esade

TEACHING GUIDE - 2026-2027

Anthropology: In Search of Principles for a Career Philosophy: Lessons from Art & Literature

UGRA_000510

Departments	Department of Society, Politics and Sustainability
Teaching Languages	English
ECTS	4
Teacher responsible	Ana Ayuso Nogueiras - ana.ayuso@esade.edu

Course Goals

A time for students to conceive a map of their priorities, strengths and motivations (a career philosophy) on which to base job and professional decisions. Other learning objectives are:

- to learn to extract useful lessons from ideas and experiences
- to encourage the desire to read and to expand one's humanistic knowledge
- to cultivate our appreciation for literature and art
- to have a more clear and refined sense of direction regarding our career about to start.

Previous knowledge

No previous knowledge is required.

Prerequisits

No previous requirement is required.

Teaching methodology

Sessions will combine a brief introductory lecture, a discussion on a reading, art references, a presentation based on an interview conducted by students and a plenary discussion leading towards a final reflection.

Description

Course contribution to program

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a time and a space to acquire useful self-knowledge that can help them make the right career decisions in the early part of their lives.

Short description

It is our belief that early adulthood and university are the time and the place for personal growth and humanistic learning, which will later become indispensable to navigate through the choices and uncertainties of one's professional life. No course can be a substitute for our own and very personal career decisions, but it's possible and useful to use classroom time shared with students facing the same dilemmas in order to obtain a sense of direction regarding "what to do in life".

The course offers students a supportive environment in which art is the tool to get to know ourselves better, and where we use the acquired self-knowledge to conceive a personal list of priorities, strengths and motivations (a career philosophy) on which to base our professional decisions.

Each session will be devoted to a specific dimension of a career or job (talent, motivation, contradictions) exemplified through the life and the work of eminent artists. A discussion will ensue to try to extract, with everyone's insight, a lesson or a principle enlightening and useful enough for us to want to remember and include in our "career philosophy". The discussions will be enriched with the ideas obtained from short stories written by some of Literature's classic writers: Faulkner, Hawthorne, Dinesen, Fitzgerald and others.

Each participant can draw his or her own conclusions as well as count on the help of the professors to come up with his or her final map of priorities, strengths and weaknesses; but an important part of the course will consist of receiving and being open to the honest and constructive feedback from classmates: they can provide an external, different and sometimes more objective viewpoint to complement one's own. The discussions will adhere to only one requirement: that all thoughts and opinions are guided by generosity and a desire to improve.

The focus and commitment to the course that is expected from students is incompatible with using phones, laptops, tablets or other electronic devices. They will not be allowed during any of the different segments of our class time.

Bibliography

Christiansen, Clayton, How Will You Measure Your Life, Harvard Business Review (Article)

Gombrich, E.H., The Story of Art, Phaidon Press (Book)

Matsuo, T., Saito, Y., Terashima, T. and Fujimoto. T., Scenario-Based Career Path Decision Support Services in Human Capital Development, International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals, Volume 3, Issue 1 (Article)

Sandel, Michael, Justice: What's the Right Thing To Do, Straus and Giroux (Book)

Shumpeter Blog, Philosopher Kings, The Economist (Article)

Xu, Hui and Tracey, Terence J.G., The Role of Ambiguity Tolerance in Career Decision Making, Journal of Vocational Behavior 85, pp.18-26 (Article)

Activities

Teamwork
In groups, students will conduct and record one interview to be watched online and discussed in class.

Other
An off-campus visit to an art institution is planned as part of this course in order to have a hands on experience, explore a bit of the art scene of Barcelona and discuss in context about some of the issues dealt with in the course (prejudices, attitudes, stepping out of comfort zones...)

Readings
Autonomous work:
Assigned readings of about 30-40 minutes prior to each session, followed by a brief thread in which the students write down their “initial thoughts on the reading” to be further discussed in class. All readings for the course will be available on the website of the course.

Content

#	Topic
1	Introduction.
2	Bentham’s utilitarianism.
3	Nozick’s libertarian school of thought.
4	Kant’s theory of justice.
5	Rawl’s veil of ignorance.
6	Aristotle’s teleological reasoning.
7	Panel of guest speakers.
8	Field trip.
9	Map of social traps and pressures.
10	Closing ceremony.

Assessment

Tool	Assessment tool	Category	Weight %
Participation in program activities	Commitment to the course (attendance + class participation)	Ordinary round	10.00%
Quizzes/tests	Threads on the readings/movies	Ordinary round	30.00%
Final individual project	Short essay	Ordinary round	30.00%
Group project	Video interview with a professional	Ordinary round	20.00%
Final individual project	Individual presentation (last day)	Ordinary round	10.00%
Final individual project	Second round evaluation	Retake	100.00%

PROGRAMS

AI26-Exchange Program Bachelor in Business and Artificial Intelligence (Undergraduates: Business)
- AI26 Year 1 (Optative)

B13-Exchange Program Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- B13 Year 1 (Optative)

BBA20-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- BBA20 Year 3 (Optative)
- BBA20 Year 1 (Optative)
- BBA20 Year 4 (Optative)
- BBA20 Year 2 (Optative)

BBA23-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- BBA23 Year 4 (Optative)
- BBA23 Year 2 (Optative)
- BBA23 Year 3 (Optative)
- BBA23 Year 1 (Optative)

BBA25-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- BBA25 Year 2 (Optative)
- BBA25 Year 3 (Optative)
- BBA25 Year 1 (Optative)

BITLASI22-Bachelor in Transformational Leadership and Social Impact (Undergraduates: Business)
- BITLASI22 Year 4 (Mandatory)
- BITLASI22 Year 1 (Mandatory)

DBAI23-Double Degree in Business Administration and Artificial Intelligence for Business (Undergraduates: Business)
- DBAI23 Year 1 (Optative)
- DBAI23 Year 4 (Optative)
- DBAI23 Year 2 (Optative)
- DBAI23 Year 3 (Optative)

GBD20-Double Degree in Business Administration and Law (Undergraduates: Law)
- GBD20 Year 5 (Optative)
- GBD20 Year 4 (Optative)

GEL19-Bachelor in Global Governance, Economics and Legal Order (Undergraduates: Law)
- GEL19 Year 3 (Optative)
- GEL19 Year 1 (Optative)
- GEL19 Year 4 (Optative)
- GEL19 Year 2 (Optative)

GEL23-Bachelor in Global Governance, Economics and Legal Order (Undergraduates: Law)
- GEL23 Year 3 (Optative)
- GEL23 Year 1 (Optative)
- GEL23 Year 4 (Optative)
- GEL23 Year 2 (Optative)