

Core Curriculum CC 202: Core Humanities IV

“From Enlightenment and the Romantic Revolt to the Modern World”

Boston University College of Arts & Sciences

Spring 2021 Syllabus

Lectures: Tuesdays 12:30-1:45pm

Lecture Zoom: Meeting #: 923 0670 7317 Passcode: [sent by email]

Course Credits: 4.0

Seminars:

B1 with Joyce Hope Scott, <i>hopescot@bu.edu</i>	TR 11am-12:15pm (NIP)
B3 with Anita Patterson, <i>apatters@bu.edu</i>	TR 3:30pm-4:45pm (NIP)
C1 with Kyna Hamill, <i>kyna@bu.edu</i>	MWF 11:15am-12:05pm in CAS 114B
C2 with Christopher Ricks, <i>cricks@bu.edu</i>	MWF 1:25pm-2:15pm (NIP)
C3 with Maria Gapotchenko, <i>daisym@bu.edu</i>	MWF 2:30pm-3:20pm in CAS 114B

For all discussion sections, check with your seminar leader to determine the rotation schedule for students attending class on campus in person.

Coordinator: Anita Patterson Department of English
Phone: 617-642-4521 Email: *apatters@bu.edu*

Department Office: CAS Room 119, open 9-5, Monday-Thursday, *core@bu.edu*

Course Description. The four semesters of the Core Humanities follow a historical sequence so that works can be studied as an evolving conversation about the enduring questions of life. Throughout, our goal is to discover what the greatest works of the past have to say to us here, right now. In CC 202, the fourth and culminating semester of our humanities study, we take up questions including... What is Enlightenment? What is the supreme principle of morality? What constitutes a just society? How do works of philosophy, literature, and the arts inspire ethical reasoning, and can they guide our judgment about ethical questions at stake in the world today? We examine these and other questions of social hierarchy and political power, subjectivity and its relation to reason, in Kant, Mendelssohn, Voltaire, Rousseau, Goethe, Jane Austen, English Romantic poetry, Dickinson, Whitman, Nietzsche, and the music of Beethoven. The course ends in the 20th century with Du Bois’ *The Souls of Black Folk*, and Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

Philosophical Inquiry and Life’s Meanings

- To demonstrate knowledge of notable works in philosophical thought, make meaningful connections among them, and be able to relate those works to your own life and those of others.
- To demonstrate the reasoning skills and possess the vocabulary to reflect upon significant philosophical questions and topics such as what constitutes a good life, right action, meaningful activity, knowledge, truth, or a just society.

Ethical Reasoning

- To be able to identify, grapple with, and make a judgment about the ethical questions at stake in major contemporary public debates, and engage in a civil discussion about it with those who hold views different from your own.
- To demonstrate the skills and vocabulary needed to reflect on the ethical responsibilities that face individuals (or organizations, or societies or governments) as they grapple with issues affecting both the communities to which they belong and those identified as “other.”

Writing

- To write as a means to learn from and engage with important works of literature, philosophy, music, and art.
- To craft responsible, considered, and well-written arguments about these works, using modes of expression appropriate to the situation.
- To read with understanding, engagement, and critical judgment, and converse thoughtfully about these works.
- To share your written work, and to practice evaluating the validity of arguments, including your own.

Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning. Students are required to attend all lectures and seminars. The lectures will be held remotely, and some will be asynchronous, but all students and faculty will meet on Zoom to watch them from 12:30 to 1:45pm. The discussion seminars will all be synchronous, and individual seminar leaders will note attendance in seminar.

Lectures will focus on the cultural contexts, main concepts, and philosophical topics in the works studied, drawing connections among them and to the ongoing themes of the course. In seminar, students will explore key ideas raised in lecture, explore ethical questions posed by the works we are studying this semester, and address these questions within the context of major contemporary public debates, through civil discussion as well as through their own writing. Active participation is crucial. Reading and writing assignments will be distributed throughout the semester, including a final research paper with ample opportunity for advice on steps along the way. As designated by individual seminar leaders, students will also demonstrate their comprehension and critical evaluation of key ideas raised in lecture. Individual seminars will vary in the direction they take, but the common CC 202 final exam will focus on questions and topics specifically raised in lecture.

Lecture sessions will be recorded for the benefit of registered students who are unable to attend live sessions (either in person or remotely) due to time zone differences, illness or other special circumstances. Recorded sessions will be made available to registered students on the password-protected course webpage. Students may not share such sessions with anyone not registered for the course and may not repost them in a public platform.

Courseware and Communication: Course communication will take place via announcements and handouts in lecture and seminar, and email messages sent from core@bu.edu and from the accounts of individual seminar instructors. Lecture media, handouts, and readings can be accessed via www.bu.edu/core/cc202. On the Core website you will find reading lists, a calendar of academic and community events, Writing Fellow contact information, writing FAQs, and other resources: www.bu.edu/core. Your seminar leader may make use of a course site specific to your section, for sharing assignment materials, readings, and other resources. Seminar-specific courses sites can be accessed via www.learn.bu.edu.

Writing Support. An at-large Core Writing Fellow will be available for help throughout the semester. Fellows are graduate students who have been trained in grammar and compositional skills and are familiar with the works read in the Core. To book an appointment, consult the reservation instructions at www.bu.edu/core/writing.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Grading Rubric. Your seminar instructor determines your final grade, based on the following components: attendance and participation 15%; discussion and engagement exercises 15%; seminar papers 50%; final exam 20%. Attendance at lectures and seminar discussions is an important part of the course. Absences from lecture and seminar will be weighed seriously by your seminar leader, and will bring down your final grade.

Writing will be a main focus of this course and, accordingly, writing assignments and reflective consideration on the nature of good writing will be ongoing throughout the course. Although specific writing assignments will vary from seminar to seminar, assignments will include both short and longer, comprehensive expository essays. Ongoing work on such papers will include such elements as submission of a proposal, outline, annotated bibliography, draft introduction and preliminary draft. For the final paper in particular, you will have multiple opportunities for feedback before submitting the paper. Other possible assignments will include reflective papers on genre-specific writing, summaries and analysis as a means to better understand the works studied, and peer-review of written works.

Because this course is based on your own engagement with the texts and ideas we will encounter, attendance at lectures and seminar is crucial. Consistent, thorough, daily preparation and vigorous class participation are keys to success. In short, read the books and be prepared to think and speak.

A comprehensive final exam is also required for this course. The exam will be largely essay-driven and possible prompts for the essay portion of the exam will be distributed at least a week before the exam.

COMMUNITY OF LEARNING: CLASS AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Learning and testing accommodation. Boston University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student who needs academic accommodations because of a documented disability, you should contact your seminar leader and present your letter of accommodation as soon as possible. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting academic accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services at access@bu.edu and 617-353-3658. Letters of accommodation should be presented as soon as possible to ensure that student needs are addressed from the start of the course. Learn more at www.bu.edu/disability/policies-procedures.

Learning Environment and Attendance. See above for your responsibility to create a positive learning environment and attend the course regularly (more than three unexcused absences will reduce your grade by one letter). In addition to these responsibilities, please note the following:

Religious Observance. Boston University's policy on religious observance will be adhered to in this course.

Dates, and Policies Regarding Late Work and Exams. Your seminar leaders will determine how papers and other work should be submitted, as well as the penalties assigned for late work. It is possible for you to take a make-up version of the final exam if you have an exam scheduling conflict or three exams scheduled on the same day. Contact the office via core@bu.edu, and your seminar leader, if this is the case. Please be sure to keep a back-up copy of all papers written.

Academic Misconduct. Plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct in this course will result in a failing grade for the course and/or referral of the case to the CAS Academic Conduct Committee, which may impose penalties up to and including expulsion from the University. Please consult your seminar leader or the University's Academic Conduct Code if you have questions about the kinds of actions that constitute plagiarism. Your best rule is to make sure you cite every source you employ, use quotations marks and provide a citation whenever you use someone else's words. Lectures may not be reproduced in any form or otherwise copied, displayed, or distributed without the written permission of the instructor. Please note in particular that selling or buying lecture notes or summaries is prohibited in this class and may result in disciplinary action under the BU Code of Student Responsibilities. You may consult the BU Academic Conduct Code at www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code.

Required textbooks are available at the BU Bookstore. Be sure to obtain these *specific* editions:

- Voltaire, *Candide*, trans. Wootton (Hackett: 9780872205468)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions*, trans. Scholar (OUP: 9780199540037)
- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Gregor & Timmermann (CUP: 9781107401068)
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethe's Faust*, trans. Kauffmann (Anchor: 9780385031141)
- Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, ed. Jones (Penguin: 9780141439518)
- *English Romantic Poetry: An Anthology*, ed. Appelbaum (Dover: 9780486292823)
- Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Signet: 9780451419170)
- Emily Dickinson, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. Franklin (Harvard UP: 9780674018242)
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Diethe (CUP: 9780521691635)
- W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Signet: 9780451532053)
- Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: 9780156628709)

An online writing handbook is available on the Core website via www.bu.edu/core/writing.

CC 202 SPRING 2021 LECTURE SCHEDULE

Lecture #1, Tuesday 1/26: Kant (1724-1804), Mendelssohn (1729-1786), Voltaire (1694-1778)

Lecturer: James Schmidt, History. Reading: Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?," Mendelssohn's remarks on Kant's essay, and *Candide*.

Lecture #2, Tuesday 2/2: Rousseau (1712-1788)

Lecturer: Charles Griswold, Philosophy. Reading: selections from *Confessions* and "Letter to Malherbes".

Lecture #3, Tuesday 2/9: Kant (1724-1804)

Lecturer: Sally Sedgwick, Philosophy. Reading: Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

Tuesday 2/16: No lecture; substitute Monday schedule

Reading: *Faust*.

Lecture #4, Tuesday 2/23: Goethe (1749-1832)

Lecturer: Peter Schwartz, World Languages and Literatures. Reading: *Faust*.

Lecture #5, Tuesday 3/2: Austen (1775-1817)

Lecturer: Joseph Rezek, English. Reading: *Pride and Prejudice*.

Tuesday 3/9: No lecture

Lecture #6, Tuesday 3/16: Beethoven (1770-1827)

Lecturer: Elizabeth Seitz, Boston Conservatory at Berklee. Listening: the Ninth Symphony, available at www.bu.edu/core/cc202.

Lecture #7, Tuesday 3/23: English Romantic Poetry

Lecturer: Karl Kirchwey, English

Reading: selections from *English Romantic Poetry*

Lecture #8, Tuesday 3/30: Dickinson and Whitman

Lecturer: Anita Patterson, English. Reading: selections from *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* and *Leaves of Grass*.

Lecture #9, Tuesday 4/6: Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Lecturer: Peter Schwartz, World Languages and Literatures. Reading: *On the Genealogy of Morality*.

Tuesday 4/13: No lecture

Lecture #10, Tuesday 4/20: Du Bois (1868-1963)

Lecturer: Cornel West, Harvard University. Reading: *The Souls of Black Folk*.

Lecture #11, Tuesday 4/27: Woolf (1882-1941)

Lecturer: Jonathan Foltz, English. Reading: *Mrs. Dalloway*.

April 29

Last Day of Classes

April 30 – May 3

Study Period

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Final Exam:

Tue 5/4 12-2PM, format TBA