

Prof. K.H.Haddad, haddad@moravian.edu, Comenius 112, (610) 861-1559
 Office hours: Tuesday 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.; Wednesday 3:30 to 4:40; and by appointment.

POLITICAL SCIENCE 298 (SPECIAL TOPIC)
 The Time of Your Life: Facebook Stalking, Ipod Walking, Nonsense Talking

Why do we think the way we do? How do our habits shape our minds, our days, and our relationships? How can we be better learners, interlocutors and users of technology? This special topic course examines contemporary conditions of consciousness such as internet usage and the speed of daily life. My motivation in teaching this course is to develop more thoughtful strategies for making choices about how we spend time and how we treat the mind. The reading selections for this course are multi-disciplinary and include activist perspectives. As an instructor, I am deeply biased in my teaching of this course: I am worried about what it means to live life online and in a hurry. As a professional academic, it often seems that I have no other choice than to spend a lot of my time online and in a hurry. I notice how students struggle with distraction and how such distraction challenges the classic critical, scholarly, and contemplative goals of a liberal arts education. My hope is that this course will provide helpful tools and concepts to students interested in maximizing the quality of their intellectual and interpersonal experiences. Politically speaking, questions of consciousness are always of concern to political theorists who take seriously how and with what consequences we know others and ourselves in the world.

	Wednesday Meetings	Readings and Assignments
1	January 16	Introduction
2	January 23	Carl Honoré, <i>In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed</i> , chapters 1 to 5
3	January 30	<i>In Praise of Slowness</i> , chapters 1 to 10
4	February 6	John De Graaf, editor, <i>Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork and Time Poverty in America</i> , parts 1 and 2
5	February 13	<i>Take Back Your Time</i> , selection to be decided by the group
6	February 20	Examination
7	February 27	Eviatar Zerubavel, <i>The Fine Line: Making Distinctions in Everyday Life</i> , chapters 1 to 3
8	March 13	<i>The Fine Line</i> , chapters 4 to 6
9	March 20	Examination
10	March 28	Nicholas Carr, <i>What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains</i> (Norton), Prologue, chapters 1 to 3
11	April 3	<i>What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains</i> , chapters 4 to 6
12	April 10	<i>What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains</i> , chapters 7 to 10 and Epilogue
13	April 17	Sherry Turkle, <i>Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other</i> , part 1
14	April 24	<i>Alone Together</i> , part 2
	April 30	Final Project

Course objectives:

- 1) To reflect on the conditions and practices of consciousness
- 2) To gain critical distance from naïve realism
- 3) To expand and deepen an account of the political
- 4) To reflect on language usage inside and outside of the classroom
- 5) To acquire familiarity with contemporary literature on temporality and technology
- 6) To ask critical questions about consciousness as it pertains to political awareness
- 7) To improve verbal and written expression with reference to textual evidence

Books for sale at the Moravian College Bookstore:

- 1) John De Graaf, editor, *Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork and Time Poverty in America* (Ingram)
- 2) Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Fine Line: Making Distinctions in Everyday Life* (University of Chicago)
- 3) Carl Honoré, *In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed* (Harper)
- 4) Nicholas Carr, *What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains* (Norton)
- 5) Sherry Turkle, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* (Perseus)

Assignments and Evaluation

Calendar	Project	% Final Grade
Ongoing	Engagement, incl. daily page*	30%
Examination	February 20	20%
Examination	March 20	25%
Final project	TBA	25%

*Daily page: The standard form of preparing would be three passages and three questions per reading assignment. Given the subject matter of this course, I would like to make room for more creativity. 50% of your pages should be traditional, 50% may be in the form that makes the most sense to you. Please make two copies, one for you and one for me. Pages are due at the start of each class meeting. Please create a file so that you can submit all of your work at the end of the semester. Pages should be fully identified: your name, course info, date, full author name, full title, and page numbers for all passages.

What does an engagement grade represent?

- A. Critical, innovative and careful reading of all assignments; substantial notes or written preparation for discussion; frequent text-based contributions; contribution of discussion-shaping questions; careful engagement of the arguments of others; support of positive discussion dynamics.
- B. Complete and careful readings; consistent notes or written preparation for discussion; lively, substantial, and argumentative text-based contributions; contribution of independent questions; engagement of the arguments of others.
- C. Incomplete or superficial readings; minimal notes or written preparation for discussion; regular (at least once per meeting) discussion participation.
- D. Incomplete or missing readings; lack of notes or written preparation for discussion; mostly passive presence.
- F Persistent, vegetative state; low-level trance; slightly elevated body temperature.

General Course Information

PLEASE TURN YOUR CELLPHONE OFF OR DOWN
AND PUT IT AWAY BEFORE YOU ENTER THE CLASSROOM.

Our purpose is concentration and dialogue. Please protect the classroom as a space of learning. If you are a parent or a caretaker and thus need to be accessible at all times, please let me know.

1) I invite you to visit my office hours. Please be in touch with any questions and thoughts you may have about our work together. I am happy to help you with difficulties relating to your reading of our texts as well as challenges that may arise with regard to assignments. It is my pleasure to help you improve your enjoyment of and performance in this course.

2) Be diligent in your studies and attend class. Undocumented absences beyond the first will harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% of your total course grade (per absence).

3) Drinks are fine, but food or gum impedes your ability to participate in our discussion and is therefore not appropriate.

4) Expect to work six hours on average outside of class per week. The workload varies, and the texts can be challenging. Give yourself plenty of time to read, reread, review, and take notes on texts. Our interest is in deep readings and in gaining a solid toolkit of political theory questions, concepts, and arguments. Don't skim or rush. Avoid online resources in favor of a direct experience with the text.

7) I strongly discourage late assignments, except in appropriately documented emergency situations. For the sake of equity, please do not ask for special treatment. Late work is penalized at 30 % of the assignment grade on the four-point scale.

8) Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment or the course. Please see Moravian College Student Handbook for an account of academic honesty. See <http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic2.htm>

9) Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling (610) 861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

10) This syllabus is subject to change.