Fall 9-1-2005

LS 151L.85: Introduction to the Humanities - Honors

Paul A. Dietrich

University of Montana - Missoula, paul.dietrich@umontana.edu

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation

https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/9883

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Course Syllabi at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
LS 151.85L  Introduction to the Humanities

Paul A. Dietrich  Fall, 2005
Office: LA 101A  MWF 10:10-11:00
Phone: 243-2805  DHC 118
Hours: MWF 9-10  Th 11:10-12:00
& by appointment (ULH 101) or
4 credits  7:10-8:00 (SS 352)

An introduction to the Western Humanities through an investigation of selected texts from the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, classical Greek civilization, the New Testament and early Christian literature. Topics to be considered include: conceptions of self, family, community, cosmos and the gods; ideas of virtue, wisdom, piety, justice, law, and the state; the nature of the good life, good and evil, and the meaning of suffering; the role of myth, symbol and ritual; conceptions of creation, time, and temporality; varieties of visionary experience and the poetics of change, conversion and metamorphosis; the language of love and desire; imagery of journey and pilgrimage; genres of classical and biblical literatures; idealism, realism, humanism and naturalism.

"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

Course Syllabus

Aug.29,31  Introduction. Creation and Covenant in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible: Genesis and Exodus
Sept.2   Law (Torah) and Prophets: Amos, Isaiah et al.
Sept.7,9  Wisdom (Writings): Love and Suffering in the Song of Songs, Psalms, Job
12,14,16  Greek Civilization and Homer’s Epic
19,21,23  Separation, Initiation and Return in the Odyssey
26,28,30  Songs of War, Love and Honor in Greek Lyric: Archilochus, Sappho, and Pindar
Oct.3,5,7  Midterm Exam
14       The Birth of Tragedy: Greek Drama and Sophocles’ Oedipus Cycle and Euripides’ Medea and the Bacchae
19,21,24,  Paideia and the School of Athens: Greek Philosophy
26,28  and Plato’s Dialogues
31,Nov.2,4  The New Covenant: Jesus in the Gospels (Luke)
7,9       Paul’s Letter to the Romans
14,16,18,21 Augustine’s Confessions: The Poetics of Conversion
Nov.23-25  Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov.28,    Augustine, Confessions. Time, Memory and
Dec.2,5,7   Healing
9           Conclusion and Review
16          Final Exam – 8:00-10:00

Required Reading

The New Oxford Annotated Bible (w/Apocrypha) (Coogan, ed.; Oxford)
Homer, The Odyssey (Fagles, tr.; Penguin)
Greek Lyric, (Miller, tr.; Hackett)
Sophocles, Three Tragedies (Oedipus Cycle) (Greene tr.; Chicago)
Euripides, Three Plays (Roche, tr.; Norton)
Plato, Five Dialogues (Grube, tr.; Hackett)
Ovid, Metamorphoses (Humphries; Indiana)
St. Augustine, The Confessions (Boulding, tr.; Vintage)

Course Requirements

1. Class meetings will be supplemented by weekly plenary lectures 
   (attendance required). Written responses(1-2 pages) to selected 
   lectures due Friday following lecture. (No late responses)
2. Essay (4-6 pages) responding to biblical materials due Sept. 
   23 on “What does it mean to be human in ancient Israel? How are 
   understandings of the self (virtue, wisdom, piety) related to 
   understandings of the family, the community, and the gods 
   (justice, covenant, law)? A revised and enlarged version of your 
   essay (6-8 pages) incorporating materials from classical Greek 
   civilization will be due Oct.28. The final version of the essay 
   including material from the New Testament and St. Augustine will 
   be due Dec. 9 (8-10 pages). The final essay will thus compare 
   and contrast the various answers to these questions from Genesis 
   to the Confessions.
3. Prompt completion of assigned reading. Quizzes on readings as 
   needed.
4. Grades will be based on papers and exams; however, attendance 
   and participation will be considered in the final grade.
5. Midterm Exam (Wednesday, October 14) and Final Exam (Friday, 
   December 16).

“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 disclosure 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