

Michael Metzler



“Begin at once to live.” - Seneca

“The unexamined life is not worth living.” - Socrates

Dear Senior Seminar Students:

It is time to begin to live. And it is time to examine this life we’ve come to “know”. Before we can do that, however, we must consider who we are based on where we’ve been. We are seasoned veterans at this “formal schooling” thing. So, why have we spent more than a decade of our lives dedicated to this end? Or is it a means to an end? If so, what is that end? What is our pursuit, and have we prepared ourselves for it? What is it we’ve been seeking? Knowledge? Why? Maybe knowledge is a means to some end. Maybe we have but a tenuous grasp on this thing called knowledge. Maybe it’s impossible for us to truly know anything. Our friend Socrates said, “I neither know, nor think that I know.” So, why continue the pursuit? What’s the point and who cares anyway?

I was about to apologize here for all of these questions, but I won’t. There is no way to approach this course without encountering a barrage of questions. In fact, this course will be more about questions than answers, and if it is firm answers you seek, you may wish to find a different setting. Furthermore, we must learn not to apologize for our myriad questions, but to embrace them and share them and cultivate them.

Of course, sharing must be a component here. While great ideas come from solitary pursuits, even greater benefit is realized when ideas are shared, examined, and used as fodder for the next great idea. We must share our ideas, and then challenge them openly and with vigor. If we do not, we have done ourselves a disservice. We must, however, appreciate the value of others in this pursuit. Indeed, we must show our fellow explorers the ultimate respect by vigorously challenging their ideas, but such challenges must always be cloaked in compassion. What would happen if we elevated personal gain above our collective advancement?

So, let’s begin at once to live. I’m eager to begin this part of my life with you.

I’m excited for our journey together.

Warmest regards,

Michael Metzler

