

# COURSE SYLLABUS

## UNIV 102-096 Freshman Seminar: “Numbers and Ethics” – 1 credit course

**Fall Semester, 2007**, Mondays, 3:50 – 4:40pm in Damen Hall, Room 127

Texts: The following three books are required for this course:

- (1) Avorn, Jerry, M.D., *Powerful Medicines: The Benefits, Risks, and Costs of Prescription Drugs*, Knopf, 2004.
- (2) Crossen, C., *Tainted Truth: The Manipulation of Fact in America*, Touchstone, 1996.
- (3) Jackson, B. & Jamieson, K.H., *unSpun: Finding Facts in a World of Disinformation*, Random House, 2007.

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Office Hours: Mondays 2.30-3.30pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays 11.30am – 12.30pm, and by appointment

Course Web Page: <http://www.math.luc.edu/~tobrien/courses/sme/coursehomepage.html>

## Course Overview and Objectives

The University 102 course is intended to provide Loyola University Chicago new students with an academic experience that exposes them to active and collaborative learning in a supportive environment. This one semester, one credit hour, course will meet weekly for 50 minutes. Additionally students will be provided opportunities to participate in activities outside of scheduled class time which assist in community development, the integration of curricular and co-curricular learning, and an understanding of engaged learning. This course will explore the topic “Numbers and Ethics” which relates to the following value areas of the core curriculum: “Understanding and Promoting Justice” and “Faith in Action”.

Specifically, this Loyola Seminar will:

- Enable students to observe and appreciate the use and misuse of statistical summaries, graphs and methods provided to manipulate findings and basic research in the media (including the Internet), in business, in our legal system, and in biomedicine;
- Help students underscore the ethical issues involved in numerical misrepresentations in society;
- Offer students an example of an Ignatian approach to learning, which values experience, critical reflection and action;
- Expose students to the key values of a Loyola education;
- Provide students a forum for raising and addressing issues associated with the transition to college;
- Demonstrate improved reading, writing and critical thinking skills;
- Enhance first year student engagement with Loyola University Chicago;
- Ensure student success at Loyola University Chicago.

The course is designed as a seminar; therefore, active participation and preparedness on the part of all class members is imperative. Students will be expected to offer opinions substantiated by course readings about the seminar’s topic during class discussions. Additionally, the sharing of one’s experiences of transition to Loyola University Chicago will be critical course content. Openness, respect and willingness to listen will be essential qualities for students to maximize learning possibilities in this course.

## Course Grading

Students are required to read the assigned reading material before class, and a quiz will be given at the start of each class on this reading material. Students are also required to keep a Class Journal and make weekly entries of at least two articles, stories, etc. related to “Numbers and Ethics” along with the student’s brief summary of the relevant ethic issues raised in the article and critical assessment and thoughts related to these ethical issues. Finally, students are required to write three 1-2 page papers during the semester related to the films, “Gattaca”, “Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room”, “The Constant Gardener”, to the presentation of Dr. David Walton on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> September (7pm) related to Dr. Paul Farmer’s “Partners in Health”, or to another approved topic.

## **Grading Scheme**

Quizzes	25 %
Class Journal	25 %
Course Papers	35 %
Participation	15 %

Final course (letter) grades will be awarded according to the following grading scheme:

[92.5 , 100] = A	[90.0 , 92.5] = A-	
[87.5 , 90.0] = B+	[82.5 , 87.5] = B	[80.0 , 82.5] = B-
[77.5 , 80.0] = C+	[72.5 , 77.5] = C	[70.0 , 72.5] = C-
[67.5 , 70.0] = D+	[60.0 , 67.5] = D	[0.0 , 60.0] = F

**Statement on Academic Integrity:** The basic commitment of a university is to search for and to communicate the truth, as it is honestly perceived. The university could not accomplish its purpose in the absence of this demanding standard. To the extent that this standard is respected, a genuine learning community can exist. Students of this university are called upon to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty. From the Loyola University Chicago web site (For the complete policy refer to the web site):  
[http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml)

**Students with Disabilities:** Students who have disabilities which are documented through the Office of Student Life at Loyola University Chicago should notify the instructor. Arrangements for accommodations will be made.

## **Preliminary Semester Schedule (subject to change)**

<b>Class Date (Monday)</b>	<b>Readings for this Class</b>
27 August	Introduction of Class, each other, syllabus, handouts
3 September	No class – Labor Day
10 September	Jackson & Jamieson, Introduction + Chapters 1-3
17 September	Jackson & Jamieson, Chapters 4-6
24 September	Jackson & Jamieson, Chapters 7-8 + Conclusion
1 October	Crossen, Introduction + Chapters 1-2
8 October	No Class – Fall Break
15 October	Crossen, Chapters 3-4
22 October	Crossen, Chapters 5-6
29 October	Crossen, Chapters 7-8
5 November	Avorn, Prologue + Part One Benefits (Chapters 1-2)
12 November	Avorn, Part Two Risks (Chapters 3-11)
19 November	Avorn, Part Three Costs (Chapters 12-15)
26 November	Avorn, Part Four Information (Chapters 16-20)
3 December	Avorn, Part Five Policy (Chapters 21-23)
<b><i>Course Journals must be submitted on 3 December for grading.</i></b>	