

V55.0402.001 CONVERSATIONS OF THE WEST: ANTIQUITY/RENAISSANCE
LECTURES: Mon-Wed 3:30 - 4:45

Course Goals:

The Renaissance understands itself as an age bearing witness to the "rebirth" of classical antiquity. In art, philosophy and literature it also assumes the task of reconciling the cultural inheritance of Greece and Rome with the Christian tradition (itself entering into a moment of crisis as allegiances split between the Catholic church and the "reformed" church of Luther). Our first task will be to look at antiquity. Our second, to explore the ways in which European culture between 1400 and 1700 invents itself—and us—by making itself conversant with the past. In the process, we will explore the two words in the title of this course not to be taken for granted: "conversation," and "the west."

Required texts (at University Book Store). Note that you may substitute other editions if you already have them—e.g., of the Bible, or Shakespeare:

The Oxford Study Bible (Oxford)
Homer, *Odyssey*. tr. Allen Mandelbaum (Bantam)
Sophocles, *Sophocles I*. (2nd Ed. tr. David Grene (Chicago)
Plato, *Five Dialogues*. tr. Grube (Hackett)
Plato, *The Symposium*, ed. Gill
Virgil, *Aeneid*. tr. Allen Mandelbaum (Bantam)
Augustine, *Confessions*. tr. Chadwick. (Oxford World Classics)
Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*. Tr. George Bull (Penguin)
Machiavelli, *The Prince* tr. Robert Adams (Norton Critical)
Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*. tr. Robert Adams (Norton Critical)
More, *Utopia* tr. Robert Adams (Norton Critical)
Montaigne, *Essays* tr. J.M Cohen (Penguin)
Shakespeare, *The Tempest* ed. Stephen Orgel (Oxford)

Course requirements (the gradebook is on line):

Two 6-8 page essays (20% each)
Participation in Recitation (20%)
Midterm exam (20%)
Final exam (20%)

Course policies:

1. Deadlines:

All work is due when it is due. Late work will be penalized five points per day in fairness to students who hand in assignments on time. All course requirements must be completed satisfactorily for a passing grade.

2. Attendance:

Attendance will be taken in lecture and in recitation. A maximum of four absences are allowed in lecture, and a maximum of two in recitation—no excuses needed or explanations required. However, with the sole the exception of absences for serious and documented medical emergencies (you broke your leg), every absence beyond the allotted number in either category will automatically lower your final grade by one full grade. The point is regard your allotted absences as a bank for sick days or personal issues, and to use them—or rather, save them—appropriately. Work missed because of any absence must be made up. If you know in advance that you will need to be absent for any reason, you should inform your recitation instructor in advance.

3. Academic integrity:

Any instances of academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism (including e-plagiarism) will result in a failure in the course and a letter of notification to the Dean. There is no appeal to the instructor, as plagiarism is a matter of fact (what appears on the page) and not of the intention of the plagiarist (“I didn’t mean to do it”). Ignorance, anxiety, lack of time, and so on, are not legitimate excuses. If you are unsure about the proper use of sources it is your responsibility to consult your section leader. Please read the "Statement on Academic Honesty" posted under the "Course Information" button on Blackboard.

4. Examinations:

Examinations are to be taken at the designated time and place, on the designated day. The final exam cannot be administered in advance. It cannot be “made up” afterwards except in the case of a documental medical emergency on the scheduled day. Those who need special accommodation should present their documentation to the instructor at the beginning of the term.

Tutorial assistance:

Additional tutorial assistance for this class is available to you free of charge at the College Learning Center located on the 1st Floor of Weinstein Hall (right behind Java City). For information on one-on-one and group peer tutoring, please stop by the CLC or go to their website: <http://www.nyu.edu/cas/clc>. They can also be reached at 212.998.8008.

Schedule of Lectures:

SEPTEMBER

05: Introductory

10: Genesis

12: Exodus

17: Luke, John

19: Acts of the Apostles

24: Homer, Odyssey

26: Homer, Odyssey

OCTOBER

01: Sophocles, Antigone

03: Plato, Phaedo

08: Holiday (No Class)

10: Plato, Symposium [**First Paper Due in Lecture**]

15: Virgil, Aeneid

17: Virgil, Aeneid

22: **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

24: Augustine, Confessions (Selections): Books 1-8

29: Augustine, Confessions (Selections)

31: Bridge Lecture: Antiquity to the Renaissance

NOVEMBER

05: Bridge Lecture: What is the "Renaissance"?

07: Castiglione, The Courtier (Books 1 and 4)

12: Machiavelli, The Prince

14: Machiavelli, The Prince

19: More, Utopia

21: More, Utopia

26: Erasmus, Praise of Folly [**Second Paper Due in Lecture**]

28: Montaigne, Essays ("Of Repentence," "Of Cannibals," "Of Experience")

DECEMBER

03: Shakespeare, The Tempest

05: Shakespeare, The Tempest

10: Conclusion

12: Review

Final Examination: TBA