

**Syllabus: Fall, 2017**

**UN561.01 Creativity and Human Development**

**Prof. John Dacey**

**Stokes Hall 363S**

Office hours: Thursdays 11:00 - 12:00 p.m. and on my Canvas site:

<https://bostoncollege.instructure.com/courses/1577980>

Home phone: *Evenings* 7:30 - 8:00 (Really important calls only, please), 781-861-1072

The best path to becoming a more creative thinker is to learn how creative people think. When you do, you cannot help but emulate the process, because consciously and unconsciously, you will want to. There is a genetic component, but nevertheless, everyone is able to become more creative.

This course will help you understand how creative people think, believe and feel. Your job will be to compare yourself to these descriptions, note the ways in which you are like them, and admit the ways in which you are not. You did not become a senior at Boston College without being above average in creativity, as well as in intelligence. Therefore you have already made progress toward being a more effective thinker and problem solver.

In this course, you will look at your life retrospectively (up to now) and prospectively (in the future), with a distinct emphasis on what role your creative ability has played and will play.

These two analyses will be achieved through writing two papers (each at least eight to 10 pages long). In the first, you will identify an “unresolved childhood conflict (UCC).” UCC’s are often the result of decades-old incidents, typically long-forgotten. They tend to be the culprit when it

comes to anxiety disorders, depression and other such psycho-social maladies. You will report on your effort to resolve a UCC.

In the second paper, you will anticipate how your creative abilities might affect the rest of your life. Both papers will be explained more fully in class. The major focus of this course is to help you become more authentic, through a variety of strategies for being more creative in all you do. Finally, in these two papers, you will need to ascertain how and whether you want spirituality, broadly defined, to assist you in your quest. These two papers will each account for 25 percent of your grade.

Another 30 percent will derive from a semester-long creativity project in which you will use all of your imaginative powers to design something (a product, an activity, an artistic endeavor, etc.) that you hope will benefit society. You will learn more about how to do this as the semester goes on.

The remaining 20 percent of your grade will depend on the quality (not quantity) of your contributions to the whole class, as well as to small group discussions. Each will take place each week and will be based on the several readings assigned for that week.

Here is how the small group discussions will work:

There will be four groups of four to five students. Each week, a different group member will be responsible for bringing a least three thought-provoking questions for each of the readings assigned for that day, and will lead the discussion of them. You should combine your group's answers into one file, typed by another group member as an electronic file (this role also rotates).

After class, that person will email the group's answers to everyone in the class at

[un56101f@bc.edu](mailto:un56101f@bc.edu). You should read these emails to see how other groups handled the

assignment. I will be reading and grading each file, and recording that grade in each student's personal file on the website.

Here's the main point: everyone in the group gets the same grade for each week's product. That means that if you don't do the readings (and take notes), you will let your group down. Also, I will be observing the discussions and I will see who is participating. If you fail to do your share, your group's grade will suffer.

As to large groups, I will lead the first two. After that, pairs of students, chosen randomly, will lead the discussions. They will decide on the questions to be discussed, and will randomly call on students to answer their questions. Every two weeks, you can see your grade for participation in large and small group discussions by looking at the grade book on Canvas.

**NB: No computers or cell phones visible in first half of class.**

### **Required Texts**

Dacey, J. (2015). A history of the concept of creativity. Chapter in Gardner, H., & Sternberg, R., Eds. *Encyclopedia of creativity*, 3 Vols. 2nd Ed. San Francisco: Academic Press. (available at my Canvas site)

Dacey, J., & Conklin, W. (2013). *Creativity AND the Standards*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell/TCM.

Dacey, J., & Lennon, K. (1998). *Understanding creativity: The interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors*. NY: Wiley.

Brown, B. (2015). *Daring greatly: How the courage to be vulnerable transforms the way we live, love, parent, and lead*. NY: Avery. ISBN: 1592407331

### **Supportive Texts**

Bennett, H. (2009). *Write starts: Prompts, quotes, and exercises to jumpstart your creativity*. NY: New World Library.

Carson, S. (2010). *Your creative brain: Seven steps to maximize imagination, productivity, and innovation in your life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Health Publications.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1998). *Finding flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life (masterminds series)*. NY: Basic Books (Paperback)

Galindo, J. (2010). *The power of thinking differently: an imaginative guide to creativity, change, and the discovery of new ideas*. Los Altos, CA: Hyena Press.

Gardner, H., & Sternberg, R., Eds. (2012). *Encyclopedia of creativity*, 3 Vols., 2nd Ed.. San Francisco: Academic Press. (Expensive: only for the passionate student of creativity.)

Hurson, T. (2007). *Think better: An innovator's guide to productive thinking*. Boston, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Kurtweil, R. (2012). *How to create a mind*. NY; Viking.

Michalko, M. (2011). *Creative thinking: Putting your imagination to work*. NY: New World Library.

## **Date &**

### **Session      Assignments**

**August 28      First class – Introduction (Prepare before first class)**

#### *Assignments*

**Dacey/Lennon 1<sup>1</sup>**

**Nature of Human Nature (U1)**

**Shield (U1)**

**After class: Interview the most successfully creative person you can find. Ask that person, “How do you do it? What is the secret of your success as a creative person?”**

**Take notes.**

**A Letter to Dad (U1)**

**#1**

*Class topics for discussion*

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<sup>1</sup> Although not specified, *Class topics for discussion* always includes readings in *Assignments* from one of the Dacey books

**Infallibility of the professor**

**Getting to know my socks**

**Introduction to the course**

**“Do Schools Kill Creativity?” – Sir Ken Robinson ([ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson](http://ted.com/talks/ken_robinson))**

**Your creative ability: it’s higher than you think! How this class will raise it significantly!**

**Sept. 7          No class.**

**14                A History of the Concept of Creativity; Finding Your Own Muse (a hypnotic meditation)**

*Assignments:*

**Fill out My Creative Progress Tracker (U2)**

**Read or listen to Freud (U2 – etc.)**

**Dacey: A History of the Concept of Creativity**

**#2**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Freud lecture: (Sample topics for discussion: Sex = main motive in life? 3 functions of psyche? Five stages? Oedipus and Electra?)**

**Dacey/Lennon 2: A History of the Concept of Creativity (Sample topics for discussion: 3 eras, religious vs. genetic vs. biopsychosocial)**

**Finding Your Own Muse (a hypnotic meditation)**

**Creative person interview: Meet with your group and discuss what you learned from your interview with your partners. Decide which of your findings you want to teach the class, then do so. Email to everyone a one-page group paper on the most**

**important generalizations you can make about a creative person's methodology.  
(Name your group's members)**

## **21 Creativity Theory**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Erikson, Part 1 (through Stage Four – U3)**

**Dacey/Conklin Chapters 1 and 2**

**Take test(s) -- <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>**

**Presentation on Creative Innovations in Firefighting and Emergency Care –think of one question**

**Robert Frost poem – “The Road Not Taken”**

**#3**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Erikson lecture Part 1**

**What's Frost's inside humor? Why creative?**

**What is a creative person like?**

**Theories of how creativity works**

**Questions for creative Fire Chief Dan Stewart**

## **28 Creative Thinking and Your Family's Life Style**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Erikson Part 2 (Stage Four through Stage Eight)**

**Dacey/Lennon 3**

**#4 The Spirituality of Love**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Erikson lecture Part 2**

**Magic Country Picker**

**What Country Am I?**

**Oct. 5 Creative Thinking and Your Social Milieu**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Skinner**

**Flow: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flow\\_%28psychology%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flow_%28psychology%29)**

#5

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Skinner lecture**

**Discuss Flow - Csikszentmihalyi**

**Torrance model of creativity**

**Jackson and Messick's Model**

**Problem-solving -- scavenger hunt around campus with cell phones**

**12 The Sociohistorical Causes of Significant Bursts of Creativity (such as the American Revolution)**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Bandura**

**Dacey/Lennon Ch. 4**

**Better Method of Classroom Control (BMCC)**

**#6**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Bandura lecture**

**BMCC**

**Dacey/Lennon 4.**

**Informal class evaluation**

**Popsicle stick bridges (Olympics of the Mind)**

**(First paper due - prospective)**

**19 Characteristics and Values of Creative Thinkers**

*Assignments*

**Read or listen to Piaget lecture**

**Dacey/Lennon 5 and 7**

**View authenticity video by Brown, “The Power of Vulnerability.”  
[youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzIF7o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzIF7o)**

**#7**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Piaget lecture**

**Dacey/Lennon 5 and 7**

**Class interview with Tim Lindgren, BC technology specialist, on the most creative applications of the Internet**

**Write a haiku poem**

**26 Alternative Class (#8)**

**Nov. 2 Strategies Creative Thinkers Typically Use**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Frankl lecture**

**Dacey/Conklin strategies paper**

**Dacey theory of CPS**

**#9**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Frankl lecture**

**Dacey/Conklin strategies**

**Dacey theory of CPS**

**Brainstorming on term projects**

**The Meaning of Life at person is.**

**9 The Central Role of Self Control**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Maslow lecture**

**Dacey/Lennon 6**

**Dacey self-control study in the schools**

**The Meaning of Life**

**#10**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Maslow lecture**

**Dacey/Lennon 6**

**Dacey self-control study in the schools**

**Discuss The Meaning of Life**

**"The neutron bomb" game**

**16 Creative Problem Solving**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Jung lecture**

**Dacey/Lennon 9**

**Reflective listening (True Feelings)**

**Brown - Each discussion group reads one quarter of this book.**

**#11**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Jung lecture**

**Dacey/Lennon 9**

**“Speed dating”:** form in groups of two to discuss a specific question, proposed by class. After three minutes, the odd-numbered persons move onto the next even-numbered partner, and continue discussion. Repeat four times

**In your group, decide what you want to teach the rest of the class about your quarter of Brown. Decide who will act as the teacher for your group. Teach your part of the book to the rest of the class.**

**Reflective listening**

**Black magic game**

**Six volunteers to make term project presentations on 11/30?**

**23 Thanksgiving – no class**

**30 The Art of Creativity**

*Assignments:*

**Read or listen to Fromm and Buddhist psychology lectures  
Dacey/Lennon 10 and 11**

**Second paper due – unresolved crisis**

**Five volunteers make term project presentations – see instructions below.**

**#12**

*Class topics for discussion:*

**Dacey/Conklin 7 and 9**

**Dacey/Lennon 10 and 11**

**Discuss: “What does your neighborhood tell you about your values? How do you know?”**

**Dec. 7 Study day**

## **14 Presentations of Remaining Creative Projects**

**15 minutes (sharp!) per person. Turn in all materials used and a one-page description of why it is creative.**

**#13**

**Creativity of presentation itself counts for 20%, content of ideas, 80%. Practice before class!**

**Food?**

**Happy Holidays!**

**Academic Integrity [www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity](http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity)**

**Information for Students with Disabilities [www.bc.edu/libraries/centers/connors](http://www.bc.edu/libraries/centers/connors)**