

## Reading Contemporary Cultures in English II

Class Time: 9:10-12:00 Tuesday

Classroom: B103 Humanities and Social Sciences Building II

Instructor: Shu-Ling Chen

Office: A407 Humanities and Social Sciences Building I

E-mail: slchen@gms.ndhu.edu.tw

Phone: 890-5309

Office Hours: 2:00-4:00 Tuesday

### Books Used:

Beare, Hedley & Richard Slaughter. *Education for the Twenty-First Century*. 2022.

Cukier, Kenneth, Viktor Mayer-Schonberger & Francis de Vericourt. *Framers: Human Advantage in an Age of Technology and Turmoil*. 2021.

Diangelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism*. 2018.

Gallo, Carmine. *Five Stars: The Communication Secrets to Get from Good to Great*. 2018.

Goshgarian, Gary, ed. *The Contemporary Reader*. 11<sup>th</sup> ed. 2013.

Harari, Yuval Noah. *21 Lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. 2018.

Hari, Johann. *Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention—and How to Think Deeply Again*. 2022.

Head, Brian W. *Wicked Problems in Public Policy*. 2022.

Lindgren, Simon. *Digital Media & Society*. 2022.

Mlodinow, Leonard. *Emotional: How Feelings Shape Our Thinking*. 2022.

Sandel, Michael J. *The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?* 2020.

Yang, Andrew. *The War on Normal People: The Truth about America's Disappearing Jobs and Why Universal Basic Income Is Our Future*. 2018. Web.

### Course Description:

This course is designed to help students better understand various aspects of contemporary cultures and further strengthen their critical reading and thinking skills. We will study chapters from 12 books almost all published in recent years and various articles from *the New York Times*, *Time*, *Open Democracy*, and *FP* on topics such as education and technology, leadership, emotions, the U.S.-China Economic War, India, Iran, democracy, racism, gender, inequality, globalization, climate justice, and big tech, etc. We will read the selected chapters and articles critically and discuss them cross-culturally. Students need to give two group presentations on the texts. In addition, to strengthen their critical thinking and presentation skills, students have to make three short individual presentations on the issues studied in this class. Students are expected to come to class prepared and participate in English in class discussions.

### Schedule:

Week 1. 2/14/23: Introduction

Week 2. 2/21: Goshgarian, "Introduction": "How to Read and Write Critically" (1-23), Harari, Chapter 19: "Education" (301-312, 397-398)

Week 3. 2/28: Holiday, No Class

- Week 4. 3/7: (1) Gallo, Chapter 8: “The Leaders” (114-131, 229-230) & Chapter 16: “Conquer the Fear That Holds You Back” (210-214, 234-235), (2) “The Art of Persuasion in a Polarized Age” & “Will Euthanasia Be Secular or Sacred?”
- Week 5. 3/14: (3) Beare & Slaughter, Chapter 6: “The Shift from Past to Future” (101-125), (4) “Machine Learning Warning” & “Why Taking a Phone Break Is So Good for You”
- Week 6. 3/21: (5) Mlodinow, Chapter 9: “Managing Emotions” (183-202, 228-230), (6) “We Face the Mother of All Stagflation Crises”
- Week 7. 3/28: (7) Hari, Chapter 2: “Cause Two: The Crippling of Our Flow States” (46-62, 300-301), (8) “How to Win the U.S.-China Economic War” & “America’s Must-Win Semiconductor War”
- Week 8. 4/4: Spring Break, No Class
- Week 9. 4/11: **Midterm Examination**
- Week 10. 4/18: (9) Cukier, Mayer-Schonberger & de Vericourt, Chapter 2: “Framing” (23-48, 224-227), (10) “India’s Path” & “A Deal to Help South Africa Is a Breakthrough for the World”
- Week 11. 4/25: (11) Yang, Chapter 10: “Mindsets of Scarcity and Abundance” (105-111) & Chapter 22: “Building People” (203-215), (12) “The Question Is No Longer Whether Iranians Will Topple the Ayatollah” & “The Women of Iran”
- Week 12. 5/2: (13) Sandel, Chapter 1: “Winners and Losers” (17-31, 230-232), (14) “Queen Elizabeth Embodied the Myth of the Good Monarch”, “The New King Will Be Alright” & “The Monarchy and Media Are Trapped in a Mutually Dependent Relationship”
- Week 13. 5/9: (15) Diangelo, Chapter 7: “Racial Triggers for White People” (99-106), Chapter 9: “White Fragility in Action” (115-122) & Chapter 10: “White Fragility and the Rules of Engagement” (123-129), (16) “How Climate Justice and Police Violence Are Inextricably Linked” & “On the Amazon's Front Lines”
- Week 14. 5/16: (17) Head, Chapter 6: “Improving Social Well-Being and Social Equity” (107-121), (18) “Davos Elite Won’t Tackle Climate Crisis and Global Inequalities” & “Globalisation Is Leading to Permanent War. Here’s What We Should Do Instead”
- Week 15. 5/23: Learning Culture from a Movie
- Week 16. 5/30: (19) Lindgren, Chapter 8: “Power and Exploitation” (153-171), (20) “Big Tech Is Failing. The Future of Democracy Depends on What Happens Next” & “If You Want to Understand How Dangerous Elon Musk Is Look Outside America”
- Week 17. 6/6: **Final Examination**

### **Grading Policy:**

Attendance: 10%

Participation: 15%

Midterm + Final Examinations: 45%

Two Group Presentations: 20%

Three Individual Presentations: 10%

### **Two Rules:**

If you miss class over 3 times, you will get 0 for Attendance unless you have a good reason.

Please be on time. Being late 3 times equals 1 absence.