



VUE-101: Exploring Values

VUE-101- F02: Exploring Values: The Pursuit of a Good Life Spring 2026

Instructor	Ossama Abdelgawwad		
Office Hours	MW 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Classroom	M/W/F 11:50 AM - 12:40 PM

Course Description

VUE General Course Description: A topics seminar with inquiry-based pedagogy designed by faculty across the university. Students attend to the values embedded in the many and varied fields of the liberal arts. In the academic experiential learning component, students examine their own values, learn about Valpo's values, and take the lead in deciding how these values can be put into action.

Course Credits: 4.00

Section summary description:

This course invites students to explore what it means to live a meaningful life by engaging with diverse ethical frameworks from religious traditions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as philosophical traditions. Through an interdisciplinary and dialogical approach, students will critically examine how different worldviews—religious and non-religious—address the question of what makes a life worth living. The course encourages students to reflect on their values while learning from the wisdom of others, fostering a deep understanding of the shared and unique elements that make a good life worth pursuing.

Course Questions:

I. Who do we answer to?

When making choices about our lives, who or what guides us? Is it society, family, spiritual or ethical principles, or our own inner sense of right and wrong?

II. How does a good life feel?

What emotions, states of being, or experiences signal that life is going well? How do different traditions and perspectives describe what it feels like to live well?

III. What should we hope for?

What aspirations, goals, or ideals guide our actions and give life direction? How do different traditions, cultures, or ethical frameworks describe the hopes that are essential to living a meaningful life?

IV. What should we do when we fail?

How should we respond to mistakes, setbacks, or failures in life? What practices, attitudes, or strategies help us learn, grow, and recover? How do different traditions, cultures, or ethical frameworks understand failure and resilience, and what guidance do they offer for turning failure into meaningful growth?

V. What is the role of suffering in a good life?

How do challenges, pain, and adversity shape our understanding of meaning, growth, and fulfillment? How do diverse traditions and ethical frameworks interpret the value of suffering?

Class time, location, and method

Class Meeting Days, Times, and Locations: MWF 11:50-12:40, MUH LL02

Instructional Method: Lecture and Fieldwork

Estimated Time on Tasks: VUE 101 is a 4-credit class. 3 credits are in the classroom: 150 minutes of class per week, for which you can expect approximately 300 minutes of homework per week. 1 credit is for fieldwork, an academic experiential learning experience completed outside of class.

Textbook(s), Other Readings, and Materials

Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2024). *They say / I say: The moves that matter in academic writing* (6th ed.). W. W. Norton.

Volf, M., Croasmun, M., & McAnnally-Linz, R. (2023). *Life worth living: A guide to what matters most*. Eerdmans

All other materials will be posted on Canvas.

Learning Goals and Objectives

Students' Learning Objectives for “Exploring Values: The Pursuit of a Good Life” align with 3, 4, 5, and 6 University Student Learning Objectives (USLOs) below.

Students will:

1. Analyze and compare ethical frameworks from various faiths and philosophical traditions, with a focus on their perspectives on a meaningful life. (Writing assignment 1 (analytical/descriptive), including drafts, revisions, and pre-reviews & group presentations)
2. Engage in reflective writing and discussions to explore personal values in relation to diverse ethical teachings. (300-500 words weekly reflection writing assignments)
3. Develop critical thinking and ethical reasoning by evaluating moral arguments and applying them to real-world scenarios. (Midterm exam, short answer questions, and scenarios)

4. Demonstrate respect for civic pluralism by engaging with diverse perspectives and contributing to pluralistic communities. (in-class activities, discussions, and Canvas board discussion)
5. Reflect on the personal meaning of a life worth living and integrate course insights into ethical decisions that promote individual and communal well-being. (a reflection question in the final exam, + Writing Assignment 2 (Reflective/descriptive), including drafts, revisions, pee-reviews and in-class presentations)

VUE 101: Exploring Values Students' Learning Objectives:

Students will:

Explore how values inform discourse in a particular field of study and how values inspire service to others.

Engage in respectful dialogue that both supports and challenges one's ideas, though practicing active listening as an act of service.

Explore information to increase awareness of relevant conversations, debates, or controversies surrounding a topic.

Use exploratory writing to develop a critical reading process, build flexibility of thinking, and connect course content to everyday life.

Examine how values and service interconnect through small-group or team-based experiential learning.

University Student Learning Objectives:

All University-wide Student Learning Objectives (USLOs) are listed below. In particular, USLOs 2-6 will be addressed in the Valparaíso University Experience.

Students will:

1. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge as well as the intellectual skills and creative capacities pertinent to their respective fields of study.
2. Solve both conceptual and applied problems by integrating broad-based knowledge, evidence-based reasoning, and informational literacy.
3. Practice experiential, interdisciplinary, and collaborative learning in both academic and co-curricular pursuits.
4. Communicate effectively in oral, written, and digital forms in increasingly complex contexts.
5. Engage in cross-cultural dialogue and experiences with the requisite knowledge to succeed in a diverse, global community.
6. Develop character, integrity, and wisdom as they discern their vocations and prepare to ethically lead and serve in church and society.

Course Principles and Guidelines:

Reading responses, homework, etc.	15%
Group Presentations	10%
First writing assignment, including 5% for the processes	15%
Midterm	10%
VUE fieldwork and reflections	10%
Attendance, participation, engagement	10%
Second Writing assignment, including 5% for the processes	20%
Final exam	10%
TOTAL:	100%

1. Weekly Reading Responses (15%) A formative assessment measuring SLO#2

Students will submit a 250-300-word weekly response to the assigned readings, including reflections on key concepts, questions, and connections to personal experiences or previous class discussions. Homework may also include short tasks, such as watching a video or conducting brief research relevant to the week's content.

2. Group Presentations (10%) A formative assessment measuring SLO#1 and 4

As part of a group, students (3-4) will prepare a 15–20-minute presentation on one of the chapters of the textbook *Life Worth Living*, focusing on a concept or a question of a meaningful life, or a comparative analysis of ideas from different traditions. Groups will be assigned topics and expected to collaborate on researching, organizing, and presenting their findings. A sign-up sheet will be posted on Canvas during the first week of the class.

3. First Writing Assignment (15%) A formative and summative assessment measuring SLO#1

The first writing assignment will require students to write a thesis-driven, descriptive paper (4-5 pages long) analyzing one of the class readings (To be determined).

As part of the final writing assignment, students will submit process work that includes the development of their thesis statement, outline, annotated bibliography, or drafts of sections of their paper.

4. Midterm (10%) A summative assessment measuring SLO#3

The midterm will assess students' understanding of the concepts, readings, and discussions covered in the first half of the course. It will include a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions that require students to apply course materials to hypothetical situations or personal reflections.

5. VUE Fieldwork and Reflections (10%) A formative assessment measuring SLO#3

Students will engage in VUE fieldwork activities that involve community engagement or experiential learning opportunities related to the course. This might include attending VU campus events, volunteering, or observing real-world ethical discussions. After each activity, students will submit a reflection on the experience, connecting it to course themes such as ethical decision-making, cultural diversity, or the search for a meaningful life. Short reflection (200-250 words) per fieldwork activity, submitted via Canvas. Small group presentations will be held at the end of the semester. Details about activities will be posted on Canvas.

6. Participation in Class Discussions (10%) A formative assessment measuring SLO#4

Active participation in class discussions, activities, role-play, etc., is essential for the learning process. Students are expected to engage with peers in both small and large group discussions, asking questions, offering insights, and responding thoughtfully to classmates' contributions. Participation will also include contributions to online forums and group discussions.

7. Second Writing Assignment (20%) A formative and summative assessment measuring SLO#5

The second writing assignment will require students to write a thesis-driven academic essay reflecting on the concept of a meaningful life. This essay should integrate insights from course readings, class discussions, and personal reflection, supported by evidence from at least three course sources. The assignment will include both personal and academic reflections, with a focus on ethical reasoning. A detailed prompt and rubric will be posted on Canvas.

As part of the second writing assignment, students will submit process work that includes the development of their thesis statement, outline, annotated bibliography, or drafts of sections of their final paper.

8. Final Exam (10%) A summative assessment measuring SLO#5

The final exam will test students' knowledge of the entire course, assessing their ability to synthesize and apply key concepts from the readings, lectures, and class discussions. The exam will include an essay and short-answer questions that challenge students to think critically about the ethical implications of a meaningful life in the context of the traditions studied.

Grading Scale:

This grading scale will be used in converting your course average into a final grade:

93-100	= A	73-76	= C
90-92	= A-	70-72	= C-
87-89	= B+	67-69	= D+
83-86	= B	63-66	= D
80-82	= B-	60-62	= D-
77-79	= C+	59 and below	= F

Other VUE Policies:

Expectations for Homework and Class Discussion

According to university policy, students should expect up to double the amount of homework as they spend in the classroom. For VUE, this means students should expect up to 300 minutes of homework per week for a class that meets 150 minutes a week, the equivalent of a 3-credit class. Note that VUE Fieldwork, which gives you a fourth credit for this course, is in addition to class time and homework for class. It is a good idea to set aside specific homework time for every class you are taking this semester and stick to that schedule. This will help you keep on top of your workload and set good habits right away. In addition, being well prepared helps you engage and contribute to creating a vibrant class atmosphere.

15% or more of your grade will reflect your homework and preparation for class, including close reading, annotating, journal entries, Canvas discussion posts, Perusall posts, or other activities as directed by your instructor. Additionally, 10% or more of your grade will reflect your engagement in small and large group activities and discussion of the content and with the people in our class. It is your responsibility to check CANVAS for assignments and your VU email for announcements.

Attendance & Participation Policy

According to the General Catalog 2024-2025, the university attendance policy is as follows:

All students are expected to attend every one of their classes unless their absence has been approved by the instructor concerned or the appropriate dean. Absence from class is primarily a matter between the student and the instructor of the class. It is the student's responsibility to discuss with their instructors the reason for their absence and to learn what makeup work may be required.

VUE Attendance Policy Details

As stated in the university attendance policy, all VUE students are expected to be present for all classes. If you miss the equivalent of one week of class (3 sessions of MWF), a notification will be sent to you and your advisors through the Starfish system that you have reached the maximum number of absences. The attendance policy includes the following:

- **Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory and will be recorded at the start of class. The academic enterprise is based on communication, and learning how to listen and contribute to that conversation takes consistent practice. Thus your attendance and participation in this class are essential! 10% of your grade will reflect your attendance and participation in class discussions.
- **Absences:** All absences will count toward the attendance policy, whether they are for medical or other reasons. Excessive absences (more than one week of class) will have a detrimental effect on your grade and could lead to failing the course. If you exceed the maximum absences, your overall grade will be reduced by 1% for each additional MWF class and 1.5% for each additional TR class missed. If you must be absent, email your instructor prior to the start of the class with a subject line "Absent [date]." Being late three times also constitutes an absence.
- **Exceptions:** An exception to this policy is warranted if you need to miss class for a University-related team/group. In this case, you are required to turn in an official letter noting your anticipated absences. These approved absences must be discussed ahead of time in person, particularly as it relates to deadlines or exams. Athletes, see the policy below. For other extenuating circumstances, let your instructor know so that we can work with you. Accommodations will be extended in cases of Covid isolation.
- **Due dates:** Being absent, whether excused or not, does not change the due dates for homework, writing assignments, or tests, unless circumstances warrant an exception. It is your responsibility to check the syllabus, Canvas, and handouts for assignments and your VU email account for any announcements.
- **Late Assignment Policy:** Late assignments may be submitted up to one week after the due date, but will receive only 50% of the grade, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor or medical accommodations are provided.

Athletes Excused Absences

Student-athletes are excused from class for university-sponsored competitions but are not exempt from completing course work missed during those absences. The manner in which work will be made up is at the discretion of the instructors, and students are responsible for obtaining any class notes or other course material. Faculty will provide options for student-athletes to make up missed work due to approved excused absences. Student-athletes may not be penalized solely for missed class time due to excused absences.

Classroom Demeanor

It is important to maintain an atmosphere in which every voice is heard and respected. Our classroom will be device-free unless you are specifically instructed otherwise. We need to attend to classroom discussions and practice good listening without distractions. All devices must be turned off and completely out of sight when class begins. Students should not normally leave the classroom during the instructional period. Please plan accordingly.

VUE Writing Policy

VUE Writing Policy for Major Assignments:

1. VUE Writing Process Policy

All successful writers use a process of writing, review, and revising! We are so confident that the process will improve your writing that we give you credit for pre-writing activities, multiple drafts, and participation in peer review. All VUE Major Assignments (designated with MA) must undergo the required process. **Essays will be eligible for a grade only after all drafts and preliminary steps, including peer review, have been completed.**

2. Required deliverables

- Three drafts. The second draft must demonstrate revision, which is understood as meaningful changes beyond corrections. The third (final) version must also demonstrate revision beyond corrections.
- Evidence of participation in at least one peer review. You may end up participating in more than one and are also encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to consult with a peer at the Writing Center.

3. Honor Code information

See Honor Code information in this syllabus. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification if you are unsure about what does or does not constitute an Honor Code violation for each assignment.

4. Format requirements

Page length required by the prompt includes the written essay only (i.e., not works cited, references, or notes). Use MLA or APA style formatting. In general, use 12 pt. Calibri font; double-space with 1-inch margins all around and insert a header with the student's last name and page numbers. First-page information starting on the top left should include name, professor's name, course name (including section number), and date (updated for each draft). Expected elements for written essays typically include:

- Title that sets up the topic or thesis
- Thesis claim that is an arguable, narrow claim that drives purpose and organization
- Rhetorical context and works cited/references for any sources used

5. Using the Writing Center

In addition to the required drafts, you are highly encouraged to schedule appointments with the [Writing Center](#) at any stage of the writing process, from idea generation to final edits.

6. Assessment disclaimer

Submitted writing assignments may be used confidentially for assessment of the University Writing Program. Any questions can be sent to the VUE Director, Lisa Jennings, at vue@valpo.edu.

VUE Fieldwork

VUE Fieldwork Details for This Section

In addition to attending the Keynote event and three required VUE events, students in this section will participate in a service project that encourages reflection on the ethical, moral, and existential dimensions of a good life. Ideally, service projects will connect to issues of well-being, health, or community care—such as assisting the elderly, supporting families facing illness, or engaging with local wellness initiatives. However, broader service activities that foster meaningful engagement with others are also welcome.

Service opportunities should be connected to two central themes of the course:

1. **The Role of Beliefs and Values:** How personal, cultural, or religious beliefs influence our actions and relationships within the community.
2. **Living a Life Worth Pursuing:** How acts of service reflect the values, responsibilities, and aspirations that define human flourishing.

Course Schedule:

The instructor reserves the right to add or drop readings and assignments to facilitate the learning process. Note: There are some reflection questions; they are meant to help you think about the reading, but are not an assignment. For assignments, check the Canvas.

We will cover five units:

- I. Who do we answer to?
- II. How does a good life feel?
- III. What should we hope for?
- IV. What should we do when we fail?
- V. What is the role of suffering in a good life?

Week	Day	Date	Topics and Reading	Assignments
1	W	1/14/2026	First day of class: overview, topics, Canvas, Keynote, Jan 19	Read the Syllabus
	F	1/16/2026	Sharing your Story	In-Class Activity
2	M	1/19/2026	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday - No Class Attend the Keynote Event in the Chapel and breakout sections in the Harre Union	
	W	1/21/2026	Valpo Vision and Mission: Reading: The mission statement	
	F	1/23/2026	Campus Tour: (museum, writing center, chapel, career center, etc.)	

3	M	1/26/2026	What are values? Reading: "Attitudes, Beliefs and Values" by Allison Hahn.	In-class activity
	W	1/28/2026	How to enter a conversation? Reading: They Say I Say [TS/S] Introduction	Introducing WA1
	F	1/30/2026	"Starting with what others are saying" Reading: TS/S chapter 1	Write three takeaways from the chapter.
Unit 1. Who do we answer to?				
4	M	2/2/2026	Learning Objectives from LWL Reading: Volf, Croasmun, McAnnally-Linz, <i>Life Worth Living: A Guide to What Matters Most</i> , [LWL] Introduction	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	W	2/4/2026	"What is Worth Wanting?" Reading: LWL Ch. 1	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	F	2/6/2026	"Where Are We Starting From?" Reading: LWL, Ch. 2	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.

5	M	2/9/2026	Why empathy? Reading: Peter Singer, "Saving a Child"	Reflection: Are good deeds selfish?
	W	2/11/2026	"The Parable of the Good Samaritan" Reading: Luke 10:25-37	In-class activity
	F	2/13/2026	"The Human Story" Asad Tarsin, <i>Being Muslim: A Practical Guide</i> (excerpt)	
6	M	2/16/2026	"Who Do We Answer to?" Reading: LWL, Ch. 3	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	W	2/18/2026	"The Art of Summarizing" and "The Art of Quoting" Reading: TS/S, chapters 2 and 3	Write three takeaways from each chapter
	F	2/20/2026	Information Literacy Session	Zero draft/paper outline is due
Unit 2: How does a good life feel?				
7	M	2/23/2026	"How Does a Good Life Feel?" Reading: LWL, Ch. 4	
	W	2/25/2026	Wisdom and Knowledge Reading: <i>Dhammacakkasutta (The Wheel of the Law)</i> , excerpts.	
	F	2/27/2026	"Utilitarianism" Reading: John Stuart Mill, "On Liberty and Other Essays," excerpts. Excerpts from the Bible.	Close reading activity. First Draft is due
8	M	3/2/2026	Peer-review in-class workshop	Bring two copies of your draft to class.
	W	3/4/2026	Catch-up day: Review Session, Midterm Study Guide	
	F	3/6/2026	Midterm	
	M	3/9/2026	Spring Break – No Classes	
	W	3/11/2026		
	F	3/6/2026		

	M	3/9/2026		
	W	3/11/2026		
	F	3/13/2026		
9	M	3/16/2026		
	W	3/18/2026		
	F	3/20/2026		
Unit 3: What should we hope for?				
10	M	3/23/2026	“What Should We Hope For?” Reading: <i>LWL</i> , Ch. 5.	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	W	3/25/2026	“How Should We Live?” Reading: <i>LWL</i> , Ch. 6	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	F	3/27/2026	The Aspects of Good Life Reading: <i>LWL</i> , Ch. 7	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
11	M	3/30/2026	“The Big Picture” Reading: <i>LWL</i> , Ch. 8	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked

				you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	W	4/1/2026	"Liberation" Reading: Karl Marx, <i>German Ideology</i> , p. 106, 129	Introduction to Writing Assignment 2 (Final Project)
	F	4/3/2026	Good Friday – No Classes	
12	M	4/6/2026	"A Life that matters" Reading: Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks, "Letters to the Next Generation: Reflections on Jewish Life," excerpts.	
Unit 4: What should we do when we fail?				
	W	4/8/2026	"When we botch it." Reading: LWL, Ch. 9	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	F	4/10/2026	Repentance: Reading: Asad Tarsin, "Being Muslim: A Practical Guide," excerpts. & Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Repentance 7	
13	M	4/13/2026	Abraham Tested: Reading: Genesis 22:1-19	Paper draft one is due
	W	4/15/2026	Confession: Reading: Pema Chödrön, "Confessing evil actions," an excerpt from <i>Start Where You Are: A Guide to Compassionate Living</i>	
	F	4/17/2026	We are all humans Reading: Friedrich Nietzsche, excerpts	
14	M	4/20/2026	Peer Review Workshop	In-class activity
Unit 5: What is the role of suffering in a good life?				

	W	4/22/2026	Pain and Suffering: Reading: Isaiah 30: 19-26. Romans 5:1-6. Qur'an 2: 155-157.	In-Class activity "Reasoning Together"
	F	4/24/2026	A Personal Story of Being Lost and Found Reading: Angela Williams Gorrell, <i>The Gravity of Joy: A Story of Being Lost and Found</i> , Ch. 7	Write a personal reflection on pain and suffering.
15	M	4/27/2026	"When Life Hurts?" Reading: <i>LWL</i> , Ch. 10.	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	W	4/29/2026	"No Fixing it" Reading: <i>LWL</i> , Ch. 11.	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.
	F	5/1/2026	"When it Ends" Reading: <i>LWL</i> , Ch. 12	Free reflection on the reading: Identify a quote that provoked you (good, challenging, etc.) Ask an open-ended question for curiosity and discussion.

16	M	5/4/2026	Class Presentation	Final project is due.
	W	5/6/2026	Class Presentation	
	F	5/8/2026	Class Wrap-up	In-Class Activity
12	T	5/12/2026	Final Examinations will be held in class, Tuesday, May 12, 10:30 am-12:30 pm	

Honor Code Statement



VALPO

"I have neither given or received, nor have I tolerated others' use of unauthorized aid."

This statement is written on all homework, quizzes, and exams at Valparaiso University. Every student must write out the Honor Code in full and sign it for all work submitted for academic credit. The Honor Code expresses the promise of the student not to cheat through either action or inaction. The use of these words expresses the faith of the faculty in the student body.

<https://www.valpo.edu/honor-council/>

Honor Code policy:

All participants in VUE will uphold the Valparaiso University Honor Code. The basic Honor Code guidelines for this VUE class are as follows:

- Students will work entirely on their own when taking exams or quizzes. During exams or quizzes, no phones are allowed to be out for any reason unless otherwise specified.
- Students' writing for every assignment will be entirely their own. Collaborative brainstorming on ideas, concepts, examples, evidence, and the like is encouraged, but all writing must be the student's own writing.
- All assignments must constitute your original academic work. Papers submitted for academic credit in another class (including high school) will not

be accepted. Similarly, VUE papers cannot be submitted for academic credit in non-VUE classes.

- Students are required to write out or type the Honor Code on all assignments and tests and sign it with their signature.
- Students are required to clarify Honor Code parameters for all assignments if unsure.

Authorized aid for this VUE class is defined as the following: your own personal knowledge on all exams and your own writing on all written work. In other words, you are to always do your own work. Copying any text verbatim from a book or article, except for cited quotations, constitutes plagiarism and is a violation of the Honor Code. Similarly, copying and pasting text from websites into your papers or presentations, except for cited quotations, constitutes plagiarism and is a violation of the Honor Code. You must be careful to cite properly any sources you use for every writing or presentation assignment. Copying answers, in whole or in part, from a classmate's test or using unauthorized notes, a cell phone, or other wireless device during an exam is also a violation of the Honor Code.

In the broadest sense, plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's writing or ideas as your own. With this in mind, plagiarism now includes presenting "AI" or computer-generated text as your own work. Writing is more than a matter of the final product—a "piece" of writing. Writing is a process of discovery, creation, analysis, and synthesis—that empowers us to think clearly and creatively. As it advances, AI will likely be part of that process, but it must not replace the work we do. For now, use of AI or other generative software when not **explicitly** allowed as part of the assignment, or at any time without citation, will be considered a violation of the Honor Code.

Similarly, copying and pasting text from websites into your papers or presentations, except for cited quotations, constitutes plagiarism and is a violation of the Honor Code. This means you should pay careful attention to each writing or presentation assignment that you cite properly any sources you use. Copying answers, in whole or in part, from a classmate's test or using unauthorized notes, a cell phone, or other wireless device during an exam is also a violation of the Honor Code.

This does not mean, however, that you may not have help in editing and revising your written work. In addition to meeting with your instructor, you are authorized and encouraged to take your writing assignments to the Writing Center. You may follow any of the suggestions you receive at the Writing Center. You may also allow fellow classmates to review your writing and offer suggestions on ways to improve it. Keep in mind at all times that the actual writing is to remain your own.

Because ideas and the ways that we express them are at the heart of the academic endeavor, plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity, such as using unauthorized aid on exams (including AI), are very serious offenses and will be treated as such.

Notifications of class cancellations will be made through Canvas with as much advance notice as possible. It will be both posted on Canvas and sent to your Valpo email address. If you don't check your Valpo email account regularly or have it set up to be forwarded to your preferred email account, you may not get the message. Please check Canvas and your Valpo email (or the email address it forwards to) before coming to class.

Academic Calendar and Final Exam Schedule

Final Exams are required and must be given in their assigned time slot unless an exception has been provided by the Dean's office. Visit the Registrar's website for the latest information:

<https://www.valpo.edu/registrar/calendar/>

Final Exam for this course: Monday, 12/9, 10:30 am-12:30 pm in our classroom.

Emergencies

VU's Emergency Notification System (ENS) uses multiple forms of communication, including e-mail, building alarms, outdoor sirens, message boards, computer alerts, Twitter, and public address messaging. Please review the specific procedures for this class found in Blackboard. Remember: "Siren inside, GO outside; Siren outside, GO inside." To evacuate, gather your personal belongings quickly and proceed to the nearest exit. Do not use the elevator. To shelter in place, move away from the windows and stay low to the ground; lock or barricade the door if there is a threat of violence.

Access and Accommodations Statement

As a student-centered community, Valparaiso University seeks to ensure all students receive the support they deserve to attain their education goals. As such, the institution is responsive to the needs of students who have disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students with documented disabilities (visible or invisible) who believe their diagnoses will create barriers to course success are encouraged to reach out to the Access and Accommodations Resource Center (AARC) to determine eligibility for reasonable accommodations.

To begin the process of establishing accommodations please contact AARC staff at aarc@valpo.edu or 219-464-5206.

Academic Support Services

To get help in this course, the best place to start is to work with your instructor during office hours and ask your professor if there are any Help Sessions or department-level tutoring offered for this course. The next step is to use the Academic Success Center (ASC) online directory (valpo.edu/academicsuccess) or contact the ASC (academic.success@valpo.edu) to help point you in the right direction for academic support resources for this course. Valpo's learning centers (Writing Center, Language

Resource Center, [Hesse Learning Resource & Assessment Center], and Academic Success Center) offer a variety of programs and services that provide group and individual learning assistance for many subject areas.

Student Success Coach

Melissa Healy serves as a Student Success Coach on campus, offering academic support to students while also facilitating connections to various campus resources. Her office is located in the Christopher Center Library on the second floor room 250 across from the Circulation Desk. She can be reached at ext. 5929 or melissa.healy@valpo.edu. Students can also click on this link [appointment](#) to set up a time to meet.

Library Research and Assignment Support Services

The librarian best able to help you navigate information resources for independent research or additional reading is listed in the library research guide for our department. Click the link to Library Guides within the Canvas table of contents or click the link below. The librarian specifically assigned to first-year students is Teresa Augustine, who can be reached at teresa.augustine@valpo.edu.

[ALL GUIDES Alphabetically - Research Guides at Valparaiso University \(valpo.edu\)](#)

Judith L. Beumer Writing Center

The Writing Center is located on the lower level of the Christopher Center. It is free for undergraduate and graduate students. The Writing Center offers individual peer consultations and workshops on writing to support your growth as a writer. Make an appointment at any time by going to <http://valpo.mywconline.com/>. The sessions provide strategies and guidance on writing assignments from any discipline, at any stage in the writing process, and for writers at all skill levels. Their goal is for you to become a credible, more confident writer who is able to make the best choices in any writing situation. Additional information is available at www.valpo.edu/writingcenter/.

University Counseling Center

The University Counseling Center is located on the Northwest side of Alumni Hall. This is a wonderful resource that is available to all VU students. Students may use the counseling center to enhance their current functioning or wellbeing as well as receive help with any issues they are facing. Individual counseling is available free of charge for full-time undergraduate or graduate students. Intake appointments can be arranged in person in the Counseling Center in Alumni Hall or by calling 219-464-5002. See the website for more information:

<https://www.valpo.edu/student-life/counseling-center/>.

Diversity and Inclusion

Valparaiso University is a welcoming community, grounded in the Lutheran tradition, built on values of mutual respect, positive regard, freedom, and reliant on grace. We strive to boldly include all individuals and groups who contribute to the life of our campus in a mutually beneficial way. Difference is a strength and reason for celebration, and we affirm that we are most inclusive when we bring groups together to make decisions in collaborative, equitable ways. Our values do not support language or behavior that demeans members of our campus based on age, appearance, ethnicity, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, biological sex, disabilities (visible and invisible), ideological/political positions, intellectual perspective, socio-economic status, immigration status, veteran status, and national or regional origin. Actions and behaviors based on positions or perspectives that inherently marginalize, oppress, or deny full dignity to all are not tolerated. As such, we will consistently and vigilantly assess our academic and co- curricular offerings and our admissions, hiring, and promotion policies in reflection of these values.

Title IX Statement

Valparaiso University strives to provide an environment free of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking). If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, we encourage you to report the incident. If you report the incident to a University faculty member or instructor, she or he **must notify** the University's Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. Disclosures to University faculty or instructors of sexual misconduct incidents are **not confidential** under Title IX. **Confidential** support services available on campus include: Sexual Assault Awareness & Facilitative Education Office "SAAFE" (219-464-6789), Counseling Center (219-464-5002), University Pastors (219-464-5093), and Student Health Center (219-464-5060). For more information, visit <https://www.valpo.edu/titleix/>.

Bias and Incident Reporting

A bias incident is any act that appears and/or is perceived by the targeted person(s) to be motivated by animus toward one or more of their identities (i.e., race, religion, nationality, sex, disability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation).

You can submit a bias incident report at valpo.edu/bias, by calling the Valparaiso University Police Department (VUPD) at 219.464.5430, or by requesting an in-person report be submitted by speaking directly to any Valparaiso University faculty or staff member.

If you are concerned about the immediate health and safety of yourself or someone else, call 911 or the Valparaiso University Police Department (VUPD) at 219.464.5430.