

History and Philosophy of Western Civilization (Renaissance to Twentieth Century)

Table of Contents

The contents of this syllabus are as follows:

- Texts
- Course requirements
- Protocol assignments (signup sheet)
- Syllabus

Texts

Required

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*

Copernicus, *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*

Galileo, "On the Heavens"

Goethe, *Faust*, Part I

Hume, any one of the following:

Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion

Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding

Enquiry Concerning the Philosophy of Morals

Treatise on Human Nature

Kant, either of the following:

Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals

Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics . . .

Kepler, *Epitome of Copernican Astronomy*

Luther, Selections

Milton, *Paradise Lost*

Shakespeare, *The Tempest* or a historical play

Also required are the following:

At least one woman author, selected from among the works and themes given below;
and at least one twentieth-century author, selected from among the works and
themes given below:

- Renaissance art/architecture, with appropriate readings
- A significant work of music, with appropriate readings

The following works should also be included, space permitting:

Bacon, *New Organon*, Book I
Boccaccio, *Decameron*
Cervantes, *Don Quixote*
de Pisan, *Treasure of the City of Ladies*
Eliot, *Four Quartets*
Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly*
Galileo, "Concerning the Use of Biblical Quotations in Matters of Science"
Goethe, *Faust*, Part II
Hegel, Introduction to *Philosophy of History*
Leibniz, "Monadology"
Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*
Moliere, any play
Montaigne, essays
More, *Utopia*
Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*
Voltaire, *Candide*

Any significant novel not read elsewhere in the curriculum could also be included.

Recommended

Alberti, *On the Family*
Arendt, *Between Past and Future*
Baudelaire, *Flowers of Evil*
Berkeley, *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*
Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*
Calvin, Selections
Camus, *Rebel*
Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*
Comte, *Positive Philosophy*
Diderot, *Encyclopedia*
Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*
Heidegger, any of the following:
 "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking"
 "End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking"
 "Question Concerning Technology"
 "What Is Thinking?"
Husserl, *Crisis of the European Sciences*
Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*

Leibniz, "Theodicy"
Machiavelli, *Discourses*
Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*
Michelet, *The People*
Novalis, *Hymns to the Night*
Olin, ed., *A Reformation Debate*
Ortega y Gasset, *History as System*
Pater, *The Renaissance*
Putney Debates
Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*
Racine, any play
Rousseau, *Confessions*
Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*

Secondary works, particularly those emphasizing historical concerns, may also be used in this course.

Course Readings

A list of the books and articles used in this course follows in the order in which they are read. Additional assignments will be announced in class.

Al-Quran (photocopy selections)
Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*
Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (selections)
Braxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*
Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*
Pater, *The Renaissance* (selections)
Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (selections)
Nicholas of Cusa (selections)
Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly*
Luther, *Three Treatises* (selections)
Copernicus, *On the Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres*
Cervantes, *Don Quixote*
Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
Shakespeare, Sonnets (selections)
Galileo, *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*
Kepler, *Epitome of Copernican Astronomy*
Milton, *Paradise Lost*
Hume, *Concerning the Principles of Morals*
Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*
Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9 in D Minor*
Goethe, *Faust*
Engels, *Condition of the Working Class in England*
Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*
Arendt, *Between Past and Future*

Course Requirements

Note: Class attendance and discussion make up 90 percent of your grade.

Protocols

Each student will write a single protocol covering readings for one day or for closely allied texts. Your protocol summarizes what the class found most important in the work, along with your own reflections, and needs to be e-mailed to each of us in a timely fashion. Other members of the class should receive it no later than a week following the discussion. Protocol grades will total 10 percent of your grade in the course.

Class Attendance

Because of the glut of reading materials as fodder for discussion, lateness and absence will seriously impair the class's ability to treat materials in depth. Many works will be discussed in one session only; some will even combine with others in a single class period. There is obviously no easy way to make up missed classes. So the rule of thumb is: *Don't miss!* At the far end of acceptability, if you miss or are substantially late on three days, you are subject to dismissal from the class upon your next absence.

Discussion

Discussion techniques should be carefully attended to. As seniors, you can expect at least the following from yourselves, from me, and from one another: mutual respect, thorough preparation, careful listening, genuine questioning, and thoughtful responses. In addition, we should be able to joke without rancor, to promote lively as well as courteous dialogue, and occasionally to have bells ring and lights pop as things we've all been thinking about come together.

Protocol Assignments (Sign up for one)

1. Islam _____
2. Canterbury Tales _____
3. Renaissance Art _____
4. Cusa and Erasmus _____
5. Luther _____
6. Don Quixote _____
7. Copernicus _____
8. Galileo _____
9. Kepler _____
10. Shakespeare _____

11. Paradise Lost _____
12. Hume and Kant _____
13. Beethoven _____
14. Faust _____
15. Engels _____

Syllabus

Friday, February 4	<i>Al-Quran</i> (photocopy selections) Lewis, <i>The Political Language of Islam</i>
Tuesday, February 8	Chaucer, <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> : (On Pronouncing Chaucer, Chronology, The General Prologue, The Knight's Tale, The Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale)
Friday, February 11	Braxandall, <i>Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy</i> ; Burckhardt, <i>The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy</i> (Parts 1, 2, and 3)
Tuesday, February 15	Burckhardt, <i>The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy</i> (Parts 4, 5, and 6); Pater, <i>The Renaissance</i> (all except Winckelmann); Mirandola, <i>Oration on the Dignity of Man</i>
Friday, February 18	Nicholas of Cusa, <i>Learned Ignorance</i> (selections), <i>Dialogue on the Hidden God</i> ; Erasmus, <i>Praise of Folly</i>
Tuesday, February 22	Luther, <i>Three Treatises</i> (To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, The Freedom of a Christian)
Friday, February 25	Copernicus, <i>On the Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres</i>
Tuesday, March 1	Shakespeare, <i>The Tempest</i> ; Shakespeare, Sonnets (nos. 2, 18, 55, 62, 94, 116, 129, 130, 146)
Friday, March 4	Dean's break
Tuesday, March 8	Galileo, <i>Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo</i>
Friday, March 11	Kepler, <i>Epitome of Copernican Astronomy</i>
Tuesday, March 15	Thesis writing
Friday, March 18	Thesis writing

Tuesday, March 22	Thesis writing
Friday, March 25	Holiday break
Tuesday, March 29	Holiday break
Friday, April 1	Thesis writing
Monday, April 4	COMPLETE DRAFT OF THESIS DUE TO READERS
Tuesday, April 5	Cervantes, <i>Don Quixote</i> (trans. Edith Grossman)
Friday, April 8	Cervantes, <i>Don Quixote</i> (trans. Edith Grossman)
Tuesday, April 12	Cervantes, <i>Don Quixote</i> (trans. Edith Grossman)
Friday, April 15	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i>
Tuesday, April 19	Hume, <i>Concerning the Principles of Morals</i>
Friday, April 22	Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i>
Tuesday, April 26	Beethoven, <i>Symphony No. 9 in D Minor</i> (score and CD)
Friday, April 29	Goethe, <i>Faust</i>
Saturday, April 30	For students wishing thesis defense, thesis due
Tuesday, May 3	Engels, <i>Condition of the Working Class in England</i>
Friday, May 6	FINAL DRAFT OF THESIS DUE TO READERS
Tuesday, May 10	Nietzsche, <i>The Use and Abuse of History</i>
Friday, May 13	Arendt, <i>Between Past and Future</i>