Spring 2-1-2003

LS 152L.02: Introduction to the Humanities

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COURSE STRUCTURE AND OBJECTIVES

This course has several goals. Most broadly it is designed to introduce the student to the study of the humanities as an important component of a liberal arts education through a focus on selective texts from the Medieval to the Modern periods that have shaped Western civilization. We will explore the formation and transformation of some western world views and themes, and reflect on how they have shaped and influenced society and culture today. The emphases of the course are engaging in close readings of the primary texts, discussing and writing about those texts.

“A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say. A classic is something that tends to relegate the concerns of the moment to the status of background noise, but at the same time this background noise is something we cannot do without. (Conversely) A classic is something that persists as a background noise even when the most incompatible momentary concerns are in control of the situation.”

- Italo Calvino

“Classics are certain texts, events, images, rituals, symbols and persons (in which we acknowledge) a disclosure of a reality we cannot but name truth... some disclosures of reality in a moment of ‘recognition’ which surprises, provokes, challenges, shocks, and eventually transforms us; an experience that upsets conventional opinions and expands the sense of the possible; indeed a realized experience of that which is essential, that which endures – the presence of classics in every culture is undeniable. Their memory haunts us. Their actual effects in our lives endure and await ever new appropriations, constantly new interpretations.”

- David Tracy

REQUIRED TEXTS

Dante, The Portable Dante (Musa trans.)
More, Utopia
Descartes, Discourse on Method ((Library of Liberal Arts)
Shakespeare, The Tempest (Penguin)
Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment
Silko, Ceremony
Fac Pac of readings

REQUIREMENTS

• Regular class attendance and participation that demonstrates a grasp of the reading assignments
• Regular short written responses to the readings and plenary lectures
• Essays on a theme from the texts
• Written midterm and final exams
ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASSES

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<td>ERES = electronic reservation</td>
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**Introduction**

1/27 M 1 Introduction: Laying out themes and structure of the course

**I. Individual and Cosmos in the Late Middle Ages (14th century)**

1/29 W 2 Dante’s *Divine Comedy: Inferno* Cantos I-V
1/30 TH Plenary Lecture: Prof. Paul Dietrich: *Introduction and Medieval Culture*
1/31 F 3 Dante’s *Inferno* Cantos X-XI, XIII-XVI
2/3 M 4 Dante’s *Inferno* Cantos XXVI, XVIII-XIX, XXI-XXII
2/5 W 5 Dante’s *Inferno* Cantos XXVI, XXVIII, XXXII-XXXIV
2/6 TH Plenary Lecture: Prof. Richard Drake: *Dante*
2/7 F 6 Dante’s *Purgatorio* Cantos I-II, IX, XXIX-XXXIII
2/10 M 7 Dante’s *Paradiso* Cantos I, XXIX-XXXIII
2/12 W 8 Christine de Pisan ERES
2/13 TH Plenary Lecture: Prof. Rafael Chacón: *Italian Renaissance Art & Culture*
2/14 F 9 Pico: “Oration on the Dignity of Man” ERES

**II. Early Renaissance, Reform and Reformation (15th/16th centuries)**

2/17 M Presidents Day – No Classes
2/19 W 10 Erasmus: “The Praise of Folly” ERES
2/20 TH Plenary Lecture: Prof. Bill Farr: *Reformations of Religion & Society*
2/21 F 11 More: *Utopia* Book I
2/24 M 12 More: *Utopia* Book II
2/26 W 13 Luther: “The Freedom of a Christian” ERES
2/27 TH Plenary Lecture: *Early Modern Political Thought in Modern Philosophy*
III. Exploration of Self in the Northern Renaissance (16th/17th centuries)


3/3 M 15 Montaigne: “Of Cannibals” ERES

3/5 W 16 Shakespeare: *The Tempest* Intro, Act I

*Discuss Essay Topics*

3/6 TH Plenary Lecture: Prof. John Hunt: *Shakespeare*

3/7 F 17 Shakespeare: *The Tempest* Acts II-III

3/10 M 18 Shakespeare: *The Tempest* Acts IV-V

3/12 W 19 Donne and Herbert ERES

3/13 TH Plenary Lecture: *Descartes and the Birth of Modern Philosophy*

IV. The Scientific Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment (17th/18th centuries)

3/14 F 20 Descartes: Discourse on Method Intro and Part One

3/17 M 21 Descartes: Discourse on Method Parts 2-6

(you may skim pp. 7-11, 26-35, 44-45, 48-50)

*Essay Due in Class*

3/19 W 22 Hume: “Personal Identity” ERES

Swift: “A Modest Proposal”

3/20 TH Plenary Lecture: Prof. Albert Borgmann: *The Enlightenment*


Kant: “What is Enlightenment”

MARCH 24-28 SPRING BREAK

3/31 M 24 “Declaration of Independence” ERES

Selections from “United States Constitution”

4/2 W 25 Romantic Poets: Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge ERES

4/3 TH Plenary Lecture: Prof. Fern Glass-Boyd: *Music: Baroque, Classical, Romantic*

4/4 F 26 Midterm Exam

V. Revolution, Realism, Modernism (19th century)

4/7 M 27 Wollstonecraft: “Vindication of the Rights of Women” ERES

Selections from Sojourner Truth

- 3 -
4/9  W  28  Marx readings
4/10 TH  Plenary Lecture: Prof. Ruth Vanita: Romantic Literature
4/11 F  29  Crime and Punishment
4/14 M  30  Crime and Punishment
4/16 W  31  Crime and Punishment
4/17 TH  Plenary Lecture: Prof. Ron Perrin: Marx and the Age of Revolution
4/18 F  32  Crime and Punishment
4/21 M  33  Crime and Punishment
4/23 W  34  Crime and Punishment
4/25 F  35  Freud: Civilization and Its Discontents
4/28 M  36  Freud: Civilization and Its Discontents

VI. Postcolonialism and Postmodernism (20th century)

4/30 W  37  Silko, Ceremony
5/1 TH  Plenary Lecture: Prof. Michael Mayer: The American Experience: Promise & Reality
5/2 F  38  Silko, Ceremony
5/5 M  39  Silko, Ceremony
5/7 W  40  Silko, Ceremony and Wrap-up
5/9 F  41  Final Exam (in class)

Final Exam Period: Fri, May 9, 10:10—11:00 am

GRADING POLICY

1. Five Weekly Response Papers to the Readings: 20%
2. Five Plenary Response Papers: 20%
3. Paper: 20%
4. Midterm exam: 20%
5. Final exam: 20%
Note Re Papers: Papers are due in class on or before the date listed in the syllabus. Unless you have made a prior agreement with me, I will take off one grade level (A becomes A-) for each class day an assignment is late. Papers with an undue number of errors of punctuation, spelling, or grammar will be returned ungraded for correction. Written work will be evaluated in terms of your depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, clarity of writing, and ability to address issues raised in the text and in class on the topic at hand. Grades given reflect the following criteria of judgment:

F: Failure to meet minimum requirements  
D: Unsatisfactory, but some effort to meet minimum requirements  
C: Satisfactory; meet minimum requirements of assignment but not much more  
B: Good to Very Good: thoughtful reflection, good analysis, clear writing style  
A: Excellent depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, and writing style; demonstrate creativity and mature analytical skills in going beyond the primary requirements of the assignment

Attendance: Regular attendance and participation in the class is expected. More than three (3) absences will result in losing any benefit of the doubt on your final grade. More than six (6) absences will result in one grade reduction. More than nine (9) absences will result in a failing course grade. Late arrivals in class will count as an absence. (Note: If you have a valid reason for missing several classes, such as illness or other conflicting commitments, you still must speak with the instructor).

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism: All work submitted is expected to be the student's own. Any acts of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure of the course, and may result in further academic punishment. If you have any doubts about definitions of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please review the relevant sections of the University Catalog (p. 22).

DESCRIPTION OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Response Papers: Once a week (beginning the week of February 3) write a critical response paper to either the plenary presentation that week, or one of the assigned readings from that week. Over the course of the semester you must write a minimum of five plenary response papers and five response papers to the readings, for a total of ten weekly response papers.

1. Five Weekly Response Papers to the Readings: choose one of the assigned readings that week for a short, typed one-two page critical response. After reading the text, write (1) two or three paragraphs that summarize the main points of the reading, (2) two or three paragraphs giving your thoughtful response and discussion of the reading, noting any questions you have in light of your reading of the article. The papers will be graded on a scale of 0 to 10 points. The cumulative score of these responses is a significant element in determining your final grade; they indicate to me the consistency and quality of your participation in the course. Due no later than the following Monday in class.

2. Five Plenary Response Papers: Write a typed, 1-2 page critical response to 5 of the plenary lectures. Each response should include a summary of the main themes and significant supporting points, as well as your thoughtful response to the issues raised and how they relate to other themes of the course. These papers also will be graded on a scale of 0 to 10 points. Due no later than the following Monday in class.
3. **Essay:** A 5-page typed essay in which you consider a theme, key term, or other consideration(s) from the texts we read from the first part of the course. Use the text to support a well-constructed argument for the theme which you decide to pursue. We will discuss paper topics in class at least one week prior to the due date of **Friday, March 14**th (in class).

4. **Midterm Exam:** will cover material from both the plenary lectures and assigned readings. **Friday, April 4.**

5. **Final Exam:** The final will cover material from the second part of the semester and will ask you to integrate your learning from across the semester. **Friday, May 9.**

**Accessing Readings on Electronic Reserve (ERES)**

The attached Table of Contents shows the list of readings on Electronic Reserve (ERES) at the beginning of the semester. You may access these readings through the Mansfield Library homepage. Go to catalogue, then course reserve, and then to LS 152. The Password is “Erasmus”. For easiest access simply go to the ERES website: “http://eres.libumt.edu” and use the password to go into the LS 152 list of readings.

**Important University Policies, Dates and Deadlines**

2/14: Last day to drop and add courses by Cyberbear. Last day to receive a full refund for courses dropped. Courses dropped after this date will bear a W on the transcript.

3/10: Last day to drop courses with instructor and advisor signatures and a drop/add form. A WP or WF will appear on your transcript for courses dropped after March 10.


5/2: Last day to withdraw from courses for Spring 2003.


**P/NP Grade option:** A minimum grade average of C- (70) is required for a P grade in the P/NP Grade option.

**Incomplete Grade:** Please see the criteria that must be met for an Incomplete on p. 21 of the University Catalog. No exceptions will be made for these criteria.