

**IDS 101-19: Living Mathematics:
The Greatest Discoveries of the Last 30 Years
Fall 2008
Course Procedures**

Professor: Josh Laison
Collins 305, x6689, jlaison@willamette.edu

Office Hours:

Monday 10:30-11:30

Wednesday 10:30-11:30, at the Bistro

Thursday 2:30-3:30

Friday 1:30-2:30

or anytime by appointment or by catching me in my office. You can see my schedule and available times at <http://www.willamette.edu/~jlaison>

Class Meetings: Collins 327, 12:50–2:20 Tuesday, Thursday

Texts:

Fermat's Enigma: The Epic Quest to Solve the World's Greatest Mathematical Problem,
Simon Singh

The Poincare Conjecture: In Search of the Shape of the Universe, Donal O'Shea

Symmetry and the Monster: One of the Greatest Quests of Mathematics, Mark Ronan

A Mathematician's Apology, G. H. Hardy

A Pocket Style Manual, 5e, Diana Hacker

Course Web Page: <http://www.willamette.edu/~jlaison/colloquium.html>

Grading:

• **Papers 60%**

You will write three papers during the course. For each paper, you will turn in a first draft and a final draft. Each draft will be worth 10% of your final grade.

• **Class Participation: Written 20%**

For many of the reading assignments, you will be asked to write a page response to help you start thinking about the reading and to engender class discussion. In addition, there will be many in-class activities which will count as part of this component of your grade, including handouts and peer responses to classmates' papers.

• **Class Participation: Oral 20%**

This includes attending class, preparing your thoughts on the reading, and being active and engaged in class discussions.

Course Goals

- Learn to think more critically about what you read and what you learn, ask more questions, and become more curious about the world.
- Become a better writer and editor of your writing.
- Learn some neat mathematics, and learn about the process of creating a new mathematical idea.
- Have fun.

The Writing Center and our Writing Consultant

The Willamette University Writing Center is an excellent resource to help you write and edit your papers. You can sign up for an appointment during their office hours, or drop in to talk to a writing consultant about your paper in progress. Don't feel that this is extra help that you only need in a crisis – everyone benefits from a second opinion on their writing, even professionals. The writing center is on the ground floor of Matthews Hall and on the web at

<http://www.willamette.edu/dept/wcenter>

In addition, Alicia Maggard is the writing consultant specifically paired with our course. She will meet with you 3 or 4 times over the course of the semester (probably once for each assigned paper) to help you with your writing. She will also introduce herself to the class in the beginning of September.

Late Assignments and Missed Classes:

I expect everyone to attend all classes and turn in all assignments on time. Unfortunately, it is inevitable that some people will have crises during the semester that will prevent them from attending class or turning in assignments on time.

If for some reason you are unable to attend class or turn in an assignment, please let me know as soon as possible, preferably *before* the missed class or assignment. The longer you wait to tell me, the less sympathetic I will become. The worst is to never tell me about it at all.

At my discretion, missed classes and late assignments may result in a lower grade in the course. Late drafts of papers are particularly bad, since you will not be able to participate in peer revision of your paper in class.

Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact me to discuss your needs. Additionally, you will need to register with Disability and Learning Services in the Bishop Wellness Center within the first two weeks of class. All such discussions will be confidential.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism can take different forms, but its essence is presenting the words or work of another as your own. When you are quoting from a source you must place that material in quotation marks and correctly cite the source of the quotation. If you are paraphrasing the words of another you must provide the source from which you are paraphrasing.

Plagiarism is a very serious offense and an insult to your professor and your classmates. If you plagiarize, your paper will receive an F and the incident will be reported to the Dean of the College. In addition, you may also fail the course. For more details, consult Willamette University's plagiarism policy in the course catalog or at

<http://www.willamette.edu/cla/catalog/Sect3/aca.html>