Overview: This is the second semester of a two semester intellectual and spiritual adventure into the Western Tradition, taking us from the infinite optimism of the Renaissance to the darker utopias that exploded across the world in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Having ended the first semester with Diderot’s brilliant and transitional *D’Alembert’s Dream*, we will begin the second with the revolution that was Romanticism. We will follow some of its currents via Blake and Keats, Mary Shelley and Mikhail Lermontov, and especially in Goethe. After looking at Faust in literature, cinema, art, and music, we will then turn to some of the key thinkers of the period: Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, and Darwin, all of whom enact the Faustian dilemma in one way or another. Next, as we reach the mid-point of the semester, we will encounter the great rebel and herald of urban modernity, the poet Charles Baudelaire, and the key novelist of the 19th century, Fyodor Dostoevsky, whose *Notes from the Underground, Dream of a Ridiculous Man*, and *The Idiot* we will read for their social, artistic, philosophical, theological, and historiosophical qualities. With Nietzsche and Freud we will do battle...
with two of the fundamental myth-makers — and fact finders! — of the modern, atheistic world. Finally, as the semester and year draw to a close, we will read briefly from the works of Tolstoy and Kafka, two heralds the 20th century who engage in fruitful dialogue with the past.

As in the first semester, the course will be run as a modified seminar, combining lecture, discussion, and occasional student presentation. Our purpose will be both to analyze the authors in their own right and to place them within the context of evolving European and universal values.

Along with our readings we will also see two film versions of Faust, and Kurosawa’s brooding interpretation of The Idiot. We will also explore Faust in music and art, as well as see the film Kafka.

Course Requirements: The syllabus assumes that you will devote no less than two hours of preparation time for each hour we meet, eight hours per week in total. I will also ask each of you to write 1) four 2-3 page reflection papers in the course of the semester, two of which must be written before the midterm; 2) a 5-7 page paper on either Notes from Underground, Dream of a Ridiculous Man, or The Idiot; 3) a 5-7 page paper on a topic or author(s) of your choice; a five page paper on Don Quixote 4) a take-home midterm and an in-class final.

Schedule of Meetings

Tuesday, January 14 — Introduction

Thursday, January 16 — Goethe: Faust, Part 1, through The Witches Kitchen, plus Blake, Songs of Innocence and Experience

Tuesday, January 21 — Goethe: Faust, Part 1, to end, plus Blake, the Book of Thel, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, A Song of Liberty, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, pp. 139-154, i.e. through the poem Anger & Wrath my bosom rends/I thought them Errors of friends / But all my limbs glow / I find them the Errors of the foe.

Thursday, January 23 — Mary Shelly: Frankenstein, Chapters 1-14, plus Keats Endymion, Book 1

Tuesday, January 28 — Mary Shelly: Frankenstein, to end, plus Keats pp. 160-215
Wednesday, January 29 — Film: Faust

Thursday, January 30 — Lermontov: Hero of Our Time, through Maxim Maxymich

Tuesday, February 4 — Lermontov: Hero of our Time, to end, plus Byron handout

Wednesday, February 5 — Film: Faust

Thursday, February 6 — Hegel: Introduction to the Philosophy of History, Chapters 1-3, The Enlightenment and Idealism (handout)

Tuesday, February 11 — Hegel: The Philosophy of History, to end, plus Hegel handout

Thursday, February 13 — Marx, The Communist Manifesto, plus Darwin handout

Tuesday, February 18 — Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death, Pt. 1

Thursday, February 20 — Kierkegaard, Pt 2, plus Schopenhauer handout

Tuesday, February 25 — Baudelaire: pp. 71-115, 137-153, 171-206
Pay special attention to

**Poems**
The Irremediable
The Swan
A Voyage to Cythera
The Voyage
The Abyss
Complaints of an Icarus

**Spleen**
Intoxication
The Mirror
The Harbor
Any Where Out of the World

**Critical Writings**
On the Essence of Laughter
The Dandy
In Praise of Make-Up

Thursday, February 27 — Baudelaire

Poems
Correspondences
Spiritual Dawn & Evening Harmony (pp. 78-79)
Invitation to the Voyage (pp. 88-89)
Travelers & The Fountain (pp. 201-211)
The Abyss and Icarus Laments (pp. 228-229)

Spleen
The Spleen of Paris
The Stranger (pg. 117)
Crowds (pg. 131)
Intoxication (pg. 149)
Anywhere Out of The World (pp. 151-152)

Critical Writings
What is Romanticism (pp. 159-163)

Tuesday, March 11 — Dostoevsky, Notes from Underground

Thursday, March 13 — Dostoevsky — The Idiot (Part 1, Chapters 1-7)

Tuesday, March 18 — Dostoevsky — The Idiot (Part 1, Chapter 8 - Part 2, Chapter 3)

Thursday, March 20 — Dostoevsky — The Idiot (Part 2, Chapter 4 - end of Part 2)

Tuesday, March 25 — Dostoevsky — The Idiot (Part 3, Chapters 1-7)

Thursday, March 27 — Dostoevsky — The Idiot (Part 3, Ch. 8 - Part 4, Chapter 4)

Tuesday, April 1 — Dostoevsky — The Idiot (to end)

Wednesday April 2 — Film: The Idiot
Thursday, April 3 — Nietzsche — On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life, plus First Essay in The Genealogy of Morals

Tuesday, April 8 — Nietzsche — The Genealogy of Morals, to end

Thursday, April 10 — Freud, Civilization and its Discontents

Tuesday, April 15 — Tolstoy — The Death of Ivan Ilych, Master and Man

Tuesday, April 22 — Hopkins and/or Dickinson (handout)

Thursday, April 24 — Kafka — The Metamorphosis & In the Penal Colony (handout)

Tuesday, April 29 — Film: Kafka, all personal reflections papers due.
Final: Friday May 2, 12:30 p.m.
All papers due: Tuesday May 6, 12:00 noon
Thomas Epstein
Fall 2002
Honors Seminar: the 20th Century. Part 1
Office: Honors Office & Lyons Hall 210
Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:15-1:15 Gasson 112, Tuesdays 8:30-9:50 Lyons Hall 210

TEXTS

Camus — The Plague
Chipp — Theories of Modern Art
Eliot — The Four Quartets
Kafka — The Trial
Lawrence — The Virgin and the Gypsy
Pirandello — Six Characters in Search of an Author
Rilke — Duino Elegies
Weil — Simone Weil: An Anthology
Woolf — To the Lighthouse

The Course

The 20th century Honors seminar provides a special challenge both to student and instructor. How, within the framework of a single-load course, to begin to penetrate the intellectual history — for want of a better term — of a century that saw Western Civilization culminate, destroy itself, and perhaps even begin the process of reconstructing itself in a new, more inclusive guise?

Happily, we have two years of previous Honors seminars for a starting point. We also have your academic majors, from which you can draw knowledge and method. Finally, we have the fact that you yourselves have lived through part of the century and know people who have lived through even greater parts of it. These three resources should provide you with important tools for grappling with the issues we will face.

One fact can neither be hidden nor glossed over: the first half of the twentieth century is the bloodiest fifty years on human record. From Verdun to Dachau, from the Russian Revolution to the Soviet gulags, from Armenia to Hiroshimo, murder and mass murder were the order of the day. This crisis of culture and the individual culminated in the 'death' of both, in the ruins of Europe. Although our seminar is not a study of history in the narrow sense, the shadow of these events will accompany us everywhere. How can so much destruction have been perpetrated? What role did culture itself play in this explosion of evil? What happened to the golden promises of knowledge, beauty, science and art? And where are religion, revolution, and democracy in all this?

Our course will center on literature, art, and philosophy. While each represents a separate approach to expression and inquiry, we will, among other things, seek their common language and concerns. The art component will have a hands-on dimension,
with students broken into one of five groups, each of which will make a class presentation. Along with our readings and presentations we will also see four films (Chaplin's *Modern Times*, Eisenstein's *Battleship Potyomkin*, Lang's *Metropolis*, and a film version of Pirandello’s *Six Characters in Search of an Author*), go to a concert of Modernist music, and visit the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Course Requirements and Grading: The syllabus assumes that you will devote two hours of preparation time for each hour we meet, six hours per week in total. I permit two unexcused absences per semester, that is, you will not be penalized (I mean in grading) for them. I of course prefer perfect attendance.

As this is a modified seminar, participation in discussion is expected and encouraged. Please, however, keep in mind that the best kind of intervention serves both self-expression and provides a catalyst for dialog with other seminar members.

The writing component is straightforward and manageable: a take-home, essay-style midterm on which I expect you to devote five hours; an in-class, essay-style final which you will have three hours to complete; a three to five page essay on a text of your choice (in consultation with the instructor), and a three to five page write-up of your art presentation.

Written work will count for two-thirds of your grade; class attendance and participation the rest.

Syllabus

Tuesday, September 3 — Introduction / Film: Battleship Potemkin

Thursday, September 5 — Kafka, In the Penal Colony & The Great Wall of China (handout)

Tuesday, September 10 — Kafka: The Trial, to The Flogger

Thursday, September 12 — Kafka: The Trial, to Block, the Merchant/Dismissal of the Lawyer

Tuesday, September 17 — Kafka: The Trial, to end, including fragments

Thursday, September 19 — Rilke, The Duino Elegies

Tuesday, September 24 — Max Weber: Science as a Vocation (handout); and Eliot, The Wasteland (Handout)

Thursday, September 26 — Lawrence: The Virgin and the Gypsy, ch. 1-5; Letters (Handout)
Tuesday, October 1 — Lawrence: The Virgin and the Gypsy, to end; and The Elephant is Slow to Mate, The Ship of Death (Handout)

Thursday, October 3 — Pirandello, Six Characters in Search of an Author

Tuesday, October 8 — Woolf: To the Lighthouse (Part 1)

Thursday, October 10 — Woolf: To the Lighthouse (to end)
Take-home Midterm

Tuesday, October 15 — Theories of Modern Art, pp. 11-94

Thursday, October 17 — Husserl & Dewey (handout)

Monday October 21: Midterm due

Tuesday, October 22— Theories of Modern Art, pp. 129-193. First Presentation

Thursday, October 24 — Theories of Modern Art, pp. 193-281, Second Presentation

Tuesday, October 29 — Theories of Modern Art, pp. 309-366, plus handout, Third Presentation

Thursday, October 31 — Theories of Modern Art, pp 366-445, Fourth Presentation

Tuesday, November 5 — Modern Art Readings (handout), Fifth Presentation

Thursday, November 7 – Wittgenstein & Heisenberg (handout)

Tuesday, November 12 — Weil: Anthology, pp. 49-127

Thursday, November 14 — Weil: Anthology, pp. 127-218

Tuesday, November 19— Weil: Anthology, The Power of Words, Prerequisite to the Dignity of Labor; and Scientism-A Review, The Love of God and Affliction (Handout)

Thursday, November 21 — Camus: The Plague, Pts. 1 & 2

Tuesday, November 26 — Camus: The Plague, Pts. 3 & 4
Tuesday, December 3 — Camus, to end, plus Bultman (handout)

Thursday, December 5 — Shestov (handout)

Tuesday, December 10 — Eliot, Four Quartets

Final Exam: December 13, 12:30-3:30
All papers due: 9 a.m, December 14