CC 201, Fall 1996 Humanities III Core Curriculum
The Renaissance
Syllabus

Lectures: T, 12:30-2:00, COM 101

Core Professors

Dennis Costa (Modern Foreign Languages and Literature)
Philip Freeman (Core Curriculum)
George Hoffmann (Modern Foreign Languages and Literature)
Stephanie Nelson (Core Curriculum)
Christopher Ricks (English)
Hallie White (Modern Foreign Languages)

Seminar Times:
B1 MWF 11:00-12:00 pm, Professor Ricks, STH B22
B2 TR 11:00-12:30 pm, Professor Nelson, CAS B04
B3 MWF 12:00-1:00 pm, Professor Freeman, STH 113
B4 MWF 2:00-3:00 pm, Professor White, SOC B65
B5 MWF 10:00-11:00 pm, Professor Ricks, STH B22
B6 TR 2:00-3:30 pm, Professor Costa, SOC B61
B7 MWF 1:00-2:00 pm, Professor Hoffmann, SOC B67
C1 MWF 2:00-3:00 pm, Professor Freeman, SOC B61

Books: The books you should purchase and read are available at the Boston University Bookstore. The last page of this syllabus provides a list of these books and of the handouts which will be provided.

Grading: Final grades will be determined by the student’s seminar instructor. The grade will be based on a combination of written work, examinations, and participation, as follows:

Seminar Papers 55%  Mid-term Exam 15%
Attendance and Participation 10%  Final Exam 25%

Attendance at lectures and seminar discussions is an important part of the course. More than two unexcused absences from seminar, or more than one unexcused absence from lecture will be weighed seriously by your seminar leader, and will bring down your grade.

Exams will cover materials in the lectures, seminars, and the readings. They will include passages for identification and short and long essay questions. Choices will be offered.
Course Description: The third semester of the Humanities Core continues our interdisciplinary survey with some of the most significant literary and philosophical works in Western culture--those of "the Renaissance," an era in which the foundations of the modern world were laid. Our attention now shifts to the early fourteenth century in Europe; and the semester will carry us through the late seventeenth century.

Our themes include the rise of individualism; skepticism; the war between the ancients and the moderns; the struggle to distinguish appearance from reality and to bridge the gap between subject and object; the foundations of the modern scientific enterprise; the rise of secularism and the distancing of the divine; the sense of mankind as master rather than servant of nature; the invention of new artistic forms; and the new unfolding of what Socrates called "the ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy."

This period also includes the first great flowering of English poetry. We will study some of the best of it--The Pearl Poet, Chaucer's General Prologue, Shakespeare's Sonnets, the lyrics of John Donne, and Milton's Paradise Lost. We will study these works in terms of their contribution to Western and world culture, but we will also want to know why reading poetry is different from reading prose, and how it is different: what special problems it poses and what particular rewards it offers to the careful reader--rewards suggested by Wallace Stevens in "An Ordinary Evening in New Haven":

As if
In the end, in the whole psychology, the self,
The town, the weather, in a causal litter,
Together, said words of the world are the life of the world.

The semester concludes with John Milton, a somewhat Baroque example of a Renaissance man: a polemicist in a time of civil war and ideological struggle; a poet-prophet who saw himself in the shadow of Shakespeare and Spenser, in the tradition of Homer and Vergil, and as an inspired interpreter of the Bible; a man well aware of the skeptical and scientific currents of his time, taking up the Bible's myth of origins and fall; a man who believed that a good education began with languages, proceeded through mathematics, agriculture, geography, philosophy, architecture, anatomy, medicine, ethics, economics, politics, law, and history, and culminated, at least for the chosen few, in poetic composition. Milton sought a language adequate to "justify the ways of God to men," and believed that all his learning was at the service of divine inspiration; his poem came from God, and had to be written as it was. Within his soul the battle between humanism and Protestantism was waged--most dramatically with the figures of Milton's heroic Satan and Eve, mother of all mankind.

Beyond the themes and historical developments charted by the course lies something even more important: the greatness of each of the individual works we will be reading. What this greatness is, why these works instead of others still have the power to engage us in conversation with the creative intellects of the past (a past which therefore includes us!)--these questions will be of primary concern, just as they are central to all of the courses in the Core Curriculum.
Tuesday, 9/3/96: Chivalry and Pilgrimage: The Pearl Poet (c. 1380) and Chaucer (1340?-1400)
Readings: The Pearl Poet, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, tr. Boroff
from Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, tr. Wright:
“General Prologue,” pp. 1-22

Lecture (1): Professor Jorgensen

Tuesday, 9/10/96: The Canterbury Tales
Readings: “Pardoner’s Prologue and Tale,” pp. 394-410;
“Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale,” pp. 219-250;
“The Author’s Valediction,” p. 464

Lecture (2): Professor Martin

Tuesday, 9/17/96: Man, the Being Between Worlds: Petrarch (1304-1374) and Pico (1463-1494)
Readings from Cassirer, The Renaissance Philosophy of Man:
Francesco Petrarca, “The Ascent of Mount Ventoux,” pp. 36-46;
Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola, “Oration on the Dignity of Man,” pp. 223-54

Lecture (3): Professor Costa

Tuesday, 9/24/96: Man Powerless, Man Empowered: Calvin (1509-1564) and Machiavelli (1469-1527)
Readings from Calvin and Machiavelli:
from John Calvin’s Institute of the Christian Religion (handout);
from Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince: I-III; V-VI; VIII-X; XIV-XVII;
XIX, first four paragraphs (through “I conclude, . . . “); XXI;
XXII, first paragraph; XXV-XXVI.

Lecture (4): Professors Swanson and Jorgensen
Tuesday, 10/1/96:  *The Essayist: Montaigne (1533-1592)*  
Reading: From Michel de Montaigne’s *Essays*, tr. Frame:  
“To the Reader,” p. 3;  
from the “Apology for Raymond Seconde,” pp. 51-71;  
“Of Repentance,” pp. 75-91;  
“Of Husbanding Your Will,” pp. 92-100;  
“Of Experience,” pp. 106-36;  
“Of Cannibals” (handout)

**Lecture (5): Professor Hoffmann**

Tuesday, 10/8/96:  *Jousts with Reality: Cervantes (1547-1616), Don Quixote*  
Reading: From Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote Part I*:  
*Chivalry revived*:  
Prologue, pp. 25-30;  
Don Quixote’s first expedition and the beginning of his second:  
chs. 1-10, pp. 31-84;  
pp. 84-7 of ch. 11 (through “Don Quixote devoted more time to”)  
*Eros and enchantment*:  
pp. 107-111 of ch. 14 (from “And he was going to read another”) Note: .  
D.Q. is at funeral of a young man who died for love of the young, rich,  
beautiful Marcela who, to escape her suitors, has been living disguised as a  
shepherdess. Mourners read the dead youth’s poems. And then, suddenly .  
chs. 15-18, pp. 111-141;  
*Liberation and retreat*:  
ch. 22, pp. 171-81;  
pp. 181-183 of ch. 23 (through “he would not have given a halfpenny for  
any other adventure”)  
*A message from Dulcinea*:  
ch. 25, pp. 199-214. Note: D.Q. has forbidden Sancho to engage in extended  
conversation with him. In the Sierra Morena, D.Q. has gotten into an argument  
with a mad lover over the virtue of a fictional lady (Queen Madasima) in the  
romance of Amadis of Gaul; this has ended in D.Q.’s being stoned, and Sancho,  
defending him, getting into a fight with a goatherd until D.Q. parts them. As  
chapter 25 begins, Sancho wants to go home.  
ch. 30, pp. 267-8 (from “While they were engaged in this conversation”)  
ch. 31, pp. 268-76

**Lecture (6): Professor Smith**

**Lecture on the art of the Renaissance to be announced**
Tuesday, 10/15/96: Jousts with Unreality: Cervantes (1547-1616), Don Quixote
Reading: from Don Quixote, Parts I and II:
Return from the second expedition:
   pp. 415-418 of ch. 46 (from “Two days had now passed”)
   chs. 47-52, pp. 418-458
The third expedition sets out:
   chs. 1-3, pp. 471-492;
The Other
   ch. 54, pp. 816-822
The final return:
   pp. 888-891 of ch. 64 (from “Now one morning Don Quixote was riding”)
   chs. 65-74, pp. 891-940.
Note: A Duke and Duchess have been mocking D.Q. and Sancho by pretending to take them seriously and by staging "adventures," including Sancho's governorship of an island and a "vision" in which Death announces that Dulcinea can only be freed from enchantment if Sancho "shall deal himself 3,300/Lashes upon his most ample buttocks."

No Lecture. Monday schedule of classes.

Tuesday, 10/22/96: The eldest have borne most: Shakespeare (1564-1616), King Lear
Reading: William Shakespeare, King Lear

Lecture (7): Professor Carroll

Tuesday, 10/29/96: Renaissance Poetry: Shakespeare's sonnets
Reading: William Shakespeare, Sonnets. Read them all, with particular attention to 1, 17, 29, 55, 87, 94, 116, 121, 130, 138, 144, 148.
Professor Martin's lecture will dwell on 116 and 138. Know them well.

Lecture (8): Professor Martin

Tuesday, 11/5/96: Renaissance Poetry: John Donne (1572-1631)
Reading: from the poetry of John Donne:
   "Song" ("Go and catch a falling star"), pp. 1-2;
   "The Indifferent," pp. 8-9;
   "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," pp. 34-5;
   "The Ecstasy," pp. 35-8;
   "A Nocturnal Upon Saint Lucy's Day," pp. 39-41;
   "The Relic," pp. 50-1;
   "Elegy XIX: To His Mistress Going to Bed," pp. 64-5;
Holy Sonnets: 1, p. 100; 7-10, pp. 102-3; 14, pp. 104-5.

Lecture (9): Professor Ricks
Tuesday, 11/12/96:  *Renaissance Philosophy: Francis Bacon (1561-1626)*
Reading: from Sir Francis Bacon, ed. Jerry Weinberger
*The Great Instauration*, pp. 1-32;
*The New Atlantis*, pp. 35-83

**Lecture (10): Professor Costa**

Tuesday, 11/19/96:  *Renaissance Philosophy: Rene Descartes (1596-1650)*
Reading: from Rene Descartes, tr. Lafleur
*Discourse on Method* Parts 1-4, pp. 3-30;

**Lecture (11): Professor Devlin**

Thursday, 11/21/96, 7 p.m.,
in The Castle:  *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)*
Reading: None.
Listening: Music of Bach.

**Lecture (12): Professor Johnson**

Tuesday, 11/26/96:  *Renaissance Philosophy: Spinoza (1632-1677)*
Reading: from Baruch Spinoza’s *Ethics*, tr. Shirley:
from Part I: Concerning God
Definitions and Axioms, pp. 31-2; props 1-16, pp. 32-43, propositions only;
Appendix, pp. 57-62;
from Part III: Concerning the Origin and Nature of the Emotions
Preface, pp. 102-3; props. 6-26, pp. 108-118; Definitions of the Emotions, pp. 141-51;
from Part IV: Of Human Bondage
Appendix, pp. 195-200;
from Part V: Of the Power of Intellect, or of Human Freedom
Preface, pp. 201-3; prop. 3, entire, p. 204; props. 4-30, pp. 204-216,
propositions only, except all of prop. 20; props. 35-40, entire, pp. 218-222.

**Lecture (13): Professor Devlin**

Thanksgiving Holiday, 11/27/96-12/1/96
Tuesday, 12/3/96:  
*Milton (1608-1674), Paradise Lost*
Reading: From Ricks, ed., John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*
"The Verse," p. 45;
Book I entire, pp. 49-69 (Introduction, fall of the angels, construction of Pandemonium)
Book II entire, pp. 69-98 (Counsel of the fallen angels, Satan’s explorations and meeting with Sin and Death);
Book III, Argument, pp. 98-9; ll. 1-371, pp. 99-109 (God foresees the fall of man, the Son offers himself as a ransom for man);
Book IV, Argument, pp. 119-20; ll. 1-843, pp. 120-143 (Satan in Paradise; Adam and Eve introduced; Satan caught whispering in Eve’s ear while she is dreaming).

*Lecture (14): Professor Ricks*

Tuesday, 12/10/96:  
*Milton (1608-1674), Paradise Lost*
Reading: From John Milton’s *Paradise Lost:*
Book V, Argument, p. 149;
Book VI, Argument, p. 174;
Book VII, Argument, p. 199; ll. 1-39, pp. 199-200 (Concerning the Muses and the Spirit);
Book VIII, Argument, p. 217; ll. 249-653, pp. 224-234 (Adam tells the angel Raphael his memories of his first moments and of the creation of Eve);
Book IX, entire, pp. 235-267 (The Fall);
Book X, Argument, pp. 267-8; ll. 383-584, pp. 279-283; ll. 720-1003, pp. 287-297 (Satan’s return to Hell; Adam curses his fall and is reconciled with Eve);
Book XI, Argument, p. 298;

*Lecture (15): Professor Jorgensen*

Saturday, 12/17/96:  FINAL EXAM, 12:30 p.m.