SYLLABUS
Honr1101-110411 and honr1101-110415
2014-2015
Stokes S286, TTh 9-11 or 1-3
Instructor: Timothy Duket, Professor of the Practice of the Humanities

Seminar Summary (Western Cultural Tradition I-IV inclusive)

Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides in the Greek theatre, Plato and Socrates in the agora and Virgil in Rome explore the richness of Homeric epic. The Hebrew prophets Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah and Isaiah and Biblical wisdom writers develop the implications of Yahweh's actions in Genesis and Moses' lessons in Exodus. In parallel ignorance of one another, Greek and Hebrew together reveal mutually exclusive types of intellectual and cultural life. The first semester's look at Greek and Hebrew traditions is a first step in answering the age-old (Tertullian's) question, "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?". But for us this is an open and exciting rather than rhetorical and negative question. The answers are many and diverse. What does it tell us about ourselves? What does it tell us about our relationships with one another? The discussion will take many forms ranging from the age-old conversation between poetry and philosophy to dichotomies of heart and mind, reason and revelation, soul and body, will and freedom, eros and agape. The second semester (HP003 and 004) explores the intermingling and synthesis of Greek and Hebrew thought in Virgil, in the Gospels and Letters of Paul, and in a "medieval synthesis", ending with the Divine Comedy, the medieval Christian epic of Dante Alighieri, and, time permitting, Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales in the original Middle English. The first semester takes advantage of comparisons and contrasts between Hebrew and Greek, the second semester uses various examples of synthesis from Virgil and the New Testament to Dante Alighieri to drill deeply into the mine of combined and synthesizing experience in the western tradition. The course does not take the view that this “western” track is the only or even the best approach to our intellectual tradition possible, but that it is one that has great value… for two reasons: 1. The tradition is allusive and self-referential; 2. The tradition is self-critical so as to be to be unified (coherent) without being monolithic; these two characteristics stimulate and require a coherent and challenging dialectic and dialogue among any group of motivated and thoughtful students (including the instructor) in search of the important differences in an only apparent consensus. There is no single tradition, in fact. The instructor regards a dialogic (Socratic) approach to be analogous to modern jazz – themes and variations in jazz are the equivalent of themes, schools of thought, and motifs in the western tradition. The student achieves mastery of the textual content in individual study and participates in explorations in permutations and combinations and along multiple paths in the seminar discussions with colleagues and in compositions and on exams.

General Expectations

This seminar fulfills university requirements in literature, writing, philosophy, theology and the social sciences. It is a double credit course that should occupy at least 40% of a
student's time. Since a seminar meets twice each week and for 110 minutes each session, much of that time will be outside class in private study and preparation, as well as, hopefully, in discussions over lunch and in e-mail exchanges. Participants - instructor as well as students - have a responsibility to each other to assume ownership of and responsibility for the course in all its aspects. Honr1101-110211 and 15 are a unified course with the second semester seminars Honr1103-110411 and 15. The two semesters of Honr1101-1104 are preparation for the second year honor seminars Honr1201-1204.
Course Requirements

1. There is a two hour final examination at the end of each semester (one-third of the grade);

2. Class preparation, attendance and participation are a *sine qua non* for this course; this includes all group projects and student Canvas and e-mail exchanges (the biggest one-third of the grade is your class participation - its quality as well as its quantity).

3. Writing. Essays and other types of writing will complement class discussions. There will be essay assignments every two weeks, 6 or 7 compositions in the first semester. The second semester writing involves three (3) compositions, concluding with an extensive bibliographical research paper in Dante Scholarship that will be weighted as two compositions (thus, four in all, 25% each). An overall assessment of these essays and the student’s progress as a writer will be one-third of the final grade in each semester.

4. Adherence to the university standards for academic integrity. "Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education. Please observe the highest standards of academic integrity in this course. Please review the standards and procedures that are published in the university catalog and on the web, at: http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity. Make sure that the work you submit is in accordance with university policies. Violations will be reported to the Deans' Office and reviewed by the College's Committee on Academic Integrity. This could result in failure in the course or even more severe sanctions." Dean's Office, January 13, 2005.

5. Canvas and E-mail, the dynamic syllabus and the www. The course calendar will be updated frequently. It is everyone's responsibility to consult the calendar in Canvas. *All changes to the syllabus on the web supersede earlier versions of the syllabus and all other written handouts.*

6. Students will participate in on-line exchanges as part of class preparation as described above. This includes the occasional (no more than twice weekly) informal writing assignments posted in “Morning Coffee” or “Afternoon Tea” (a Canvas discussion forum). This writing is preparation for each class day and is, thus, part of the class participation grade (see above).

7. Information Literacy. Students will be expected to gain skills in the use of electronic and all other library resources. Training is available in the O’Neill Library itself, using tutorials developed by the Boston College libraries. The Bibliographical Research paper in Dante Scholarship will require the mastery of RefWorks, the bibliographical software supported by O’Neill Library.
Fall Books (fall, 2013 – subject to change in 2014):
Books for the first semester (Honr1101-1102)

Required:

*Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha*

*Gilgamesh*, tr. and ed. Andrew George (Penguin)

Homer, *Odyssey* (any verse translation: Lombardo, Fagles, Lattimore, Fitzgerald, etc.)

Homer, *Iliad*, tr. Lattimore (U of Chicago)

Aeschylus, *Oresteia*, tr. Lattimore (U of Chicago P)

*Complete Plays of Sophocles* (Bantam)

*Euripides V* (U of Chicago P)

*Last Days of Socrates* (Penguin)

Recommended:

Hexter Ralph. *Guide to the Odyssey* (*Fitzgerald translation*)

Wilcock, Malcolm. *Companion to the Iliad* (*Lattimore translation*)
Books for Honr1103-1104 - spring, 2014 (subject to change in 2015)


Virgil, tr. Fagles, *Aeneid* (Penguin)

*Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha*, 3rd edition, ed. Coogan, Brettler, Newsom and Pheme Perkins (Oxford U P)

Augustine of Hippo, tr. F.J. Sheed, *Confessions* (Hackett) or tr. Maria Boulding ((New City P)


Dante Alighieri, tr. Alan Mandelbaum, *The Divine Comedy* (Everyman Library)


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Instructor information

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