

AMERICAN CARNIVAL: MEET ME AT THE FAIR

Dr. Tona Hangen

Fall 2010 TR 10:00-11:15

4th Hour Thurs 11:30 – 12:30

HI 193-FS37 <http://tonahangen.com/wsc/fysfair>

Worcester State College University



Office: S-327B, x8688

e: thangen@worchester.edu

Successful Completion of the FYS is a Requirement for Graduation

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

“American Carnival: Meet Me At the Fair” is an interdisciplinary honors seminar for first year students. The course will cover a wide range of American amusements, carnivals, and fairs past and present – looking at leisure, festivity and ritual with a scholarly eye. Students will develop their critical reading, thinking, information literacy and writing skills and will try their hand at podcasting and writing for the web. As a first-year seminar, the course is also designed to give you an introduction to the rigors, joys, and challenges of college life. We will consider the HS-to-college transition and explore ways to achieve academic and personal success. This course is in the “Thought, Language and Culture” LASC content area.

READING LIST

Robert Bogdan, *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit*
ISBN-10: 0226063127 (U Chicago Paperback)

Janet Davis, *The Circus Age: Culture and Society under the American Big Top*
ISBN-10: 0807853992 (UNC Press)

Sarah Gruen, *Water for Elephants*
ISBN-10: 1565125606 (Algonquin)

Erik Larson, *Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness at the Fair that Changed America*
ISBN-10: 0375725601 (Vintage Paperback)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course is a seminar, which means it involves extensive reading, writing, research, group discussion, and independent thought. You will be expected to read 50-100 pages a week (sometimes more), and to write approximately 30 pages over the course of the term. You will need to put in consistent effort during the whole semester and in each class session. You’ll need research skills, which we’ll enhance through targeted history labs. You’ll need to prepare for and speak up in class and demonstrate active learning, not passive absorption. Learning is not a spectator sport.

To promote a community of learners and to acknowledge different styles of learning, your grade is based on multiple dimensions:

Attendance and Participation in class – I will take attendance in each class. You should be on time and ready for discussion each day, by having done that day’s assigned reading or work before class. I expect class discussion to be lively, respectful and substantive. Bring the reading assignment with you to class so you can refer to it during our discussion. Your attendance and participation in the 4th hour sessions is as important as in my class sessions.

History “Labs:” you will complete 6 of these, each giving you experience analyzing different kinds of historical sources: primary documents, photographic images, a scholarly article, a website, a novel, and a film.

Projects: You’ll produce two projects that involve your own research and creativity. One will be a class project, in which we will collectively write a digital novel for young adults – a work of historical fiction based (loosely, perhaps) on the life of P.T. Barnum and published online under Creative Commons license. The other is your final historical research project, which could take the form of a well-crafted research paper, a script or film, or a plan for a museum exhibit.

Your grade will be determined this way:

Attendance and Participation	20%	Silent attendance will not receive full credit
FYE 4 th Hour	15%	This score assigned by mentor & FYE faculty
History Labs, 6 @ 5% each	30%	Due dates: 9/9, 9/21, 10/7, 10/19, 11/2, 11/16
Barnum Book Chapter	20%	Grade includes classwork sessions. Due date: 11/23
Final Project	15%	Proposal due date [tba] Final project due date 12/7
	100%	

WHAT IS A FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR?

First-year seminars at Worcester State College are learning-centered, academic seminars on varied topics. A seminar is a discussion-based course in which students and instructors exchange ideas and information and learn from one another. Emphasis is placed on creating community within the classroom. First-year seminars introduce students to college-level learning and facilitate student transition from high school to college. First-year seminars differ from the traditional, lecture-based, introductory course. They offer the opportunity for students to learn from one another, to explore new ideas, to learn about oneself and one’s abilities, and to get to know a professor well in a small classroom setting. First-year seminars encourage active, reflective learning, and enhance students’ critical thinking, information literacy, and written and oral communication skills.

First-year seminars meet four hours per week. The fourth hour is facilitated primarily by the peer mentor assigned to your class along with Student Affairs professionals and your first-year learning community instructors. Input from earlier cohorts of WSC first-year students was relied upon in structuring the fourth hour topics, content, and assignments. Particular emphasis is on building and reinforcing the skills necessary for college success.

CLASS COMMUNICATION

Course Blackboard and Course Blog: All of the course information and material is available online in TWO places: on Blackboard, and on a public blog. That way, if Blackboard is down, our work goes on. You should bookmark the blog’s url (<http://www.tonahangen.com/wsc/fysfair>), subscribe to its RSS feed, or add its Google calendar to your own to keep track of due dates.

Email: Your worcester.edu email account is your official email address for course and college-related correspondence. Please check it regularly. All email correspondence from you should originate from your worcester.edu address. Email is the best way to reach me – I check it several times a day, although I am more likely to answer it during regular business hours.

THE FINE PRINT

Technology is delightful and useful. However, some of it detracts from our learning environment. Silence your cell phones before entering class. No texting in class. Laptops are welcome but only for taking notes, conducting group writing work via the Wiki, or accessing the course's documents – not for checking Facebook, email, or surfing the web.

On all papers, doing your own work is absolutely essential. Papers which contain plagiarized material get a ZERO on the assignment and could result in your failing the class. In all your writing, you **MUST** cite the sources of your quotations, information and ideas. Please familiarize yourself with and follow the college policy on Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook, and make use of proper citation formats (Chicago Style or MLA is preferred).

If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise) and you need a reasonable accommodation made for you in this course, please consult with me immediately at the outset of the course so we can design a solution that will help you be successful in the class.

My office hours are Mondays 1-2, Wednesdays 11:30-12:30, Thursdays 1-2:30 & by appointment.

WORCESTER STATE POLICIES

1. Code of Conduct/Classroom Civility: All students are expected to adhere to the policies as outlined in the College's Student Code of Conduct.

2. Academic Integrity: All students are expected to adhere to the WSC Academic Honesty Policy. The Academic Honesty Policy can be found in the WSC catalog and is outlined in the Student Handbook, in the section "Worcester State College Student Code of Conduct and the Judicial System."

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

1. Disability Services Office: For information regarding the Disability Services Office (DSO), please go to <http://www.worcester.edu/DSO/default.aspx>. The DSO is located in the Administration Building, A-131.

2. The Academic Tutoring Center/Learning Assistance Center: The Academic Tutoring Center is located on the first floor of the Administration Building. Assistance is provided to students FREE of charge. Students seeking academic assistance should visit the center as soon as possible or contact the Academic Coordinator at 508-929-8530/8043.

3. The Writing Center: The Writing Center provides free assistance to students in the areas of research and writing. It is located on the third floor of the Sullivan Academic Building, S306. To schedule an appointment, please call at 508-929-8112 or email the Center at writingcenter@worcester.edu. To find out more information about the Writing Center including the Center's Hours and the Center's Online Writing Lab, visit their website at www.worcester.edu/writing

SYLLABUS

#	Date	Topic	Readings	Notes/What's Due
1	Th 9/2	Mapping Our Course		
2	T 9/7	Columbian Expo 1893 + Wikipedia workshop	Larsen, DWC, Part I	
3	Th 9/9	Building White City	Larsen, DWC, Part II	Wikipedia Lab (#1)
4	T 9/14	The Fair	Larsen, DWC, Part III	
5	Th 9/16	Photo workshop: Chicago, 1893	Larsen, DWC, Part IV & Epilogue	
6	T 9/21	The Freak Show	Bogdan, FS Ch 1	Photograph Lab (#2)
7	Th 9/23	Step Right Up	Bogdan, FS Ch 2-4	
8	T 9/28	Profiles of Presentation	Bogdan, FS Ch 5-10	
9	Th 9/30	Primary Source Wkshop		
10	T 10/5	Big Top I	Davis, CA Ch 1-2	
11	Th 10/7	The Big E		Primary Sources Lab (#3)
12	T 10/12	Big Top II	Davis, CA Ch 3-5	
13	Th 10/14	Academia as Circus		
14	T 10/19	Sin City: Vegas	None; film viewing	Scholarly Article Lab (#4)
15	Th 10/21	Big Top III/ WFE I	Davis, CA Ch 6-7	
16	T 10/26	Discussion of WFE	Greun, WFE	
17	Th 10/28	Discussion of WFE II	Greun, WFE	
18	T 11/2	The Big Easy: New Orleans	None; film viewing	Novel Lab (#5)
19	Th 11/4	Mardi Gras in American Pop Culture	Article + slide show in <i>National Geographic Traveler</i>	
20	T 11/9	Film Workshop	Bring your film to class if possible	
	Th 11/11	No Class – Veteran's Day		
21	T 11/16	The Great American Boardwalk	Jim Lilliefors, <i>America's Boardwalks</i> (on Google Books)	Film Lab (#6)
22	Th 11/18	Working Class Amusements	K. Piess, "Coney Island Excursion," from <i>Cheap Amusements</i> (1986)	
23	T 11/23	Final HF Workshop	None	HF Book Chapter
	Th 11/5	No Class – Thanksgiving		
24	T 11/30	Amusement Destination Resorts	TBA	
25	Th 12/2	Disney's Worlds	Steiner, "Frontierland as Tomorrowland" (PDF) and Francaviglia, "History After Disney" (PDF)	
26	T 12/7	Woodstock	Greil Marcus, "The Woodstock Festival" <i>Rolling Stone</i> 1969 (online)	Final Project
27	Th 12/9	Project Day		Reflection/ Evaluation