

Proposal for

Walker Percy National Curriculum Project

Percy-focused and Internet-based Curricula for Literature Courses

The Walker Percy Project

Providing access, opportunity, and collaboration for students, scholars, and general readers of Percy...

OVERVIEW

The Walker Percy Project will develop and implement four online interactive “teaching guides” for use by high school and university-level educators by building on the rich content resources and innovative technologies currently available in the Walker Percy Project web site.

A national team of educators, scholars, content specialists, and technology experts will work together under the guidance of the Percy Project staff to produce the four curricula of the Curriculum Project. The team will use the Percy Project’s extensive online educational resources, as well as procure and develop multimedia content for such learning tools as an Interactive Slide Show and access to unpublished audio and video materials.

Existing Percy Project resources include biographical and critical essays, posting and discussion forums; Percy interviews, personal remembrances, and secondary bibliographies; and video footage, photographs, and book-ordering services.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

Specifically, the Curriculum Project team of collaborators will develop and implement the following Internet-based educational materials for educators and their students:

1. **Secondary Level--** The team will develop “reader-response” exercises for Walker Percy’s first two novels, *The Moviegoer* and *The Last Gentleman*, including discussion questions, journal topics, self-grading quizzes, and essay questions.
2. **Freshman Composition--** The team will develop a “Walker Percy as Writer” unit, drawing from his biography, essays, and writings to emphasize the key elements of compositional writing and analysis.
3. **Lower-level Undergraduate--** The team will use Percy’s novels *Lancelot* and *The Second Coming* as the primary text for developing exercises that highlight general literary explication as well as formalistic and historical analysis methods.
4. **Upper-level Undergraduate--** The team will develop exercises in cultural analysis and advanced critical reading methods with a focus on the relationship between literature and technology. The texts they will use include Percy’s *Love in the Ruins* and its sequel *Thanatos Syndrome*, as well as several of his non-fiction essays and his 1989 NEH Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities.

In addition to generating these materials, the staff and collaborators will identify specific communication and administrative software tools useful for Internet-based delivery of the teaching materials and assignments.

CUSTOMIZABLE TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS

As supplement to its comprehensive content resources, The Walker Percy Project will develop numerous customizable, online discussion tools as a part of the Curriculum Project in order to provide the literary and writing classes with an extended range of options for literary engagement. Each will enhance the ability of students and teachers to hold group collaboration activities both in and outside of the physical classroom using entirely virtual mechanisms.

Example class collaboration tools that the Project will offer include:

- Text-based chat rooms
- "Threaded" posting forums
- Collaborative annotation tools
- Video-based presentations

In addition to student collaboration tools, this project will develop a number of online classroom administration and management tools useful for instructors. The administrative tools will allow the scheduling of joint projects between different classes at various institutions. Example administration tools that the Project plans to offer include:

- Online student roster and profile
- Appointment scheduler
- Activity reports

OUTCOMES

The National Curriculum Project will provide educators with the opportunity to improve their Internet skills while affording them opportunities to establish professional relationships with other educators who teach Percy's work. The Internet skills that educators gain and fine-tune through participation in the curriculum project will be essential to teaching in the 21st century classroom.

Appropriately, students who participate in the Curriculum Project will be exposed to different levels of literary, analytical, and writing composition experience according to their grade level:

- Secondary education students will learn genre characteristics, story elements, and the thematic examination of novels, as well as an introduction to Walker Percy's life and work as a creative artist.
- Freshman composition students will learn free-writing techniques, compositional elements, and revisionary procedures to foster their ability to generate well-structured essays and provide them with the means to understand sophisticated style elements in a seasoned writer's work.
- Critical reading strategies will be taught to lower-level undergraduates so as to foster introductory literary analysis and explication skills.
- Learning outcomes for upper-level undergraduate students include an ability to apply critical theory to their reading of literature, a heightened understanding of the role of literature in society, and a comparative understanding of science and literature as intellectual modes of understanding.

Each student who participates in the Curriculum Project will improve their "Internet literacy skills"—a competency that will be critical to success in the technologically-based workforce of the future.

The Walker Percy Educational Project
a 501(c)3 non-profit organization
<https://www.ibiblio.org/wpercy>

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