

Archer "Plus"

Course Information

No Credit
Archer Plus

Summer 2019
May 20-August 10, 2018

Professor Contact Information

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<i>Office Hours</i>	Monday/Tuesday (4-6 pm)
<i>Other Information</i>	Other meetings by appointment

Course Description

This is a schedule for educational programming available to graduate Archer Fellows. There is no academic credit offered for this course. The events and discussions are open to any current Archer Fellow. Attendance and participation are voluntary.

Some events, which are designed for small groups, will be limited to "first-come, first-served". Please make note of these events that you wish to attend and let the Archer Center staff and Dr. Swerdlow know. We will also schedule a variety of Lunch and Learn opportunities for students to meet with policymakers and influencers in DC.

NOTE

**Dr. Swerdlow is also available to meet with students who wish to have small group discussions. Please contact him to let him know of your interest in these seminar-style discussions. He is partial to early Saturday morning or mid-Saturday afternoon coffees at Bread Furst (4434 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008).

Readings

For May 21-May 30, be prepared to discuss these readings (posted on Canvas)

- Plato, *The Republic* [excerpts]
- Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* (Thomas Hobbes translation) [excerpt]
- Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Law* [excerpt]
- James Madison, "Memorandum on Republics"
- Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, [The Collapse of Western Civilization : A View From the Future](#).
- "Of Two Minds: How Fast and Slow Thinking Shape Perception and Choice [Excerpt]," Daniel Kahneman, *Scientific American*, June 15, 2012
(<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/kahneman-excerpt-thinking-fast-and-slow/#>)

Schedule of Events

May 21 (Tuesday) – Memorial Walk

- 9-10:30 *Lincoln Memorial*
- Focus on memorial literacy; the Gettysburg Address; major speeches censored at the Memorial; and how the U.S. is now inventing Lincoln 5.0; activities include standing where Martin Luther King, Jr. stood and delivering his "I Have a Dream" speech.
- 10:30 - 11:30 *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*
- Focus includes: how and why: (1) the VVM was built less than seven years after the war ended for the U.S.; (2) the VVM triggered construction of a half-dozen other major war memorials on the Mall; (3) arguments and decisions about public art in the U.S. have evolved; and (4) a key to success in Washington, DC is to not listen when told your dream is "impossible."
- 12-1:00 Lunch at the *World War One Memorial* – Lunch delivered
- 1:15-2 Visit to the unmarked site of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Poor Person's Campaign

May 22 (Wednesday) – Literacy & Writing

- 8:45 am Meet at Library of Congress Kluge Center (Jefferson Building, 10 First St SE, Washington, DC 20540)
- 9-noon *Writing an Effective and Compelling One-Page Policy Memo—Workshop I: No Matter What Your Current Writing Skills, Three Ways to Improve Your Writing for the Rest of Your Life*
- Examine original copy of the Declaration of Independence and Thomas Jefferson's copy of *Peloponnesian War* (Thucydides); explore Library of Congress research facilities
 - Get Library of Congress user card
- 12:30-1:30 Lunch – Hunan Dynasty (215 Pennsylvania Ave SE, Washington, DC 20003)
- 1:30-2 Walk to Museum of the Bible (400 4th St SW, Washington, DC 20024)
- 2:30-5 pm Visit the Museum of the Bible (topics to be discussed include museum "literacy;" the sources of morality; and the causes of climate change)

May 23 (Thursday) - Capitol Hill Day

- 9-10 am Coffee w/ Senator John Cornyn (Capitol Visitors Center)
- 10:30-12 Visits to House/Senate galleries
- 12-1:30 pm Lunch at Capitol Visitors Center Café (meal vouchers provided)
- 2-4 pm Visits to Texas Congressional Delegation
- 4-6 pm Debrief with Archer Center Faculty and Staff (TBD)

May 24 (Friday) – The Newseum

- 10 am Meet at the Newseum (555 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20001)
- 10 am – noon You'll have a chance to visit the museum (your ticket provides entry that is valid for two consecutive days) and consider how policy issues are covered by news media.
- 12-1 pm Lunch – vouchers provided
- 1:30-3 Visit to National Gallery of Art, East Wing: "What can Art Tell Us about Democracy, Politics and Policy?"

May 30 (Thursday) – Writing Workshop II

9-11:30 am Meet at the Archer Center for *Writing an Effective and Compelling One-Page Policy Memo—Workshop II: How to use “deep reading” techniques to identify key ideas when a long document is TIMR—too important, must read*

June 11 – Lunch and Learn

Noon-1 Lunch with Dr. Alice Chen, former executive director, Doctors for America (Location: Asia Nine, 915 E Street NW, DC 20004)
RSVP to Keenan/Billy by noon June 10. Preference/priority for health policy fellows.

June 15 – Art & Power Series 1 – Hirschhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden (see below)

10 am-noon **"What Absence is Made Of" – Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden** (Independence Ave SW &, 7th St SW, Washington, DC 20560)

June 26 (Wednesday) - Writing Workshop III & Museum Experience Discussion

6-7 pm Meet at the Archer Center for *Writing an Effective and Compelling One-Page Policy Memo—Workshop III: How to Use Storytelling Techniques that Make a Novel Unputdownable*

7-8 pm Discussion of Holocaust Museum experience (Explore on your own)

July 11 (Thursday) – Culture in DC

8 pm “Ann” at Arena Stage (1101 6th St SW, Washington, DC 20024)

- Opening night of this play about former Texas Governor Ann Richards. Written by Emmy Award-winning actress and writer Holland Taylor (*The Practice, Two and a Half Men*), *Ann* is a comical and inspiring production based on the colorful and complex woman whose sense of humor was bigger than the state which she represented. Jayne Atkinson (*House of Cards, Criminal Minds*) reprises her well-received performance in this intimate, no-holds-barred comedy chronicling Richards’ legacy and how she was determined to make her mark on the world.
- Each Fellow will have a ticket to this event.

July 13 – Art & Power Series 2 – National Portrait Gallery (see below)

11 :30a-1 :30p **"Votes for Women" – National Portrait Gallery** (8th St NW & F St NW, Washington, DC 20001)

July 28 – Art & Power Series 3 – Smithsonian American Art Museum (see below)

11 :30a-1 :30p **"Artists Respond: American Artists and the Vietnam War" – Smithsonian American Art Museum** (8th St NW & F St NW, Washington, DC 20001)

Art & Power Series

Visits to three art exhibitions followed by discussion with Dr. Swerdlow. 2 hours. Limited to 6-8 Fellows. RSVP to Keenan Courtland or Billy Nguyen 2 days prior. Bring your own food.

1. **10 am-noon, Sat, June 15 – "What Absence is Made Of" – Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden** (Independence Ave SW &, 7th St SW, Washington, DC 20560)
2. **11:30 am-1 :30 pm, Sat, July 13 - "Votes for Women" – National Portrait Gallery** (8th St NW & F St NW, Washington, DC 20001)

3. **11:30 am-1 :30 pm, Sun, July 28 - "Artists Respond: American Artists and the Vietnam War" – Smithsonian American Art Museum (8th St NW & F St NW, Washington, DC 20001)**

Culture Experience Discussion

Dr. Swerdlow will have a list of questions to help guide you during your own exploration of the following sites. The questions and related readings will be posted to Canvas. He will be available at the Archer Center for a pizza dinner to discuss your experiences on the following days:

Holocaust Memorial Museum (HMM)— Discussion on Wed, June 26, 7-8 pm (The Archer Center)

When visiting, ask yourself:

- What lessons does the museum teach about the health and survival of democracy?
- Why are the HMM's physical structure and the narrative format of its exhibitions innovative and admirable; e.g. also seen in the Museum of African-American History and Culture;
- Why does present-day awareness of suffering (e.g. Syria, Yemen, Congo) seem to do so little to alleviate or stop it?
- **Honors Question**—How and why are the stories told about Denmark, and Hungary incomplete and misleading?

Arlington National Cemetery— Discussion on Wed, July 17, 6-7 pm (The Archer Center)

Include in your visit:

- Quotes at the RFK grave (video clips on YouTube)
- Civil War Unknowns—read Frederick Douglass dedication speech
- Confederate Memorial—read Woodrow Wilson dedication speech
- Section 60—Iraq, Afghanistan and “war on terror” fatalities buried here; find someone younger than you (remember, please, this is an active cemetery)
- **Honors Question**: What percent of the people buried in Arlington died in combat or while on active military duty?

Details

To visit a museum or memorial is to develop critical skills that include (not in order of importance) the ability to:

- see the obvious (which is usually the most difficult thing to see):
- recognize the presence and power of stories—and develop your own stories that attract other people:
- participate in a Great Paradox: We need times when we escape electronics (and, for example, simply do nothing or talk face-to-face with other people)—and, at the same time, electronics can augment/expand/enrich most things we do—such as a visit to a museum or memorial.

Furthermore, just as reading a book or a social situation requires that we follow certain rules, so does reading a museum (or museum exhibition) or memorial; the three keys are:

1. Who and what shaped the story that we (and other visitors) believe about this site and why? (for a specific museum exhibition, this will include, “Where did the money for this come from?)
2. What is missing that we expect; what is present that we do not expect? (crucial to this is often, “What is the relationship between objects and written words?”)
3. What important questions (can we think of) that require answers but for which searches on the Internet reveal no answers

Book Talks

The Archer Center will schedule some informal meetings with authors about books they have written. Two book talks have been planned and others may be added to the calendar.

1. **Peter Wehner, *The Death of Politics: How to Heal Our Frayed Republic After Trump* (2019)**
Friday, June 21, 2019 – 8-9 am (Breakfast provided)
2. **Carol Schwartz, *Quite a Life!: From Defeat to Defeat ... and Back* (2017)**
Monday, July 29, 2019 – 6 :30-7 :30 pm (Dinner provided)
See <https://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/news/city-desk/article/20983527/the-making-of-dc-politician-carol-schwartzs-745page-autobiography>

Archer Honors

Dr. Swerdlow will work with a select group of 6 students who are interested in a guided reading and discussion of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Edward Gibbon (1776). If you wish to join this group, please contact Dr. Swerdlow. Schedule to be arranged with Dr. Swerdlow and the students.

During the early summer of 1776— as Great Britain expanded its worldwide empire, and fought a rebellion in thirteen of its North American colonies—Edward Gibbon, a prominent member of the British Parliament, wrote and published a 700+ page book: *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Volume I*. The book quickly became a success with British elites as well as the general public. Crossing the Atlantic (which then took about thirty days), it was read by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison’s and America’s other Founders. Their letters show that Gibbon’s work—which by 1783 had expanded to six volumes—influenced both the Revolution and the writing of the U.S. Constitution. For example, one idea that came from Rome was the notion of checks and balances. Gibbon’s writings continued to influence American leaders, like Abraham Lincoln, who borrowed it from a friend. Today, it is invariably included in collections such as the *Harvard Classics*.

This is a 3-part Archer Honors series, which consists of 1-hour sessions at the Archer Center to discuss selected readings from *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Edward Gibbon (1776). The readings will be posted to Canvas and will be about 20,000 words in length. Students will also be given a link to the full, searchable text so those who want to do so can see the segments in full context.

Skills developed include how to:

- “deep read” a classic work and discover hitherto unseen stories, insights and ideas;
- apply these stories, insights and ideas to today public policy debates and politics;
- decipher how stories, ideas and insights move from discovery to mainstream thinking;
- appreciate how forgotten times and events from the past can be rediscovered;
- see the degree to which stories and beliefs about the past shape and guide our actions
- better understand basic principles that define—and sustain— the workings of the Federal government in Washington, DC today;
- think through why talk of the U.S.’s post-World War II “decline” began in the early 1970s and has intensified in recent decades; and
- lead and participate in discussions with peers, learning how to better listen and get others to listen to you.

NOTE : Participation in Archer Plus and the Archer Honors Series is voluntary. No grade or credit will be awarded for participation.