

Brandon Carter is from the tiny town of Fulton, KY, also known as the “Banana Capitol of the World.” He graduated from Fulton Independent High School in 2012. He is currently majoring in Photojournalism with a planned double minor in Business Marketing and Political Science. He plans to study abroad at Harlaxton College in England next fall. He is a huge music fan, and his tastes range from hip-hop to indie rock. Brandon’s ultimate goal is to become a staff photographer for TIME Magazine or The New York Times.

Jamie Doctrow is from Louisville, KY, where she graduated from duPont Manual High School in 2012. She is double majoring in psychology and biology, with a pre-med concentration. She enjoys hanging out with friends, reading, shopping, and volunteering. She plans to study abroad fall semester of next year in Botswana in a public health program. She hopes to attend medical school after she graduates from WKU and dreams of becoming a pediatric oncologist or surgeon.

Kristina Burton is from Russell Springs, Kentucky and she graduated from Russell County High School in 2012. She is majoring in news-editorial journalism and minoring in psychology. In her free time she likes to watch movies, listen to music, act in community theater, and read biographies of her favorite actors, musicians, and other inspirations. Her dream is to be the editor of a music publication after graduating college, and she hopes to move to Nashville to pursue this dream.

How is this class different from high school or other classes you might be taking?

Brandon: The biggest difference between this class and my high school classes has been the abstract nature of the course. Most high school classes are cut and dry – you read, you take notes, you spit back facts on a generic test for a grade, and forget the material two weeks later. With Citizen and Self, you’re forced to think about every little thing – from the course readings to the lecture to the report. Critical thinking skills are a MUST in this class, while they are rarely needed in high school.

Jamie: I agree with Brandon. The biggest difference is the need for critical thinking. There are no tests and you won’t be asked to memorize anything. You will, however, be required to make decisions about what you believe and you will be required to hold yourself accountable. Unlike previous classes, you can’t skirt by. You must put in maximum effort if you want to succeed.

How would you describe Citizen and Self (HON251) to someone who is not yet ready to read the (somewhat long) syllabus?

Kristina: Citizen & Self is different from any other class you’ve taken. It involves participation and working in teams to research a topic that affects the nation and city of Bowling Green. You will also find possible solutions for improving or somehow changing the state of the issue. Throughout the semester, you’ll record your team’s info and write a collective report about it, divided into several parts. It may seem overwhelming at first, but as you get more involved with it, it all starts to flow much easier.

Brandon: Three words: lots of work! On a more serious note, Honors Citizen and Self is probably best described

as a class unlike any other. You'll be working in small groups on a "State of the City" report on an issue facing Bowling Green. You'll be reading various articles and passages on topics ranging from "wicked problems" to morality. You will discuss these readings in addition to writing about them. But wait, there's more! You'll also be in a large class setting with lectures on these readings, the common themes in them, and how they connect to the class. Prepare to spend lots of time outside of class on your work, prepare to be stressed out, but most importantly, prepare to learn a lot about the world and what you can do to improve it.

What have you learned in the course so far – both about the world and also about yourself?

Kristina: So far I have learned quite a bit about the world and myself. I've determined that the world has far more problems than I had ever realized prior to this class. The trouble is, so many of these problems are "wicked" which makes them extremely difficult to solve. Despite this, I have learned that it is possible for me to make a difference through my actions, service, research, etc. It just takes a small effort to generate an effect or change within something. Solutions to global problems ARE possible if enough people choose to get involved!

Jamie: Overall, the class has raised my awareness about the large number of issues our nation faces and how we are so heavily impacted by issues in other countries. It's overwhelming and a little scary, but it's made me realize how important it is to keep up with current events. As far as learning about myself, this class has just made me realize that my actions do contribute to the welfare of society and has encouraged me to keep volunteering, even if it doesn't always feel like I'm making a difference.

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Beth says:

October 8, 2012 at 10:35 am

What brilliant students, eh?

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