Honor Read Ignorance
IDH 2930   Section 14H8
Class Periods: Tuesday, period 7, 1:55 pm – 2:45 pm
Location: LIT 0117
Academic Term: Spring 2017

Instructor:
Distinguished Professor Panagote (Panos) M. Pardalos, http://www.ise.ufl.edu/pardalos/
Email Address: pardalos@ufl.edu
Office Phone Number: 352-392-1464
Office Hours: By appointment, WEIL 401

Teaching Assistants:
None

Course Description
Thousands of year ago, Socrates (469-399 BCE), discussed the importance of ignorance (paradoxically known as Socratic ignorance or Socratic wisdom). It is captured by the well-known statement by Socrates: "I know only one thing: that I know nothing" (in Greek: "ἓν οἶδα ὅτι οὐδὲν οἶδα").

In "Ignorance,"   Stuart Firestein gets to the heart of science as it is really practiced and suggests that we should value what we don't know -- or "high-quality ignorance" -- just as much as what we know. The author (a) Argues that ignorance, not knowledge, is what drives science, (b) Provides a fascinating inside-view of the way every-day science is actually done, and (c) Features intriguing case histories of how individual scientists use ignorance to direct their research.

From the book's review in Nature we read that: "It has been estimated that, from the beginning of civilization - 5,000 years ago or more - until 2003, humanity created a total of five exabytes (billion gigabytes) of information. From 2003 to 2010, we created this amount every two days. By 2013, we will be doing so every ten minutes, exceeding within hours all the information currently contained in all the books ever written.

So it isn't that we need more knowledge; it is that we need to distinguish between what we know and what we don't know, through what Firestein calls "controlled neglect." Researchers must selectively ignore vast quantities of facts and data that block creative solutions, and focus on a narrow range of possibilities."

Course Pre-Requisites / Co-Requisites
None

Materials and Supply Fees
No fees.

Required Textbooks and Software
Textbook: Ignorance: How it drives science by Stuart Firestein, Oxford University Press (2012). ISBN: 9780199828074.

Attendance Policy, Class Expectations, and Make-Up Policy
Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

Grading Method and Policy
Students will read the book "Ignorance" and each week will engage in discussions to provoke questions on the subject.
Each student in the class will give a short presentation regarding a related case study. Students will be evaluated by class participation and their presentation.

Students Requiring Accommodations
Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation
Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.

University Honesty Policy
UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use
All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy
There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see:
http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html

Campus Resources:

<u>Health and Wellness</u>

U Matter, We Care:
If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)
Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or http://www.police.ufl.edu/.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. https://www.crc.ufl.edu/.

Library Support, http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/.

Student Complaints Campus: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf.

On-Line Students Complaints: http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process.

Teaching Improvement
We are interested in being the best instructors possible. In particular, we would like to know of the problems you face during the semester as soon as they occur. It is a waste for us to learn at the end of the semester that we were not speaking sufficiently loud to be heard, that our handwriting was not readable or that nobody understood the pictures that were drawn on the board. We want you to feel free to make suggestions to improve the content of the class, its exposition and our instructing skills. You can address these suggestions directly to us (in a polite manner) or anonymously by leaving comments in the instructor mailbox. We will consider carefully all these suggestions and if necessary, we will address them in class.

Feedback
If you foresee any problem with adhering to the guidelines set in this syllabus, please discuss them with the instructor as soon as possible. The sooner problems are discussed, the more likely it is that they can be solved.