-request
students.asu.edu/drop-add

Participation

Participation in seminar-style discussions is a central component of The Human Event. Participation means 1) reading the assigned texts before class discussions, 2) bringing the texts to class and referencing them during the discussion, 3) taking notes on both the reading and the class discussion, and 4) a general willingness to engage with the material and other students in a respectful and attentive manner.

Reading the assigned texts. You must complete all reading assignments prior to coming to class. The date listed next to each reading is the date *before which* you should have completed the assignment.

Bringing the texts to class. Please use the versions of the texts assigned for this course and always bring them to class. Failure to bring your text to class will result in a penalty to your participation grade. The purpose of bringing the texts to class is to reference them during the discussions, so be sure to follow along in the text as others are citing passages.

Taking notes. As part of your note-taking for the class readings, I would highly recommend underlining, circling, making notes in the margins of the texts, etc., and formulating answers to the following questions for every reading:

1. If the text(s) were a Human Event essay, what would its thesis be?
2. What are the supporting claims for this thesis?
3. What does the author assume, either to be true or about the text's audience?
4. What are the basic themes in the text?
5. List 2–3 passages from the reading with which you disagreed or which you found confusing.

A general willingness to engage. Success in this course depends on engaging the material and other students in a respectful and attentive manner. Things that will help your participation score are: referencing the texts directly to support your discussion points; listening attentively to others; and building on other students' ideas. Those for whom speaking in class is easy should be mindful that it is the quality (not quantity) of your interventions which will be judged, as well as your ability to listen to other students

and not dominate the conversation. For those for whom speaking in class is difficult, it is a necessary part of your academic and civic education to at least partially overcome this discomfort. That being said, I will do my best to create a welcoming atmosphere and will happily work with you outside of class to help you improve your ability to contribute in discussion. To help with this process, please direct your comments to each other (and not to me), and prioritize engaging and talking with other students who have not contributed to the discussion as much as others.

Attendance. You cannot participate without being present, and so absences will naturally count against your grade. I do not judge the validity or worthiness of an absence—instead, all students may miss any two (2) classes during the semester for any reason without penalty. In particular, *you do not need to submit a doctor's note or other documentation for these absences to be excused.* If you miss three (3) classes, the corresponding participation grade will be reduced $\frac{1}{3}$ of a letter grade. If you miss four (4) classes, the corresponding participation grade will be reduced by a full letter grade. If you miss five (5) or more classes, your final grade may be reduced by a full letter grade, your academic advisor will be contacted, and *you may receive a final course grade of E.* Chronic tardiness will result in a deduction to your participation grade. Arriving more than ten minutes late (or leaving more than 10 minutes early) is considered an absence. *When you are absent, for any reason, you are responsible for getting the notes for the class you missed from a peer. Whether or not you are present, you are responsible for the material/announcements in every class.*

Evaluation criteria. The contributions of students with A-level participation grades are regular, substantive, and conversationally uplifting. The contributions of students with B-level participation grades are regular, often substantive, but sometimes feel perfunctory. Students with C-level participation grades are semi-regular, typically lacking in substance, and conversationally deadening. Students with D-level participation grades will go two or more classes without contributing and appear generally disengaged. Students with E-level participation grades exist, do little else, and generally have attendance issues.

Essays

There will be three (3) full-length written assignments this semester. These essays should be between 1600–2000 words (roughly 5–7 pages) in length, *including* title, citations, and other paratext. Prompts for each of these assignments will be distributed in class and on the [course website](#) in advance of the deadline.

The best way to ensure a good grade on your argumentative essays is by reading and following the advice of the “Writing an Argumentative Essay for the Human Event” guide passed out in class and available on the [course website](#). *Read this document carefully.* Pay attention especially to the “Essay Evaluation Criteria,” which should be considered a checklist of sorts: I would recommend going through your essays point-by-point before turning them in.

For assistance:

- I am always available in office hours or by appointment to help you with your written work, but I will not brainstorm from scratch with you, and I simply do not have the time to read long drafts. If you would like help with your essays (and I encourage you to seek it), come to office hours with a rough draft or outline of your ideas. I am also happy to correspond about your outline over email, but if you do email me be sure to state clearly what your questions are, so that I know how to help.

- Each class has at least one TA who is experienced in writing Human Event essays and who will hold office hours throughout the semester. I encourage you to talk to them!
- The Barrett Writing Center is available to assist Barrett students with their essays for all their classes. Directed by BHC faculty and staffed by BHC writing tutors who themselves have completed both semesters of The Human Event, the Barrett Writing Center offers individual tutoring on writing essays for the Human Event and your other courses. Its goal is to help you improve your lifelong writing and critical thinking skills, so please take advantage of its services. Go to the BWC web site at barretthonors.asu.edu and click on *Current Students*. Under *Barrett Writing Center*, you can access tutoring schedules, appointment information, and academic background on the staff.

Rough drafts and peer reviews. Part of each essay grade will be assigned for completing a rough draft of your essay. Rough drafts will be due about a week before each essay. These drafts will not be graded according to the essay evaluation criteria (they will be graded much more laxly) but you should nevertheless keep the essay evaluation criteria in mind when you are writing your rough drafts. In addition to turning in a rough draft, you will be expected to provide peer feedback on two or three of your colleagues' essays, and you will receive feedback from two or three of your colleagues in return. Detailed instructions on how and when to turn in your rough drafts and your peer review will be available well ahead of time on the [course website](#).

Essay workshops. In-class essay workshops will take place before every essay is due. You must bring your computer and an editable copy of your rough draft to class with you. These will be shared with others in class and may be reviewed on the projector or DocCam. See "Writing an Argumentative Essay" packet handed out in class and available on the [course website](#) for instructions on creating an outline and rough draft. Participation grades for the essay workshops will generally follow the same rubric as other participation grades. In particular, students are expected to contribute to discussions on one another's essays and be willing to discuss their own work. Students who fail to bring their rough draft to class will be counted as absent for the day.

Late essays. Essays that are submitted late will lose 1/3 of a letter grade for every day after the deadline (e.g., an A- would turn into a B+). Essays are considered one day late a minute after the deadline (e.g., if an essay is due at 11:59pm Friday, it would be considered one day late at 12:00am Saturday and two days late at 12:00am Sunday). You may receive an E on any assignment turned in four (4) or more days late. Extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and typically in consultation with your academic advisors.

Submitting essays. Written assignments must be submitted through TurnItIn on the [course website](#), which checks for plagiarism as well as the use of generative AI tools (like ChatGPT).

Citations. Cite any bit of text or a paraphrase of the text using [Chicago-style notation](#). A quick guide can be found here: chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html, and [example citations are shown in this handout](#). The full version of this manual is available online through the ASU Library's website. Just search for "chicago manual of style" on the homepage, click on the first link, and login with your ASUrite ID. When in doubt, cite it! See the "Academic Integrity" section of the course syllabus for the consequences of failing to credit your sources.

Evaluation criteria. For detailed evaluation criteria, review the "Writing an Argumentative Essay for the Human Event" guide passed on the [course website](#), in particular the "Essay Evaluation Criteria."

Course schedule

Thursday, 8/22 Course introduction (no reading)

Tuesday, 8/27 Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* pp.9–43 (1688 UK/Surinam)

Thursday, 8/29 *Oroonoko* pp.44–77

Tuesday, 9/3 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Part I of *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755 Geneva)

Thursday, 9/5 *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part II

Tuesday, 9/10 Selected writings of Toussaint L'Ouverture (c. 1791–1804 Haiti)

Thursday, 9/12 Gillo Pontecorvo, *¡Queimada!* [Burn!] (1969 Columbia and Morocco) and Chapter 2 sections “Silent dialogue: talking back to the movies”, “Taking notes”, and “Visual memory and reflection” (pp. 23–35) in Timothy Corrigan’s *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, 8th ed. (2012)

Tuesday, 9/17 Octavia E. Butler, *Wild Seed* (1980 USA)

Thursday, 9/19 *Wild Seed* (day 2)

Tuesday, 9/24 *Wild Seed* (day 3)

Thursday, 9/26 Writing workshop (no reading)

Sunday, 9/29 First essay due (on Canvas by 11:59pm)

Tuesday, 10/1 Archival materials from Lowell “Mill girls” (1840–1850 USA)

Thursday, 10/3 Adam Smith, excerpts from *The Wealth of Nations* (1776 UK)

Tuesday, 10/8 Karl Marx, excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto* and *The German Ideology* (1840s Germany)

Thursday, 10/10 Charlie Chaplin, [*Modern Times*](#) (1936 USA) and “Mise-en-scène and Realism” pp.49–56 of Chapter 3 in Timothy Corrigan’s *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, 8th ed. (2012)

Tuesday, 10/15 Fall break (no reading)

Thursday, 10/17 ASU Art Museum

Tuesday, 10/22 Leslie T. Chang, “Going Out,” from *Factory Girls* (2008 China)

Thursday, 10/24 Jennifer Silva, excerpts from *We’re Still Here* (2019 USA)

Tuesday, 10/29 Benjamin Fong, excerpts from *Quick Fixes* (2023 USA)

Thursday, 10/31 Nas, *Illmatic* (1994 USA)

Sunday, 11/3 Second essay due (on Canvas by 11:59pm)

Tuesday, 11/5 Yuan Mei, *Censored by Confucius: Ghost Stories* (1788 China)

Thursday, 11/7 Jorge Luis Borges, selected short stories from *Labyrinths* (1941–1956 Argentina)

Tuesday, 11/12 Franz Kafka, *The Trial* pp.5–63 (1925 Czechia)

Thursday, 11/14 *The Trial*, pp.64–165

Tuesday, 11/19 Apostolos Doxiadis, Christos Papadimitriou, Alecos Papadatos, and Annie Di Donna, *Logicomix* (2008 Greece), Overture and Chapters 1–3 (pp.9–154)

Thursday, 11/21 *Logicomix*, Chapter 4–Finale (pp.155–313)

Tuesday, 11/26 Akira Kurosawa, *Ikiru* (1952 Japan) and Chapter 3 section “Composition and the image” (pp.57–71) in *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*

Thursday, 11/28 Thanksgiving holiday observed (no class)

Tuesday, 12/3 Mazen Maarouf, “The Curse of the Mud Ball Kid,” trans. Jonathan Wright (2019 Palestine)

Thursday, 12/5 Writing workshop (no reading)

Monday, 12/9 Final essay due (on Canvas by 11:59pm)

Course policies and guidelines

COVID-19. We are all required to follow [ASU Health Service's COVID Policies](#). In particular: please do not come to class if you are sick or showing symptoms of illness.

COVID resources.

- ASU provides [free COVID testing](#) to any student or employee who needs it. Information about where to access testing at no charge can be found here: <https://www.asu.edu/about/fall-2020/COVID-testing>
- The [ASU Health Services website](#) is located here: <https://eooss.asu.edu/health/announcements/coronavirus>
This is Arizona State University's official source of information about the Novel Coronavirus and important tips and precautions you can take to stay healthy. This website is updated regularly with information about the Novel Coronavirus affecting the ASU community.
- You can find the most up-to-date information about the status of the Novel Coronavirus in the US at the [Centers For Disease Control and Prevention](#): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Technical support. This course uses [Canvas](#) to deliver content. It can be accessed through [MyASU](#) at <http://my.asu.edu>. To monitor the status of campus networks and services, visit the [System Health Portal](#) at <http://syshealth.asu.edu/>. To contact the help desk call toll-free at 1-855-278-5080.

Course time commitment. According to ABOR (Arizona Board of Regents) policy, a minimum of 45 hours of work by each student is required for each unit of credit. In particular, a three-credit course requires approximately 135 total hours of student work. Expect to spend about 10 hours each week preparing for and actively participating in this course.

ASU's policies regarding accommodations for religious practices: asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-04.html.

ASU's policies regarding accommodation for university-sanctioned activities: asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-02.html.

Expected classroom behavior. The Barrett community is committed to upholding the values of academic, professional, and personal honesty of the highest order. We believe that ethical and respectful behavior is one of the most important measures of the worth of an individual and, as such, the overall integrity of our community as a whole. To foster a positive learning environment, you are expected to maintain a cordial atmosphere and to use tact in expressing differences of opinion. You may not text, chat, browse social media, play games, have disruptive side conversations, or use electronic communication devices during class. If you are disrupting class, you will be told so and will be counted as absent for the day. If you continue to disrupt class, you will be asked to leave the classroom and may be reported to the Dean of Students and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. ASU's policy on an instructor's withdrawal of a student for disruptive classroom behavior is available at asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm201-10.html.

Remember, this class is a safe haven for expressing reasoned views. Using racial, gender, sexual-orientation, political or religious slurs, however veiled, has no place in formal intellectual discussion. This is also an adult environment in which we discuss adult themes. You are an adult and so are all of your classmates. Be respectful of others in the classroom.

Threatening behavior. For ASU's policy on handling disruptive, threatening, or violent individuals on campus, see asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm104-02.html.

Code of conduct. The Student Code of Conduct is available at eooss.asu.edu/dos/srr/codeofconduct.

Breaks. You do not need to ask to leave the classroom during class but please do not do so unless necessary.

Food and drink. ASU's Technology Office requests that you not allow food or drink in the classroom in order to keep the room presentable and equipment functioning for all users. See uto.asu.edu/services/campus-it-resources#20.

Electronic devices in class. The use of all phones, laptops, tablets, or other electronic communication devices should be restricted to the scope of class. You should bring your texts and notes to class and keep your phones safely stowed in your bags. The use of electronic devices, especially when your colleagues are talking, is both academically counterproductive and disrespectful. If I see you on your phones, *your participation grade may be penalized*.

Use of recording devices. Audio or visual recording of any kind is not permitted.

Instructor/Student communication. ASU email is the official means of communication among students, faculty, and staff. The best way to contact me outside of designated office hours is via email, at taylor.hines@asu.edu. I am available for any questions you might have, but please note that I will generally only answer email during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, from 9am to 5pm). I will try to respond to all emails within one business day. If I contact you by email and need a response, I ask that you do the same. All instructor correspondence will be sent to your ASU email account. As stated in the Student Services Manual ([SSM 107-03](#)), students bear the responsibility of missed messages and should check their ASU-assigned email regularly.

Please do not use any of the “contact your instructor” buttons or similar functions on Canvas, myASU, or other course websites. These messages are often misdirected and will increase the time it takes me to respond.

Academic integrity. The work that you submit in this course must be the product of your own ideas, composed in your own words (with appropriate citations), and written solely for this course. I consider the failure to submit work of this nature to be a violation of the [ASU Academic Integrity Policy](#), which states, “Each student must act with honesty and integrity, and must respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments.” To avoid inadvertent plagiarism, be careful when taking notes: do not copy large chunks of text without attribution. For any incidence of plagiarism, you will fail the course and may face other disciplinary action, including possible expulsion from the Honors College and ASU. If you do not understand what plagiarism is, or are, at any time during the semester, even the slightest bit uncertain about whether what you are doing can be considered plagiarism, please contact me immediately.

In general, the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), including ChatGPT or related tools for the creation of text, images, computer code, audio, or other media is not permitted. I will inform you of any instance when these tools are allowed and [provide guidance for attribution](#). The use of generative AI tools in any other context in this course will be considered a violation of the [ASU Academic Integrity Policy](#), and students may be sanctioned for confirmed, non-allowable use. If at any point you have questions about what is permitted, contact me to discuss your questions *before* submitting any work.

The ASU Library’s Guide to Academic Integrity: libguides.asu.edu/integrity.

ASU’s Academic Integrity Policy: provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity.

Notification of objectionable materials. Although some students may deem course content offensive, such materials are considered important for the learning process. Students are not excused from interacting with such materials, but they are certainly encouraged to express well-formed opinions that express those objections and their reasons for them.

Disability accommodation. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101-336), reasonable accommodation must be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities. A student is, however, absolutely not required to identify her- or himself as having a disability; however, a request for reasonable accommodation can only be granted when a student is registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and makes his or her disability known by submitting appropriate documentation from the DRC. If you have a disability and wish to discuss accommodations with me, please do so within the first two weeks of the semester so that successful accommodations can be made.

The Disability Resource Center’s website: eoss.asu.edu/drc.

Title IX. Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately. ASU online students may access 360 Life Services, <https://goto.asuonline.asu.edu/success/online-resources.html>.

Distribution of copyrighted materials. Students must refrain from uploading to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum, material that is not the student's original work, unless the student first complies with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement.

In the event that the instructor is late or absent. If the instructor fails to indicate otherwise, the time obligation will be 15 minutes for class sessions lasting 90 minutes or less, and 30 minutes for class sessions lasting more than 90 minutes. Students may be directed to wait longer by someone from the academic unit if they know the instructor will arrive shortly.

Commitment to Intellectual Curiosity and Compassionate Learning. Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University, is committed to cultivating an equitable and learner-centered environment that embraces cultural difference and nurtures curiosity. This commitment is the foundation of the educational experience at Barrett: investigating diverse perspectives and challenging dominant paradigms. Our students compassionately and critically engage with the full spectrum of human ideas that situate us in our borderland communities and in the world. We aim to build an honors community that draws from the richness of our community members' knowledge, experiences, and identities to meet the challenges of the present and future.

Statement of ethics. The Barrett community is committed to upholding values of academic, professional, and personal honesty of the highest order. We believe that ethical and respectful behavior is one of the most important measures of the worth of an individual and, as such, the overall integrity of our community as a whole.

Disclaimer. Information contained in the course syllabus, other than ASU and Barrett policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Writing standards for Human Event essays

The elements outlined below form the basis of all Human Event argumentative papers, and therefore constitute the fundamental criteria of evaluation. These standards were developed by Barrett faculty. In this course, you will be asked to abide by these standards, as well as any specific guidelines I discuss in class and/or provide for you on the [course website](#) (see "Writing an Argumentative Essay for the Human Event" guide).

1. **A Human Event paper contains a clear thesis statement.**
 - a. The thesis statement makes a specific, text-based claim, not a vague or broad observation.
 - b. The paper must stake a substantive position, one that is neither trivial nor obvious.
 - c. Human Event papers are typically 5-7 pages, and the thesis statement should appear in the first paragraph.

- 2. The body of a Human Event paper defends the thesis via a progression of arguments.**
 - a. The opening of the paper provides an overall map of its direction.
 - b. The body of the paper mirrors the introductory map, and each paragraph builds the case in logical progression.
 - c. The paper makes an evidence-based case in support of the thesis. Accordingly, the paper also anticipates and addresses potential objections.
- 3. Evidence from and analysis of the primary text(s) form the backbone of the paper's defense of a thesis.**
 - a. Textual evidence constitutes the foundation of the papers argument.
 - b. The paper cites the sources of evidence.
 - c. No outside sources are permitted.
 - d. Analysis offers plausible explications of the texts that show how the meaning of the cited evidence helps develop the argument.
- 4. Human Event papers adhere to fundamental style elements.**
 - a. The paper uses proper grammar and word choice including gender neutral and inclusive language.
 - b. The author proofreads the paper to avoid errors, wordiness, unnecessarily complex phrasings, and excessive use of passive voice.