Shimer Great Books School
Required and Suggested Texts

HUMANITIES SEQUENCE

SGBH 101: ART AND FICTION

REQUIRED TEXTS/WORKS OF ART
A modern novel
Albers, *The Interaction of Color*
An East Asian novel, e.g. Murasaki, *The Tale of Genji* or Cao Xueqin, *The Story of the Stone*

At least one film
At least one graphic novel
At least three short stories
Auerbach, “Odysseus’ Scar”

Bible: *Genesis*
Homer, *Odyssey*

Ovid, excerpts from *Metamorphoses*
Paintings from Japan and China
Paintings relating to myths from Ovid
Susanne Langer, “Creation”
Taylor, *Learning to Look*

The Qur’an

SUGGESTED TEXTS/WORKS

*Achebe, Things Fall Apart*  
*Adams, Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres*  
*Alpers, Vexations of Art*  
*Brinkman, Gods in Color: Polychromy in the Ancient World*  
*Conrad, Heart of Darkness*  
*Hermitage (film)*  
*Hockney, A History of Pictures or A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China*  
*Hurston, Their Eyes were Watching God*  
*Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice or Persuasion*  
*Liu Xie, The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*  
*Rilke, Letters on Cezanne*  
*Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse or other major work*

SGBH 102: MUSIC AND VERSE

REQUIRED TEXTS/WORKS
Musical pieces from the classical and jazz traditions
One Shakespeare play related to a piece of music
Ralph Ellison, *Living with Music*
Selections of English Poetry from a representative anthology (e.g., Norton)
Sonnets by Shakespeare and other English-language authors
Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*

*The 300 Tang Poems, Griswold et al, I am the Beggar of the World or Basha, Narrow Road to the North*  
*The Qur’an*

SUGGESTED TEXTS/WORKS

Gershwin, *Porgy and Bess*
Levitin, *This Is Your Brain on Music*
Mahabharata
Plato, *Republic*
Tolstoy, What is Art?

SGBH 201: PHILOSOPHY AND THE NATURE OF THOUGHT

REQUIRED TEXTS/WORKS
Aesthetics of photography and film
*Bhagavad Gita*
*Chuang Tzu*
*Confucius, Analects*
*De Beauvoir, The Ethics of Ambiguity*
*Descartes, Meditations*
*Ibn Rushd, The Decisive Treatise*
*Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*
*Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals*
*Plato, Last Days of Socrates and Phaedrus*
*Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes*

SUGGESTED TEXTS/WORKS

*Bellah, The Axial Age and its Consequences*
*Benjamin, On the Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*
*Bordo, Cartesian Masculinization of Thought*
*Heidegger, Origin of the Work of Art*
*Heidegger, What Is Metaphysics*
*La Dolce Vita, 2001, Vertigo, or Melancholia*
*Nietzsche, Birth of Tragedy*
*Nussbaum, Poetic Justice*

SGBH 202: THEOLOGY AND STRUCTURES OF MEANING

REQUIRED TEXTS/WORKS

*Al-Ghazali, Deliverance from Error*  
*Anselm, Why God Became Man*  
*Augustine, Confessions*  
*Book of Daniel*  
*Buber, I and Thou*  
*Cone, God of the Oppressed*  
*Dhammapada and Rahula, What the Buddha Taught or Syedullah, Radical Dharma*  
*Gospel of John*  
*Qur’an and Hadith*  
*Sistine Chapel, Mosques, Cathedrals*

SUGGESTED TEXTS/WORKS

*Baldwin, The Fire Next Time*  
*Bellah, Religion in Human Evolution*  
*Butler, Antigone’s Claim*  
*Gandhi, Autobiography*  
*Henry Adams, Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*  
*Malcolm X, Autobiography*  
*Sophocles, Oedipus in Colonus*

SGBI 101: THE CLASSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF LOGIC AND MATHEMATICS

REQUIRED TEXTS

*Aristotle, The Organon*
*Descartes, Discourse on Method, Rules for the Direction of the Mind and Geometry*
*Euclid, Elements, Books 1, 5, 7, 10*
*Nicomachus of Gerasa, “On Arithmetic”*
*Pascal, “On the Geometrical Mind” and “On Conic Sections”*

SUGGESTED TEXTS

*Plato, Meno*  
*Shiner and Moon, “Bits and Bins”*  
*Stoic logical theory*

SUGGESTED TEXTS

*Erasthenes’ demonstration of earth circumference*  
*Shiner, “On Fallacious Reasoning”*
SGBI 102: THE FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN MATHEMATICS AND LOGIC

REQUIRED TEXTS
Bayes’ Rule
Dedekind, Essays on the Theory of Numbers
Einstein, Relativity
Fisher, Selections on Statistics
Hume, Treatise on Human Nature
Lobachevskii, “Imaginary Geometry”
Mendel, Experiments in Plant Hybridization
Nagel & Newman, Gödel’s Proof
Newton, Principia Mathematica
Pascal, Letters on Probability Theory and Gambling
Shiner and Moon, “A Little Bit of Reasoning about Reasoning and Logic” and “On Paradox”

SUGGESTED TEXTS
Kapoor, Cloudgate (field trip on curved space)

SENIOR CAPSTONE SEQUENCE

INTEGRATIVE STUDIES 451: THE ANCIENT TO EARLY MODERN WORLD

REQUIRED TEXTS
A major study of the origins of monotheism, e.g. Jan Assmann, The Price of Monothemism
A scholarly work on the relationship between Greek politics and thought, e.g. Nicole Loraux, The Divided City, Hadot, What is Ancient Philosophy? or Kuhn, The Copernican Revolution
Aeschylys, Agamemnon and Eumenides
Exodus
Gilgamesh
Homer, The Iliad
Hannibal
Plato, Timaeus, Phaedo, and/or Republic
Sappho, selected poems
Simone Weil, “The Iliad, or The Poem of Force”
Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War

SUGGESTED TEXTS
Aristotle, On the Heavens
Augustine, City of God
Dante, Divine Comedy
de France, Lais
de Pizan, Treasure of the City of Ladies
Douglas, “The Abominations of Leviticus”
Freyd, Moses and Monothemism
Hallaj, “Iblis as Tragic Lover”
Ibn Khaldun,
Ibn Tufayl, Hayy ibn Yaqzan
Selections from Ancient Near Eastern legal documents, e.g. Hammurabi’s Code
Selections from legal codes in Leviticus and Deuteronomy
Sima Guang, Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance
Sima Qian, Records of the Grand Historian
Song of Songs
Stowasser, Women in the Qu’ran, Traditions and Interpretations
The Qur’an, Surah 2
Virgil, The Aeneid

ARIOUATIVE STUDIES 452: THE MODERN WORLD

REQUIRED TEXTS
Arendt, On Revolution or Origins of Totalitarianism
At least one consideration of visual art
At least one novel
At least one significant musical work
At least one work originally published in the 21st century
Goethe, Faust, Part I
James, The Black Jacobins
Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions
Levi, Survival in Auschwitz
One primary text from the Protestant Reformation, e.g. Luther, The Enslaved Will or Calvin’s Institutes
One Shakespeare play
Webber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

SUGGESTED TEXTS
Cesaire, A Tempest
Crowe, Modern Theories of the Universe from Herschel to Hubble
de Castro, The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul
Einstein, “Geometry and Experience”
Federici, Caliban and the Witch
Ginzburg, The Cheese and the Worms
Koyre, From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe
Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions
Wynter, “1492”

NATURAL SCIENCES SEQUENCE

SGBI 101: THE SHAPE OF THE WORLD

REQUIRED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Archimedes’ Principle, Floating bodies
Aristotle, On the Heavens, On the Soul
Day and night sky observation and recording
Galen, On Diseases and Symptoms
Kuhn, The Copernican Revolution
Linberg, The Beginnings of Western Science
Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, Books I-II
Ptolemy, Almagest
Weights and levers; Building a balance
Wheelwright, The Presocratics

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Aristotle, Politics, Physics
Averroes (Ibn Rushd), De substantia orbis, On Aristotle’s De Generatione et Corruptione
Bacon, The Opus Maius
Duhem, To Save the Phenomena
Epicurus, The Epicurus Reader
Hadot, What is Ancient Philosophy?
Hippocratic Writings
Ibn-al-Haythan (Alhazen), The Optics of Ibn al-Haytham
Maimonides, Guide of the Perplexed
Paracelsus, The Hermetic and Alchemical Writings
Pliny, Natural Histories
Wheeler, Listening to Heloise

SGBN 102: WHAT IS MATTER?

REQUIRED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Air and hydraulic pressure
Bacon, New Organon, Book II
Boyle, “Touching the Spring of the Air”
Boyle’s Law
Calcination of iron
Cannizzaro, Sketch of a Course in Chemical Philosophy
Clausius, “On the Nature of the Motion that We Call Heat”
Coin Lab on Cannizzaro’s methods
Curie, 1911 Nobel Lecture
“Dephlogistication” of magnesium
Du Chatelet, Dissertation on the Nature and Propagation of Fire
Examination of Modern Periodic Table
Latent Heat
Lavoisier, “Memoir on the Calcination of Tin,” “Elements of Chemistry”
Mechanical equivalent of heat
Mendeleev, “The Relation Between Properties and Atomic Weights”
Pascal, Scientific Treatises on Fluid Dynamics
Weight of air

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Avogadro, “A Manner of Determining the Relative Masses . . .”
Black, “Lectures on the Elements of Chemistry”
Dalton, “1810 Extract,” “Atomic Principles of Chemistry”
Dulong, “Atomic Weights and Specific Heat”
Electrochemical potentials/Batteries
Electrolysis of water
Faraday, “Decomposition of Tin Chloride”
Priestly, “On Dephlogisticated Air”
Specific heats of different elements
Supercooling
Thompson, “Source of the Heat Which is Excited by Friction”
Volta, “On the Electricity excited by the mere Contact . . .”
Wheelwright, The Presocratics

SGBN 201: WHAT IS MOTION?

REQUIRED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Bohr, “On the Spectrum of Hydrogen”
Collins and Pinch, “The Golem,” What Everyone Should Know About Science
Davison, “Are Electrons Waves?”
Descartes, Optics
Einstein, “Photoelectric Effect”
Electron diffraction
Experiments from Galileo’s Two New Sciences and Newton’s Opticks
Feynman, QED: The Strange Theory of Light and Matter, Character of Physical Law
Franklin, “The One Fluid Theory of Electricity”
Galileo, Dialogues Concerning Two New Sciences
Gamow, Thirty Years that Shook Physics
Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy
Hertz, “Electromagnetic Waves”
Hunt, Pursuing Power and Light
Huygens, “Treatise on Light”
Induction
Mass/charge of electron
Maxwell, “On Action At a Distance,” “On Some Points of Magnetic Philosophy”
Millikan, “A Direct Photoelectric Determination of Planck’s h,” “The Electron”
Motors and electromagnetic induction
Newton, Opticks, Principia Mathematica
Observation of spectral lines
Oersted, “Electromagnetism”
Oersted’s experiment
Photoelectric effect
Planck, Eight Lectures on Theoretical Physics
Reflection, refraction, and diffraction of light
Schrödinger, “Four Lectures on Wave Mechanics,” “Remarks,” or Nobel Lecture
Snell’s Law
Somerville, On The Connexion of the Physical Sciences
Static electric phenomena

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Transmission and properties of Hertz waves
Types and behaviors of waves
Visualizing and mapping magnetic fields
Young, “Interference of Light”

SGBN 202: WHAT IS LIFE?

REQUIRED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Aristotle, On the Soul
Lamarck, Zoological Philosophy
Paley, “Natural Theology”
Darwin, Origin of Species, Descents of Man
Mendel, Experiments in Plant Hybridization
Hardy, “Mendelian Proportions in a Mixed Population”
Schrödinger, What Is Life?
Lorenz, On Aggression
Goodall, Chimps of Gombe
Franklin, “Molecular Configuration in Sodium Thymonucleate”
Contemporary account of evolutionary developmental biology, e.g. Nusslein-Volhard, Coming to Life or Carroll, Endless Forms Most Beautiful
Dyson, Origins of Life
Examination of the ethical issues of developments in biological science, e.g. Suzuki and Knudson, Genetics: The Clash Between the New Genetics and Human Values
Examination of relation of scientific to other forms of inquiry and knowledge, e.g. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, Snow, The Two Cultures, or Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology” taxonomic categorization
Calculations of population genetics/Punnett squares
Observing animal behavior (fish, fowl, human)

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND LABORATORY SESSIONS
Dominance lab
Glick & Kohn (eds.), Charles Darwin On Evolution
Goldschmidt, Darwin’s Dreampond
Gould, Panda’s Thumb
Margulis, Origin of Sex
McCintock, Nobel lecture
Medawar, “An Unsolved Problem in Biology”
Observing and describing variation in nature
Preserved specimens
Spermann, “Embryonic Development and Induction”

SOCIAL SCIENCES SEQUENCE

SGBS 101: MODELS OF SOCIAL THOUGHT

REQUIRED TEXTS
A contemporary sociological study relating to race in America (e.g. Alexander, The New Jim Crow or Moore, The South Side)
DuBois, Souls of Black Folk
Durkheim, Division of Labor, Suicide, or Rules of Sociological Method
Geertz, Interpretation of Cultures or Local Knowledge and one additional anthropological monograph, e.g. Benedict, Patterns of Culture; Conklin, Consuming Grief; Latour, Laboratory Life; Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific; Warnock, Guests of the Sheikh
Marx, selections from 1844 Manuscripts and/or “Wage Labor and Capital,” Grundrisse, or Capital Selections from Hayek and Keynes on economics
Smith, Wealth of Nations
Weber, selected shorter writings

SUGGESTED TEXTS
A contemporary sociological investigation of suicide
Becker, “The Economic Way of Looking at Things”
Bourdieu, Distinction
Douglas, World of Goods
DuBois, The Philadelphia Negro
Galbraith, “The Inevitability of Planning”
Marshall, selections from Principles of Economics
Milgram, Obedience to Authority
Nussbaum, selected writings
Robinson, selected writings
Sen, “Equality of What?”
Smith, Theory of Moral Sentiments
Veblen, Theory of the Leisure Class
Zimbardo, Stanford Prison Experiment: A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment

SGBS 102: THE WESTERN POLITICAL TRADITION

REQUIRED TEXTS
American Founding Documents, including Declaration of Independence; Constitution
Aristotle, Politics
At least two Supreme Court cases
de Tocqueville, On Democracy in America
Douglas, Story of My Life
Hobbes, Leviathan
Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
King, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
Locke, Second Treatise on Civil Government
Machiavelli, Prince
Madison, Hamilton, and Jay, The Federalist Papers
Plato, Republic
Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Human Inequality, Social Contract, and/or Émile*
Schneir, *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings*
Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Women*

**SUGGESTED TEXTS**
Aquinas, selected writings on politics
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
Cooper, *A Voice from the South*
Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” or other speeches on civil rights
Ida Wells, selected articles
Lincoln, selected speeches
Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet”
Mann, writings on public education
Mill, *On the Subjection of Women*
Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*
Other speeches of Sojourner Truth or Martin Luther King
Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*
Stephens, “Cornerstone Speech”
Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience”

**SGBS 201: CRITICAL THEORIES OF SOCIETY AND POLITICS**

**REQUIRED TEXTS**
Arendt, *The Human Condition*
de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*
Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth or Black Skin, White Masks*
Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit and/or Philosophy of Right*
Marx, selections highlighting his relation to Hegel, “The German Ideology,” such as *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (if not used in 101), “Theses on Feuerbach,” and/or “Manifesto of the Communist Party”
Mill, *On Liberty and On the Subjection of Women*

**SUGGESTED TEXTS**
Engels, *Origin of The Family, Private Property and The State*
Fanon, *Algeria Unveiled*
Gandhi, essays on non-violence
Goldman, essays on anarchism and communism
Salih, *A Season of Migration to the North*
Young, “Throwing like a Girl”

**SGBS 202: SOCIAL FORMATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

**REQUIRED TEXTS**
Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction of Reality*
Foucault, *Discipline and Punish or History of Sexuality*
Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*
Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*
Gilgian, *In a Different Voice*
Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*
Piaget, “Moral Feelings and Judgments”
Selections on feminism and methodology, including at least two essays by Haraway, Harding, and Flax and/or selections from Keller, *Feminism and Science*
Texts on moral development by Kohlberg and Chodorow

**SUGGESTED TEXTS**
Huxley, *Brave New World*
Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*
Laing and Esterson, *Sanity, Madness, and the Family*
Le Guin, *Dispossessed*
Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*
Zimbardo, *The Stanford Prison Experiment*