LS 151L.80: Introduction to the Humanities - Honors

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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 classical and biblical texts that have shaped Western civilization. We will explore the formation and transformation of some western worldviews 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

REQUISITE TEXTS

Metzger, et all. The New Oxford Annotated Bible
Homer, The Odyssey (trans. Fagles; Penguin edition.)
Sophocles, Sophocles I / Three Tragedies (trans. Grene; Univ Chicago press)
Euripides, Three Plays of Euripides (trans. Roche; Norton publ)
Plato, Five Dialogues (trans. Grube; Hackett press)

REQUIREMENTS
• Regular class attendance and participation that demonstrates a grasp of the reading assignments
• Mandatory attendance at the weekly plenary lectures
• Regular short written responses to the readings and plenary lectures
• Two essays on a theme from the texts
• Written final exam
ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Reading</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/30</td>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction: Laying out themes and structure of the course</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td><em>Hand out Genesis 1-2 Worksheet</em></td>
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**I. The Hebrew Bible**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9/1</th>
<th>Th</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>The Hebrew Bible: Primeval History</th>
<th>Genesis: Introduction (3-10), Ch. 1-4, 6-9, 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9/1   | Th  | Lecture 1: *Introduction to the Course*  
        Paul Dietrich, Liberal Studies | | |
| 9/6   | Tu  | 3       | Abraham and Sarah: Beginning the Covenant | Genesis 11:27- ch 13, chs 15-22 |
|       |     |         | *(First Response Paper Due)* | |
| 9/8   | Th  | 4       | Law (Torah) and Covenant: Moses | Exodus: Introduction (82-84), Ch. 1-4, 7-8, 11-12, 15-16, 19-20, 24, 32-34 |
|       |     |         | 34 | |
| 9/8   | Th  | Lecture 2: *Law and the Hebrew Bible*  
        Tom Lee, Liberal Studies | | |
| 9/13  | Tu  | 5       | The Prophets: Amos and God’s Judgment | Amos: Introduction (969-973, 1302-03), Ch. 1-9 |
|       |     |         | *Discuss paper topics for Essay #1* | |
|       |     |         | 21 | |
| 9/15  | Th  | Lecture 3: *The Prophets and the Prophetic Tradition*  
        Dan Spencer, Liberal Studies | | |
|       |     |         | The Trial: Job Confronts God | |

**II. Homer: *The Odyssey***
9/22  Th  8  Homer: *The Odyssey*. Introduction  
Books 1-5 (pp. 77-167)

9/22  Th  Lecture 4: *Job and Wisdom*  
Jim Scott, Associate Dean, Arts and Sciences

9/27  Tu  9  *The Odyssey*  
Books 6-12 (pp. 168-285)  
1st Essay Due

9/29  Th  10  No Class

9/29  Th  Lecture 5: *Homer and Greek Civilization*  
Hayden Ausland, Modern and Classical Languages and Literature

10/4  Tu  11  *The Odyssey*  
Books 13-18 (pp. 286-389)

10/6  Th  12  *The Odyssey*  
Books 19-24 (pp. 390-485)

10/6  Th  Lecture 6: *Hero and Anti-Hero in Homer’s Odyssey*  
Stewart Justman, Liberal Studies

III. The Later Greek Writers

10/11  Tu  13  Greek Lyric  
Archilochus, Tyrtaeus, Sappho, Pinder  
GRES

10/13  Th  14  Sophocles: *Oedipus the King* I  
Greene and Lattimore: 11-49

10/13  Th  Lecture 7: *Greek Lyric*  
Hayden Ausland, Modern and Classical Languages and Literature

10/18  Tu  15  Sophocles: *Oedipus the King* II  
Greene and Lattimore: 49-76

2nd Essay Due: Option A

10/20  Th  16  Sophocles: *Antigone*  
Greene and Lattimore: 161-212

10/20  Th  Lecture 8: *Greek Tragedy and the Politics of Drama*  
Matt Semanoff, Modern and Classical Languages and Literature
IV. Greek Philosophy: Plato’s Dialogues

11/1 Tu  Plato: *Euthyphro*  
Grube: Intro ix-x, 1-20

11/3 Th 19  Plato: *Apology*  
Grube: 21-44

11/3 Th  Lecture 10: *Hellenistic and Roman History*  
Barbara Weinlich, Modern and Classical Languages and Literature

11/8 T 20  Plato: *Crito*  
Grube: 45-57

V. The Christian New Testament

11/10 Th 21  Introduction to the New Testament: Gospels  
Matthew 1-4; Mark 1; Luke 1-4:13; John 1-2; plus *Introduction* to each Gospel

Megan Williams, Liberal Studies

11/15 T 22  Jesus’s Ministry in Galilee  

2nd Essay Due: Option B

11/17 Th 23  Jesus on the Road to Jerusalem  
Luke 9:51 – Ch. 18

Paul Dietrich, Liberal Studies

11/22 Tu 24  Jesus in Jerusalem: Death and Resurrection  

11/24  Thanksgiving Holiday

11/29 Tu 25  Paul: Justification by Faith  
Acts 9:1-31, Romans 1-8  
1 Corinthians 12-14
VI. Christian Autobiography and Reflection: Augustine

12/1 Th 26 Augustine: The Confessions
       Preface (xiii-xxvi),
       Books 1-2, 3; chs. 1-7

Lecture 12: Augustine’s Confessions
           Phillip Fandozzi, English

12/6 Tu 27 Augustine: The Confessions
       Bk 4, all; 5, ch. 10, 13-14; Bk 6, 4-6, 8, 15; Bk 7: 1-5, 12, 17

12/8 Th 28 Augustine: The Confessions and Wrap-up
       Bk 8, chs. 5, 11-12; Bk 9, chs. 1, Bk 10: 1-8, 17, 30-31, 35, 40, 43

Lecture 13: Roman and Early Christian Art
           Megan Williams, Liberal Studies

Final Exam Period: Monday, December 12, 3:20 – 5:20 pm

GRADING POLICY

1. Four Weekly Response Papers to the Readings: 20%
2. Four Plenary Response Papers: 20%
3. Paper #1: 15%
4. Paper #2: 25%
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.

**Note:** Grades will be recorded using pluses and minuses.

**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 five (5) absences will result in one grade reduction. More than seven (7) 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 September 6) 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 four plenary response papers and four response papers to the readings, for a total of ten weekly response papers.

1. **Four Weekly Response Papers to the Readings:** choose one of the assigned readings that week for a short, typed two-three page critical response. After reading the text, write (1) three or four paragraphs that summarize and explain 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 25 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 week (Tuesday or Thursday) in class.**

2. **Four Plenary Response Papers:** Write a typed, two-three page critical response to four 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 25 points. **Due no later than the following week (Tuesday or Thursday) in class.**

3. **Essay #1:** A 5-6 page typed essay in which you consider a theme, key term, or other consideration(s) from the texts we read from the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). Use the text to support a well-constructed argument for the theme that you decide to pursue. **Note:** The theme(s) you select for this essay will be the theme you pursue in later readings in the course and in your second essay, so be sure to choose one which is meaningful and important to you. We will
discuss paper topics in class at least a week prior to the due date of **Tuesday, Sept. 27**th (in class).

4. **Essay #2:** This essay will be composite process. Your second paper (9-10 pages) will completely revise your first essay and seamlessly extend its thesis by developing a focal point from a second text from the Greek writers. You may choose the latter text from Homer’s *The Odyssey* (Option A: Due in class **Tuesday, Oct. 18**), or from one of the later Greek writers (Sappho, Sophocles, Euripides, or Plato) (Option B: Due in class **Tuesday, Nov. 15**). **You must turn in your original graded essay with this second essay or you will not receive a grade.** Each text should receive equal attention, or 4-5 pages of development each. Take special care to ensure that the two portions of your essay are well integrated and consistent.

5. **Final Exam:** The final will cover material from the whole semester and will ask you to integrate your learning from across the semester. The last day of class I will hand out a list of several questions, of which some will appear on the final. You must write your exam during the Final Exam Period: **Monday, December 12, 3:20-5:20 pm.**

**ERES:** To access the ERES readings:

a. Go into http://eres.lib.umt.edu/
b. Click on Electronic Reserves and Course Materials
c. Under Instructor, find and select SPENCER, Daniel
d. Click on the course name: LS 151.
e. Enter the password, "humanities"
f. The readings are entered in the order we will discuss them. The readings are in PDF format.

If you don’t like using ERES, there are also hard copies of all the readings on Reserve in the Library where you can read them or make copies.

**Important University Policies, Dates and Deadlines**

9/19: Last day to drop and add courses by Cyberbear. Last day to receive a full refund for classes dropped. Courses dropped after this date will bear a **W** on the transcript.
10/20: 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 October 13.
12/2: Last day to withdraw from courses for Autumn 2005.

**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.