

Medaille College  
18 Agassiz Circle  
Buffalo, NY 14214

## Course Syllabus

Course Number:	GEN 411
Course Title:	Baccalaureate Capstone II
Section:	H1, M W F 2:50-3:50 p.m.
Semester:	Fall 2007
Credits:	3.0
Prerequisites:	GEN 410; <i>in addition, this honors section is reserved for students participating in the Medaille College Scholars Program.</i>
Instructor:	Dr. Gerald J. Erion
Instructor Availability:	M 9:00-10:00 a.m., 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tu 10:00-11:30 a.m. W 5:30-6:00 p.m. and by appointment, 221 Main Hall
	telephone: 716.880.2174 e-mail: <a href="mailto:gerion@medaille.edu">gerion@medaille.edu</a> web: <a href="http://erion.humanitiesdepartment.com/gen411/">erion.humanitiesdepartment.com/gen411/</a>

### A. Catalog Description of Course

This seminar course gives students the opportunity to integrate their course work with individual research projects. Each student is responsible for the production, presentation, and defense of a research paper which addresses a specific academic topic related to the college's General Education core. Research projects must demonstrate significant knowledge within the selected topic area, an understanding of its place in an integrated intellectual framework, and a high level of skill development.

#### *College Scholars Program Addendum*

*GEN 411 serves as a capstone course for the Medaille College Scholars Program; so, students should expect that their GEN 411 papers will apply the important critical thinking tools and concepts introduced and reinforced in earlier courses, and with a quality and significance appropriate for honors-level work.*

### B. Objectives

Students will:

1. Refine an academically valid research question and plan within the identified field of inquiry.
2. Read appropriate source material.
3. Collaborate with the instructor in establishing specific learning objectives for the research project.

4. Collaborate with the instructor in establishing suitable and rigorous research and learning activities appropriate to these objectives.
5. Achieve the identified objectives through performance of these activities.
6. Write, present, and defend a culminating research paper.
7. Participate in the self/ peer assessment process.

### C. Outline of Course Content and Tentative Schedule

date	topic	assignment
Mon. Sept. 3	holiday	
Wed. Sept. 5	introductions, course syllabus (all teams)	
Fri. Sept. 7	paper assignment (all teams)	
Mon. Sept. 10	paper assignment continued (all teams)	<b>NB: <i>FOUND Magazine</i> reading is Sept. 11 NB: last day to drop or add is Sept. 11</b>
Wed. Sept. 12	research session (all teams)	<b>NB: class will meet in Huber Hall lab (TBA)</b>
Fri. Sept. 14	research session (all teams)	<b>NB: class will meet in Huber Hall lab (TBA)</b>
Mon. Sept. 17	conferences (by appointment)	
Wed. Sept. 19	prospectus review (teams TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of prospectus for peer review</b>
Fri. Sept. 21	prospectus review (teams TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of prospectus for peer review</b>
Mon. Sept. 24	prospectus review (teams TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of prospectus for peer review</b>
Wed. Sept. 26	conferences (by appointment)	
Fri. Sept. 28	conferences (by appointment)	
Mon. Oct. 1	conferences (by appointment)	
Wed. Oct. 3	conferences (by appointment)	
Fri. Oct. 5	conferences (by appointment)	
Mon. Oct. 8	holiday	
Wed. Oct. 10	draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of draft for peer review</b>
Fri. Oct. 12	draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of draft for peer review</b>
Mon. Oct. 15	draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of draft for peer review</b>
Wed. Oct. 17	draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of draft for peer review</b>
Fri. Oct. 19	draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of draft for peer review</b>
Mon. Oct. 22	conferences (by appointment)	
Wed. Oct. 24	conferences (by appointment)	
Fri. Oct. 26	conferences (by appointment)	
Mon. Oct. 29	conferences (by appointment)	
Wed. Oct. 31	conferences (by appointment)	
Fri. Nov. 2	conferences (by appointment)	<b>NB: last day to withdraw is Nov. 2</b>
Mon. Nov. 5	conferences (by appointment)	<b>NB: Lance Strate lecture is Nov. 6 NB: Election Day is Nov. 6</b>
Wed. Nov. 7	second draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of second draft for peer review</b>
Fri. Nov. 9	second draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of second draft for peer review</b>
Mon. Nov. 12	second draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of second draft for peer review</b>
Wed. Nov. 14	second draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of second draft for peer review</b>
Fri. Nov. 16	second draft review (team TBA)	<b>NB: bring copies of second draft for peer review</b>
Mon. Nov. 19	conferences (by appointment)	
Wed. Nov. 21	holiday	
Fri. Nov. 23	holiday	
Mon. Nov. 26	student presentations (all teams)	<b>NB: prepare for presentation NB: complete final draft</b>
Wed. Nov. 28	student presentations (all teams)	<b>NB: prepare for presentation NB: complete final draft</b>
Fri. Nov. 30	student presentations (all teams)	<b>NB: prepare for presentation NB: complete final draft</b>
Mon. Dec. 3	student presentations (all teams)	<b>NB: prepare for presentation NB: complete final draft</b>
Wed. Dec. 5	student presentations (all teams)	<b>NB: prepare for presentation NB: complete final draft</b>
Fri. Dec. 7	student presentations (all teams)	<b>NB: prepare for presentation NB: complete final draft</b>
Mon. Dec. 10	final review	

#### D. Method of Evaluating Students

Final marks will be determined by the research paper, a defense presentation, and participation during class meetings and peer review workshops, each weighted as follows:

paper:	65%
defense presentation:	20%
participation (includes attendance):	15%

Please note that your participation during class meetings and peer review workshops will determine a significant portion of your final grade. To do well here, you must not only *attend* meetings as assigned at their scheduled dates and times, but also *arrive prepared for constructive discussion of your project and the projects of your other team members*. (On the other hand, students who are chronically unprepared, disengaged, or absent will reduce their participation grades to zero.)

As in any Medaille course, the grading of student writing in this course will reflect standard English usage; thus, in addition to thoroughly addressing the required content, your *papers and essays should be well organized, well written, and properly documented* in MLA or APA style.

Numerical grades will be converted to letter grades with the following table:\*

A ≥ 95 (high distinction)	B 85-88 (above average)	C 75-78 (average)	D 65-68 (below average)
A- 92-94	B- 82-84	C- 72-74	
B+ 89-91	C+ 79-81	D+ 69-71	F ≤ 64 (unsatisfactory)

#### E. Attendance Policy

See section (D) above on the importance of attendance and active participation; moreover, chronic unpreparedness, disengagement, or unexcused absences will reduce your participation grade to zero.

#### F. Textbooks

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. The Craft of Research. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Hacker, Diana. A Pocket Style Manual. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins, 2004.

And as appropriate to specific field of inquiry.

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\* Grading guidelines appear in the current *Medaille College Academic Undergraduate Catalog*.

## G. Suggested Reading List

- Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart. New York: Anchor, 1994.
- Brinkley, Alan. The Unfinished Nation. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000.
- Czikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. Flow. New York: Harper Collins, 1991.
- Demos, John. The Unredeemed Captive. New York: Vintage, 1995.
- de Tocqueville, Alexis. Democracy in America. Ed. J. P. Mayer. Trans. by George Lawrence. New York: HarperPerennial, 1988.
- Dewey, John. Art As Experience. New York: Perigee, 1988.
- Kevles, Daniel. The Code of Codes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Kuhn, Thomas. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Martin, David and Lee Jacobus. The Humanities Through the Arts. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997.
- Noonan, Peggy. Simply Speaking: How to Communicate Your Ideas With Style, Substance, and Clarity. New York: Harper Collins, 1999.
- Osborne, Michael and Suzanne Osborne. Public Speaking. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1999.
- Panofsky, Erwin. Meaning In The Visual Arts. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Postman, Neil. Amusing Ourselves to Death. New York: Viking, 1986.
- Postman, Neil. Technopoly. New York: Vintage, 1993.
- Sporre, Dennis. Perceiving the Arts. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1997.
- Ruggiero, Vincent. The Art of Thinking. New York: Addison-Wesley, 1997.
- Weston, Anthony. A Rulebook for Arguments. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000.
- Wills, Garry. Lincoln at Gettysburg. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992.
- Wilson, Edward O. Consilience. New York: Knopf, 1998.
- Zinsser, William. On Writing Well. New York: Harper Collins, 1995.

## H. Other Specifications, Requirements, or Arrangements

To help create an effective learning environment, we will conduct our class activities in accordance with the following policies.

- You should be in the classroom, seated, and ready to participate at the start of each class meeting.
- Please do not bring food into the classroom; beverages with secure lids are acceptable, though.
- If you must bring a mobile phone to class, kindly turn it off before we begin.
- Regular class discussions and peer review workshops are an important part of the Capstone project; thus, you should be prepared to give thoughtful, meaningful, and respectful commentary on the work of others, and to receive such feedback on your own work.
- We will ordinarily meet for the entire class period. If you need to leave a particular class meeting early, though, please let me know beforehand.

- Medaille's faculty and administration expect all students to complete their academic work with honesty and integrity. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, forging signatures or College documents, etc.) face penalties ranging from an F on a given assignment to academic suspension. Students should consult the College's Undergraduate Catalog and Student Handbook for full details on the College's policies and procedures for handling formal charges of academic dishonesty.
- *Attendance at presentations and other activities sponsored by the Medaille College Scholars Program may be encouraged and/ or required.*

Any student with a disability who believes he/ she needs accommodation(s) in order to complete this course should contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. The staff in the Office of Disability Services will determine what accommodations are appropriate and reasonable under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Office of Disability Services is located in the Main Building, room M031, and can be reached by telephone at (716) 880-2391.