

V55.0402.001 CONVERSATIONS OF THE WEST: ANTIQUITY/RENAISSANCE
LECTURES: Mon-Wed 3:30 - 4:45 in 19 University Place, Room 102

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 :

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 to 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 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, or if you have other problems with your writing such that you might be tempted to listen to the devil on your shoulder, it is your responsibility to consult your section leader for help. For a further explanation, 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:

JANUARY

23: Introductory: “Conversations” and the “West”

28: The Book of Genesis

30: The Book of Exodus

FEBRUARY

04: The Gospels of Luke and John

06: The Acts of the Apostles

11: Homer, Odyssey (Books 1-12)

13: Homer, Odyssey (Books 12-24)

18: Presidents’ Day: No class 🙋

20: Sophocles, Antigone

25: Plato, Phaedo

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

MARCH

03: Virgil, Aeneid (Books 1-6)

05: Virgil, Aeneid (Books 7-12)

10: Review of first half of course

12: **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

17: Spring Break: no class 🙋

19: Spring Break: no class 🙋

- 24: Augustine, Confessions: Books 1-8
26: Augustine, Confessions (continued)
31: Bridge Lecture: Antiquity to the Renaissance

APRIL

- 02: Bridge Lecture: What is the "Renaissance"?
07: Castiglione, The Courtier (Books 1 and 4)
09: Machiavelli, The Prince
14: Machiavelli, The Prince (continued)
16: More, Utopia
21: More, Utopia (continued)
23: Erasmus, Praise of Folly [**Second Paper Due in Lecture**]
28: Montaigne, Essays ("Of Repentence," "Of Cannibals," "Of Experience")
30: Shakespeare, The Tempest

MAY

- 05: Conclusion and Review

Final Examination: TBA