First-Year Seminar Bridge Course

**GNED 1300 Section 6 Culture and Medicine**

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**Bridge Objectives:**

1) Trinity University's 2010 summer reading program, *Reading TUgether*, is focused on Anne Fadiman's book “The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down.” Fadiman details how Hmong immigrants to Merced, California interact with the health care system there. *Reading TUgether* will culminate with Ms. Fadiman's visit to campus August 26. Her text is the principal reading for the first half of the Culture and Medicine First-Year Seminar. This seminar section allows the combining of the *Reading TUgether* program and the *First-Year Seminar* program.

2) The seminar bridge course explores a new way of facilitating a small group of entering students into Trinity academic life. The seminar students will be selected from the FGUS program (First-Generation Under-Represented) and will have special status within the New Student Orientation (NSO) program. The First-Year Seminar course will begin August 12 (Thursday) and conclude Oct. 2 (Saturday). The seminar will meet intensely for the first two weeks and then follow a standard academic schedule thereafter.

**Course Objectives:**

1) Physicians and patients participate in a unique dialog. This dialog is greatly affected by the cultures associated with the participants. The Culture and Medicine seminar will explore the many ways culture can influence the physician patient relationship.

2) The overarching seminar experience is that a small group of first-year students have a seminar experience that emphasizes writing and oral discussion.

**Key Seminar Dates:**

- **Thursday Aug. 12**  Bridge F-YS course begins. Students must have read Fadiman's book in advance of the course.
- **Thursday Aug. 19**  FGUS program day and campus move-in
- **Friday Aug. 20**  NSO program begins with registration following on Tuesday morning
- **Wednesday Aug. 25**  Fadiman preparation
- **Thursday Aug. 26**  Fadiman meeting and presentation
- **Friday Oct. 1**  Last class day
- **Saturday Oct. 2**  Class celebration
Daily course outline: pre-semester

Aug 12  9 - 11  Introductions, group dynamics, first-pass writing sample
         1 – 3  Information Literacy – how to identify, find, and maintain information

Aug 13  9 - 11  Writing analysis; participating in discussions
         1 - 3  All things computer – addressing computer issues at Trinity
         Assignment for Monday: Who is Anne Fadiman?

Aug 14  9 – 1  Field Trip to the Institute of Texan Culture

Aug 16  9 - 11  DUE: Report on "Who is Anne Fadiman?"
         The History of the Hmongs and the Vietnam War - Blystone
         1 – 3  Discussion: Chapters 1 – 4; by Blystone and Manning

Aug 17  9 – 11  DUE: One-page idea summary
         Discussion: Chapters 5 – 8; groups 1 and 2
         1 – 3  Discussion: Chapters 9 – 12; groups 3 and 4

Aug 18  9 - 11  DUE: Two-page idea summary
         Discussion: Chapters 13 – 16; groups 5 and 6
         1 – 3  Discussion: Chapters 17 – 19; group 7

Aug 19  9  DUE: First paper draft
         The FGUS program and residence hall move in.

Aug 20  9 – 11  Developing an essay on the Fadiman text.
         NSO day 1

         Preparing for Fadiman's visit: tactful and useful question posing,

Aug 25  9 – 11  Oral presentations of essays (15 minutes each student)
         1 – 3  Oral presentations of essays

Aug 26  3 – 5  Meeting with Anne Fadiman
         7 – 9  Lecture by Anne Fadiman
**Regular Classroom Schedule: MWF 11:30 to 12:20 CLS 320**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 27</td>
<td>DUE: One page summary of lecture. Retrospective of Lecture and Fadiman</td>
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<td>Aug 30</td>
<td><em>Medicine and Culture</em> by Lynn Payer: introduction</td>
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<td>Sept 01</td>
<td>Due: Report on Who is Lynn Payer? The Flexner report and medical education</td>
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<td>Sept 03</td>
<td>Finding health and cultural information</td>
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<td>Sept 08</td>
<td><em>How Doctors Think</em> – Jerome Groopman</td>
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<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>Sept 13</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>Country One Report and Discussion – Group A</td>
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<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>Country Two Report and Discussion – Group B</td>
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<td>Sept 20</td>
<td>Country Three Report and Discussion – Group C</td>
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<td>Sept 22</td>
<td>Country Four Report and Discussion – Group D</td>
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<td>Sept 24</td>
<td>Conclusion of <em>Medicine and Culture</em></td>
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<td>Sept 27</td>
<td>Aftermath of “The Spirit Catches You”</td>
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<td>Sept 29</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>DUE: Formal essay number 2 Concluding remarks</td>
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<td>Oct 2</td>
<td>Meal together (lunch or dinner; perhaps for families, as well)</td>
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**Course Texts:**


Assignments – graded material (percentage contribution to course grade)

Minor reports, etc. - 25%

1) First-pass writing sample
2) Report: Who is Anne Fadiman?
3) Spirit discussion summaries – 3
4) Fadiman lecture summary
5) Report: Who is Lynn Payer?
5) Payer country summaries – 3

Major Essays - 35%

1) Essay #1 – derived from “The Spirit Catches You”
2) Essay #2 – derived from aftermath of “The Spirit Catches You”

Minor discussion, etc. - 15%

1) Various opportunities to participate individually in class discussions

Major Presentation and Discussion Lead – 20%

1) Group presentation Fadiman chapters
2) Group presentation Payer country.

Goals and Requirements for the First-Year Seminar
March 19, 1999 – adopted by the faculty. (This course is unique in that the whole faculty prescribes its requirements.)

1) Goals
   a) To develop ability to weigh evidence, critically evaluate ideas and arguments, and make reasonable judgments.
   b) To develop ability to generate ideas, create arguments, and think independently.
   c) To develop research and writing skills.
   d) To develop discussion skills.

2) Assessment guidelines
   a) At least 20 pages of evaluated written work.
   b) At least one evaluated presentation as well as active participation in informal discussion.
   c) Required attendance; policy discussed in syllabus.
   d) Writing and oral component each must count for at least 30% of grade.

Honor Code:
The course will be governed by the approved policies associated with the Honor Code.
**Personnel:**
Robert Blystone is a Professor of Biology and teaches courses dealing with anatomy and development. His research interests include temperature flow through skin exposed to radio frequency radiation; anesthesia hypothermia; lung development; and cellular anatomy of both invertebrate and vertebrate photoreceptors. He has additional interests in textbook design, computer visualization of data and images, and the history of histology. Professor Blystone has participated in First-Year Seminar throughout its history at Trinity (25 years) and currently chairs the First-Year Seminar Steering Committee. Dr. Blystone has served on Trinity’s Health Professions Advisory Committee for forty years. He was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. Professor Blystone is a first generation college student. His wife, Donna, and their son, Dan, are both Trinity graduates. His Fall office hours are Tuesday and Thursday 11 to 2 pm.

Stephen Manning serves as the peer tutor of this course. He is a junior, majoring in Biochemistry/Molecular Biology, from Kingwood, Texas. Stephen is interested in entering the field of medicine upon graduation: hoping to specialize in Oncology. He serves as external chair for the Academic Honor Council, and is an active member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity and Alpha Epsilon Delta pre-med honor society. Stephen also participates in Biomathematics research.

**Comment:**
Some people shake hands when they meet and others bow. Some people think the number seven is lucky and others five. Some people will not walk under ladders. Hmong bury the placenta on their property so that when they die they have a way to the afterlife. In the United States, hospitals sell the placenta to pharmaceutical companies so that cord blood and hormones can be harvested for medicinal use.

We each are formed by a culture and our daily lives are influenced by that culture. Many say “Bless you” when you sneeze. Some throw a pinch of salt over their shoulder should the salt be spilled. Some people think the cultural customs of others are silly. What would an American obstetrician think if a Hmong mother-to-be requested that her placenta be given to the father after the baby is born? Why do German physicians order more heart medications than British docs? Why do French physicians order more liver medications than U.S. health practitioners? The response is culture, the culture of the patient and that of the physician.

Anne Fadiman describes when cultures come into collision with a small girl who has epilepsy. Lynn Payer muses how patients and physicians have different expectations of medical care in different countries. Jerome Groopman reveals that sometimes the underlying cause of clinical misjudgment can be related to cultural differences between the physician and patient. These texts are supplemented by reports and short papers (as pdf files), which explore how culture and medicine interact. I trust you will find this a fascinating intellectual journey that has many practical uses.