

## **THE FIRST YEAR PROGRAM: Embracing Your Global Future Fall 2008**

### **GETTING READY FOR YOUR ORIENTATION SESSION “THE COMMON READING” ACTIVITY**

One of the activities planned during Orientation week is designed to help you “move into the classroom.” On Friday 29 August, some of the faculty will speak briefly about different aspects of “globalization” which is tied into our orientation theme – and institutional framework. Then you will join your specific First Year Seminar group to discuss the novel and film we would like you to read and watch this summer.

We want to give all new students the opportunity to participate in a common reading activity where the exchange of ideas and opinions will reflect your future classroom experiences. By listening, participating and learning from others, you will continue to develop important life-long skills which including group work, understanding cultural differences and appropriate self-expression.

We have chosen the 2003 novel **THE KITE RUNNER** by the Afghani writer, Khaled Hosseini, for the common reading activity. Even if you will have already read this novel, read it again to be prepared for the discussion! We also ask that you also watch the film. The film was released in late December and is now easily available on DVD.

#### **READING and Film VIEWING:**

THE KITE RUNNER by Khaled Hosseini (novel easily available)  
THE KITE RUNNER film (recently released as a DVD)

Hosseini tells a great story that draws the reader in, but the novel also has certain themes many of us can relate to: parent/child relationships, living in and adjusting to a new culture, trying to keep loyal to our roots while we explore new routes and directions for the future...

Above all, read and enjoy the novel. You will have an opportunity to discuss your reactions to the film adaptation in your seminar meetings. After the orientation session, there will also be an opportunity to write something about the story and film.

#### **FURTHER READING related to Globalization:**

For those of you who may want to explore the ideas related to globalization, below are some points that may help to give you a head start with your studies at Richmond.

*Globalization* has been defined as “the worldwide diffusion of practices, expansion of relations across continents, organization of social life on a global scale, and growth of a shared global consciousness.” (Ritzer/Lechner) It affects us all economically, politically, culturally, socially –and will continue to shape our lives in the future. What jobs you have, where you live, the people you mix with and the activities you engage in are all affected by globalization.

Globalization is one of those terms, however overused, that all students will study at Richmond, no matter what their major. The lives of 21<sup>st</sup> century humanity are impacted by the influence of globalization on religion, sport, pop music, the environment and many other aspects. At Richmond you’ll be studying these relationships in different ways:

- **International Relations and Politics** students will focus on issues relating to international governance, democracy and the state.
- Globalization is of great interest to those in **Business and Economics**, especially with the emergence of new local markets.
- The use of **technology**, including the Internet and the emergence of the global digital divide are issues that affect us all.
- For **Communications, Art and Psychology** students, the global media is a key player in shaping our lives and the ways we communicate with others.

A good article that explores the idea of globalization is “*Jihad vs. McWorld*” by Benjamin Barber:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199203/barber>

Although this well known article first appeared in 1992 in *The Atlantic* magazine, it’s still a good introduction to some of the debates within the area of globalization studies – and it is still relevant today despite some of the historical references. Although parts of this article may be difficult for some of you, try to get as much from it as you can.

**THE FACULTY AND STAFF AT RICHMOND ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING YOU IN AUGUST. ENJOY THE REST OF YOUR SUMMER...**