LS 152L.01: Introduction to the Humanities

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

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi
Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/10842

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.
"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

Course Syllabus

I. Individual and Cosmos in the Late Middle Ages (14c)
Week of:
1/23 Introduction. Dante's Divine Comedy
   Inferno - The Hell Descent and Damnation
   Plenary Lecture 1/26 – Introduction/Medieval Art and Culture - Dietrich
1/30 Purgatorio - The Ascent of the Mountain and Purification
   Paradiso - The Love that Moves the Sun and Beatitude
Plenary 2/2 – Dante and His Times - Drake

II. The Early Italian Renaissance and the Wonder of the Human (15c)
2/6 Christian Humanism and Renaissance Platonism in Pico della Mirandola’s “On the Dignity of Man”
   Plenary 2/9 – Italian Renaissance Art - Chacon
2/10 Last day to add/drop by Cyberbear

III. Faith and Freedom – Catholic Reform and the Protestant Reformation (16c)
2/13 The Philosophy of Christ in Erasmus and Martin Luther’s “On Christian Liberty”
   Plenary 2/16 – Renaissance Humanism (Pico, Erasmus, More) – Dietrich
2/20 Washington/Lincoln Holiday – no class
2/22 Satire, Social Criticism, and Reform in More’s Utopia
   Plenary 2/23 – Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation - Farr
IV. *The Exploration of the Self in the Northern Renaissance* (16c/17c)
2/27 Montaigne’s ‘Book of Myself’ and Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*
*Plenary* 3/2 - Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* - Hunt
3/6 *An Anatomy of Melancholy*: Action, Character and Criticism
3/6 Drop/add deadline

V. *The Scientific Revolution and the Birth of Modern Philosophy* (17c)
*Plenary* 3/9 - Descartes and Modern Philosophy - Sherman
3/13 Science and Method in Descartes’ *Discourse on Method*
*Plenary* 3/16 - The Art of the Baroque - Hedquist
3/17 Midterm Exam

VI. *The Poetry and Art of Meditation in the Age of the Baroque* (17c)
3/20 The Erotic and the Sacred in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Marvell
*Plenary* 3/23 - Classical Music (Baroque to Romantic) - Glass
3/27-31 Spring Break

VII. *The Age of the Enlightenment* (18c)
4/3 Reason and Satire (Pope, Kant, Swift and Voltaire’s *Candide*)
*Plenary* 4/6 - The Enlightenment - Borgmann

VIII. *Romanticism* (18c/19c)
*Plenary* 4/13 - Romanticism - Vanita

IX. *The Rise of Realism* (19c)
4/17,24 Suffering, Folly and Wisdom in Dostoevsky’s *The Idiot*
*Plenary* 4/20 - The Russian Novel: Tolstoy and Dostoevsky - Justman

X. *The Age of Revolution and the Modern World* (19c)
*Plenary* 4/27 - Modern Political Thought - Drake
5/1 From the Declaration of Independence & James Madison’s “Federalist Papers #10” to Karl Marx to Hannah Arendt’s “On the Nature of Totalitarianism”

**Required Reading**

Dante, *The Portable Dante*, Viking (Musa trans.)
Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, Library of Liberal Arts
Voltaire, *Candide*, Penguin Classics
Dostoevsky, *The Idiot*, Vintage

(ES 152 ERES facpoc - http://eres.lib.umt.edu - password “Erasmus”)
Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation are crucial in a class such as ours. (10% of grade.) It is not possible to engage in a deep conversation with these books and with each other if you miss class. Therefore, three absences (or persistent tardiness) will lower your grade one letter grade. Six absences will result in failure of the course.

2. There will be occasional, brief in-class written responses to the plenary lectures during the Friday class following the lecture. (10%) No make-ups.

3. You are expected to complete the assigned reading in a timely fashion. Weekly quizzes may be needed to encourage you in this regard.

4. Thematic essays (4-5 pages) in response to two of the major readings (e.g., Dante, More or Shakespeare; Voltaire or Dostoevsky) will be due at the end of Spring break and at the end of the term, respectively. Topics to be discussed. (20% each.) No late papers. Evidence of plagiarism will result in failure of the course. (Special materials on writing will be forthcoming.)

5. There will be a midterm exam on Friday, March 17 and a final exam on Thursday, May 11, 10-12. (20% each.)

For those who elect the P/NP option, the equivalent of a "C" is necessary for a "Pass".

“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
LS 152L Plenary Lectures  
Spring 2006

Jan. 26  Introduction/ Medieval Art & Culture  
        Dietrich, LS

Feb.  2  Dante and His Times  
        Drake, History

Feb.  9  Italian Renaissance Art  
        Chacon, Art

Feb. 16 Renaissance Humanism (Pico, Erasmus, More)  
        Dietrich, LS

Feb. 23 Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation  
        Farr, History

Mar.  2  Shakespeare and "Hamlet"  
        Hunt, English

Mar.  9  Descartes and Modern Philosophy  
        Sherman, Philosophy

Mar. 16 The Art of the Baroque  
        Hedquist, Fine Arts

Mar. 23 Bach, Beethoven & the Boys: "Classical" Music  
        Glass, Music

April  6  The Enlightenment  
        Borgmann, Philosophy

April 13  Romanticism  
        Vanita, LS

April 20 The Russian Novel: Tolstoy & Dostoevsky  
        Justman, LS

April 27 Modern Political Thought  
        Drake, History

Lectures are given at 11:10-12:00 in ULH (Urey Lecture Hall) and repeated at  
7:10-8:00 pm in SS (Social Sciences) 352
### Table of Contents for LS 152

1. Christine de Pizan: Background and excerpts of her own words


3. Desiderius Erasmus, “Paraclesis” and selections from *Praise of Folly*


5. Michel de Montaigne, from “Essais” plus full texts of “Education of Children” and “On Repentance”

6. John Donne: “To His Mistress Going to Bed” and “The Flea”
   - “Apparition” and “Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”
   - “Extasie” and Selected Sonnets and “Good Friday, 1613 Meditation XVII

7. George Herbert: “Elixir” and “Love” and “Pulley” and “Prayer”


10. Andrew Marvell, “To his Coy Mistress”


13. Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment?”

14. Declaration of Independence and the Constitution

15. James Madison, “Federalist Papers, no. 10”

16. William Wordsworth, prose Preface to Lyrical Ballads

17. Mary Wollstonecraft, “Vindication of the Rights of Woman”

18. Karl Marx: “Theses on Feuerbach, “Contribution to Political Economy,” and *Communist Manifesto*

19. Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?”