

FYW-1138, Fall 2011
MWF 10:30-11:20, Johns 111I
Office hours: MWF 2:30-3:30, and by appointment
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Know Thyself
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Know Thyself: the Soul, The Self, and the Synapse

This course will investigate the question at the heart of a truly liberal education, the question of human nature. As the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates once said, "I am still unable to know myself, and it really seems to me ridiculous to look into other things before I have understood that." What does it mean to be a human being, and how can we figure it out? Are we *souls*, as the ancient philosophers argued, or are we *selves*, as their modern counterparts have suggested? What, exactly, is the difference? Are both the self and the soul delusions, as some contemporary scientists maintain? Or should science's inability to speak about the soul point us toward other sources of wisdom in our search for self-understanding? Using the writings of some of the Western tradition's greatest philosophers as our guides, this course will thus tackle the questions of human nature, human excellence, human happiness, and human self-understanding. Although answers to such questions are no doubt elusive, we will pursue them in the Socratic conviction that "the unexamined life is not worth living."

This course is supported by a grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities' "Enduring Questions" program. Any views expressed in this course do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Required Texts:

Plato, *Phaedrus*. Trans. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995.

Rousseau, *Confessions*. Trans. Christopher Kelly. Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College, 1995.

Wolfe, Tom. "Sorry, But Your Soul Just Died." *Forbes*, December 2, 1996 (moodle).

Brooks, David. *The Social Animal*. New York: Random House, 2011.

Kass, Leon. *The Hungry Soul*. New York: The Free Press, 1994.

Lewis, C. S. *The Abolition of Man*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.

Corbett, Edward P. J. *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971, chapters 2 and 3 (moodle).

Part I: The Soul

Wednesday, August 24: Introduction

Friday, August 26: Plato, *Phaedrus*, 227a-230e.

Monday, August 29: *Phaedrus*, 231a-241d; Corbett, *CRMS*, chapter II, p. 45-49.

Wednesday, August 31: *Phaedrus*, 241e-257b. Essay 1 due.

Friday, September 2: re-read *Phaedrus*, 241e-257b. Quiz 1.

Monday, September 5: No Class (Labor Day).

Wednesday, September 7: re-read *Phaedrus*, 241e-257b again; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 51-62.

Friday, September 9: *Phaedrus*, 257c-273d. Quiz 2.

Monday, September 12: re-read *Phaedrus*, 257c-273d; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 62-72.

Wednesday, September 14: *Phaedrus*, 274b-279c.

Friday, September 16: *Phaedrus*, conclusion. Essay 2.

Monday, September 19: Class meets with Mary Fairbairn in Library 041. Complete online research tutorials 1 and 2 before this meeting.

Part II: The Self

Wednesday, September 21: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 1-21; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 72-81.

Friday, September 23: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 21-37. Quiz 3.

Monday, September 26: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 37-58; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 81-93.

Wednesday, September 28: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 58-73.

Friday, September 30: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 74-93. Essay 3.

Monday, October 3: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 93-110; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 93-107.

Wednesday, October 5: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 111-128.

Friday, October 7: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 128-147. Quiz 4.

Monday, October 10: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 148-170; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 107-119.

Wednesday, October 12: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 170-188.

Friday, October 14: No Class (Fall Break)

Monday, October 17: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 189-208; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 119-129.

Wednesday, October 19: Rousseau, *Confessions*, 208-228.

Friday, October 21: Rousseau, *Confessions*, conclusion. Essay 4.

Monday, October 24: Fairbairn, Library 041. Complete online research tutorials 3 and 4 before this meeting.

Part III: The Synapse

Wednesday, October 26: Wolfe, "Sorry, But Your Soul Just Died" (Moodle); Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 129-137.

Friday, October 28: Brooks, *The Social Animal*, Introduction, Chapter 1 (ix-xviii; 3-22). Quiz 5.

Monday, October 31: Brooks, *The Social Animal*, Chapter 6 (73-99); Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter II, p. 137-145.

Wednesday, November 2: Brooks, *The Social Animal*, Chapters 7, 13 (100-116; 200-214).

Friday, November 4: Brooks, *The Social Animal*, chapters 14, 17 (215-232, 264-275).

Monday, November 7: Brooks, *The Social Animal*, Chapters 18, 22 (277-295, 363-378). Essay 5.

Wednesday, November 9: Kass, *The Hungry Soul*, Preface, Introduction (xiii-xviii; 1-15).

Friday, November 11: Kass, *The Hungry Soul*, Chapter 1, (19-39); Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter III, p. 299-314.

Monday, November 14: Kass, *The Hungry Soul*, Chapter 1 (40-57). Quiz 6.

Wednesday, November 16: Kass, *The Hungry Soul*, Chapter 2 (59-93).

Friday, November 18: Kass, *The Hungry Soul*, Chapter 3 (97-114); Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter III, p. 315-328.

Monday, November 21: Kass, *The Hungry Soul*, Chapter 3, Conclusion (114-127; 227-231). Essay 6.

Tuesday, November 22: Research paper proposal and preliminary bibliography due to Johns 111JA by 5 pm.

Wednesday, November 23 and Friday, November 25: No Class (Thanksgiving)

Monday, November 28: Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, chapter 1; Corbett, *CRMS*, Chapter III, p. 328-338.

Wednesday, November 30: Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, chapter 2.

Friday, December 2: Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, chapter 3. Quiz 7.

Monday, December 5: Conclusion. Research Paper Outline Due.

Wednesday, December 7, 12:00: outlines available for pickup outside Johns 111JA.

Monday, December 12, 12:00: Final Papers due to Johns 111JA.

Assignments and Grading:

Short Papers: You will write six short essays over the course of the term. **Each essay must fit on one side of one page, in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Further Information about these assignments can be found in the “Writing and Grading Guidelines.”**

Quizzes: Every other week, you will have a quiz on our readings, including both our main texts and Corbett’s *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. Most quiz questions will be drawn directly from the study guide. Six of those quizzes will count toward your final grade.

Research Paper: at the end of the term, you will write a research paper 1500-2500 words in length, incorporating secondary literature. You will turn in a proposal and bibliography as well as an outline preparatory to writing your final paper.

Participation: Perfect attendance with no active participation in class earns a C for class participation. The addition of regular participation earns a B; frequent, helpful, intelligent

participation earns an A. After 2 unexcused absences, every further absence results in the loss of one partial letter grade (B becomes B-, B- becomes C+, and so on). Completion of library research tutorials is part of your participation grade.

Grade Components:

6 Short Papers:	5% each	30 %
Quizzes (7 total, drop the lowest grade):	5% each	30%
Research Paper:		30%
Participation:		10%
Total		100%

Grade Values

A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0.0

Grade Ranges

A	3.83-4.00
A-	3.50-3.83
B+	3.17-3.50
B	2.83-3.17
B-	2.50-2.83
C+	2.17-2.50
C	1.83-2.17
C-	1.50-1.83
D+	1.17-1.50
D	0.83-1.17
D-	0.50-0.83
F	0.00-0.50