



Gifted LearningLinks Program

Course Syllabus

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."
– attributed to Voltaire

Course Title: Censorship

Session Date: 2010-2011, monthly start dates

Instructor: Ginger Seip-Nuño

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Course Description

Catcher in the Rye, *The Da Vinci Code* and the *American Heritage Dictionary* — these three books have been banned by various groups for different reasons. Why were they censored? What can (or should) be regulated? Who is (or should be) the authority? This course explores the human desire to restrain information, thought, and humankind itself. Starting with banned books and continuing on to media censorship and technology filters, you'll learn about power, authority, and control of the media.

Course Disclaimer

Any course in censorship is going to deal with very controversial issues. Be forewarned that you will be asked to contemplate, write, and comment on issues that some of you might find offensive or just plain disturbing. Topics covered in this course will examine social reactions to graphic violence, offensive language, illegal behavior, anti-social or anti-government activities, and sexual imagery and situations. Although it is difficult to distance yourself from your initial reactions to some of this material, please remember that this is an academic setting and we ask that you respect other's opinions as they are expected to respect yours.

Instructor Bio

Ginger Seip-Nuño has a BA in English, MS in International Relations, MA in English, and a certificate in Intelligence Analytics. She has taught at universities and colleges and the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth. This is her first year with GLL.

Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- a. Understand the legal and social ramifications of censorship
- b. Be able to analyze specific examples of censorship in media (book, film, and the internet)
- c. Be able to rationally argue the "reasons" behind the human desire to

ensor and control information

Course Construction

Remember this course is a facilitated independent study course, but I do put some of the readings in context if needed or add a different perspective than those assigned. The bulk of your “learning,” however, will be through the readings and the discourse on the discussion board where you will be able to thoroughly engage the material, ask questions, and share your knowledge with the rest of the class. How much you learn from this course is up to you.

Student Evaluation and Grading Policies (Credit Courses Only)

3 Short Response Paper: (10 pts each) 30 % of overall grade

You will be asked to write three short paper (1-2 pages or 300-600 words) on your response to a prompt that can be found to your right under: “Response Paper Prompts.” Each prompt has guidelines about the question. The response papers are due at the end of Unit 2, 3, and 4.

11 Discussion Board Posts: (5 pts each) 55% of overall grade

Within each Unit, there are multiple sections broken down into weeks for your convenience; each week’s section ends with a header: “Up For Discussion,” which includes a series of questions or concerns for the student to consider. These questions are open-ended discussion topics geared toward class participation. There will be several, so please choose one question to answer. Your response to this question must be at least 2 healthy paragraphs long—a healthy paragraph being at least 8 sentences. Feel free to write as much as you need to answer the question to your satisfaction. These questions are meant to fuel debate and interaction not only me, but with your classmates as well, so **please** check to see if anyone has commented on your post and respond if needed.

Final Presentations: (15 pts.) 15% of overall grade

You will have two choices for your final project. These presentations will be done in PowerPoint and posted in the final week of your course. The expectations for the final presentation can be found to under the left menu tab: “Final Presentation Instructions.”

Due Dates

All Unit work is due at the end of the Unit. Late work will be docked one point for each ensuing week it is late. Please see the right menu tab “Due Dates” for a breakdown on due dates corresponding to your start date for this course.

Grading Scale

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Below 60
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Evaluation

Students receive a final evaluation upon completion of the course. Interim progress reports are emailed when a student is earning a grade of C or below.

Resources and Materials

All materials for this course are open source and available via an internet connection.

Course Readings / Suggested 18 Week Schedule

Unit 1: Introduction, Reasons, and Law (Week 1-3)

	Topic	Readings	Due
Week 1	Introductions		Intros Definitions
Week 2	Censorship Law (US)	“The Laws That Censor”	Post #1
Week 3	Banned Music	“Brief Timeline on Censored Music” http://www.aclu.org/free-speech/brief-timeline-censored-music	Post #2

Unit 2: Censorship in Books (Week 4-6)

	Topic	Readings	Due
Week 4	Overview: Censorship of Books	“Gay Titles Missing in Most AR Libraries” http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6403256.html “Self-censorship is Rampant and Lethal” http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6632974.html	Post #3
Week 5	Case Study: Harry Potter	“What do Harry Potter, Captain Underpants, and Huck Finn Have in Common?” http://www.cfif.org/htdocs/legal_issues/legal_updates/first_amendment_cases/harry_potter_censorship.htm “Harry Potter Banned?” http://www.infoplease.com/spot/banned-harry.html#axzz0xOvuebXV “Look Out Harry Potter! – Book Banning Heats Up” http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin157.shtml	Banning Harry Potter ?
Week 6		No Readings: Banned Book Paper Due	Response Paper

Unit 3: Censorship in Film (Week 7-10)

	Topic	Readings	Due
Week 7	Overview: Censorship of Film	“Censorship” http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=censorship	Post #4
Week 8	Evolution of Film Rating	“The Production Code” http://productioncode.dhwritings.com/multipleframes_productioncode.php	Post #5
Week 9	Modern Rating System	“The Movie Rating System” http://www.filmratings.com/filmRatings_Cara/downloads/pdf/about/cara_about_voluntary_movie_rating.pdf	Post #6

Week 10		No Readings: Censored Film Paper Due	Response Paper
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Unit 4: Censorship of the Internet (Week 11-14)

	Topic	Readings	Due
Week 11	Overview: Censorship of Internet	<p>“AT&T defends Verizon-Google Mobile exemption from net neutrality” http://www.appleinsider.com/articles/10/08/14/att_defends_verizon_google_mobile_exemption_from_net_neutrality.html</p> <p>“Library Filtering Introduction: History of Internet Filters and the Library” http://www.infopeople.org/resources/filtering/</p> <p>“Supreme Court Hold Steady on Workplace Privacy” http://www.cdt.org/blogs/jim-dempsey/supreme-court-holds-steady-workplace-privacy</p> <p>“Social Networking Trumps Censorship Every Time” http://www.pcworld.com/article/167825/social_networking_trumps_censorship_every_time.html</p> <p>“The High Price of Facebook” http://www.newsweek.com/2010/05/15/the-high-price-of-facebook.html</p>	Post #7
Week 12	Case Studies: China and Iran, among Others	<p>“A New Approach to China” http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2010/01/new-approach-to-china.html</p> <p>“China Gives License to Redirect Search of the Free and Open Internet” http://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2010/07/china-gives-license-redirected-search-free-and</p> <p>“Iran Protests: Why Twitter is the Medium of the Movement” http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1905125,00.html</p> <p>“Australia” http://en.rsf.org/surveillance-australia,36674.html</p> <p>“South Korea” http://en.rsf.org/surveillance-south-korea,36667.html</p>	Post #8
Week 13	United States and Censorship	<p>“The Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative” http://www.whitehouse.gov/cybersecurity/comprehensive-national-cybersecurity-initiative</p> <p>“Net Censorship Law Struck Down Again” http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2008/07/net-censorship/</p> <p>“Senate ‘Internet Kill Switch’ Bill Moves Forward” http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2365709,00.asp</p> <p>“The Facts About S. 3480, ‘Protecting Cyberspace as a National Asset Act of 2010’ ” http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Press.Majority.News&ContentRecord_id=66c23959-5056-8059-7686-43a8307e966c</p>	Post #9
Week 14		No Readings: Censored Internet Paper Due	Response Paper

Unit 5: Objection, Interpretation, and Control (Week 15-16)

	Topic	Readings	Due
Week 15	Authority and Moderation	<p>“Things That are Not in the Constitution” http://www.usconstitution.net/constnot.html</p> <p>“Transparency and Open Government” http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/TransparencyandOpenGovernment/</p>	Post #10

		<p>“It’s Modern Trade: Web Users Get As Much as They Give” http://online.wsj.com/article/NA_WSJ_PUB:SB10001424052748703748904575411530096840958.html</p> <p>“FCC vs. FOX Television, INC” http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/07-582.ZS.html</p> <p>“Austin Heap: How I helped Iran’s Citizens to Beat the Censor” http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2010/mar/21/austin-heap-haystack-iran</p>	
Week 16	Information Control	<p>“UAE Blackberry Update was Spyware” http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/8161190.stm</p> <p>“China’s Cyberposse” http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/07/magazine/07Human-t.html?_r=4&hp=&pagewanted=all</p> <p>“Cruel Cat Woman named and shamed” http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/3109791/Cruel-cat-woman-named-and-shamed.html</p> <p>“3 Colombian Teens on Facebook hit List Killed in Past 10 days” http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/americas/08/24/colombia.facebook.killings/index.html?hpt=T2#fbid=aS9IfYiZ3tM&wom=false</p>	Post #11

Unit 6: Final Presentations (Week 17-18)

Weeks 17 -18	Final Presentations are to be posted no later than the last day of your session.
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Third Party Websites

While a staff member (which includes but is not limited to instructors, teaching assistants, residential staff, office staff) may use or refer students to third-party web sites for instructional purposes, s/he is required to review thoroughly any such web sites for inappropriate content before referencing them. This includes clicking on all links contained in any such web site, reviewing the materials contained on every page within a web site, and ensuring that the web site does not provide links to other inappropriate web sites. If there is any doubt about whether something is appropriate, a staff member is instructed to err on the side of caution and not use the web site or check with a CTD supervisor. If a referenced third-party web site is later determined to contain inappropriate content, the staff member may be subject to discipline.

Student Evaluation and Grading Policies

Honors Elective students will receive a final evaluation and transcript when the course is complete. Students who are struggling (grade of C or below) may receive an interim progress report.

Final evaluations and transcripts are mailed to the student and the home school, if so designated.

Course Requirements

- All Gifted LearningLinks (GLL) courses require a properly-maintained computer with broadband Internet access, a recent-version web browser (such as Explorer 6 or 7, Firefox, or Safari), and a stable email account. Please don't change your email once you have registered for a course, because difficulties in communication will greatly affect your success in the course!
- All GLL courses use the Blackboard Course Management System. Web browsers must be Java- and cookie-enabled.
- Please check your email and the Blackboard Classroom 3—4 times a week!
- You are expected to be familiar with standard computer operations (e.g., login, cut & paste, email attachments) and to acquaint themselves with the Blackboard Course Management System and Acrobat Connect (formerly called Breeze) software prior to the start of class. Tutorials for using the software are in the Blackboard Classroom in the GLL Tutorials link.
- In order to be successful in an online course, you need the following skills:
 - self-direction
 - independent time management
 - ability to meet deadlines

Intellectual Ownership, Academic Honesty, & Netiquette

The Gifted LearningLinks online course environment is offered as a virtual space where students and professionals may meet, communicate, and collaborate. Participants are expected to behave as they would in the workplace or in a face-to-face classroom, following online rules of etiquette (netiquette). Students are expected to act with honesty and personal integrity in all of their academic work and social interactions. This applies to all academic exercises including assignments, papers, labs, and assessments. See the CTD Web site for specific details:

<http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/gll/program/academics/expectations/>

Academic and Performance Expectations

Gifted LearningLinks courses are intended for highly motivated, independent learners.

- While instructors initiate contact with students, it is each student's responsibility to contact the instructor with questions and concerns.
- While online programming provides students with the flexibility to schedule study time around their other academic and personal commitments, GLL students must be able to:
 - Devote the appropriate amount of time per week to study for their courses (see above chart)
 - Plan ahead and meet all assignment and test deadlines as set out in the course syllabus.

- Unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, students are expected to follow the course syllabus and meet all course requirements outlined therein.

Performance issues will be resolved in the following ways:

- Instructor and student will confer
- Instructor will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Gifted LearningLinks staff will arrange a conference with the student, parent(s)/guardian(s) and instructor.

Chronic performance problems unresolved by the above measures may warrant dismissal from the program. If CTD dismisses a student from a Gifted LearningLinks course, CTD will enter a grade of "X" for that course on the student's transcript.

GLL Sample