FUNDAMENTALS: ISSUES AND TEXTS

ABOUT FUNDAMENTALS

The Fundamentals program enables students to concentrate on fundamental questions by reading classic texts that articulate and speak to these questions. It seeks to foster precise and thoughtful pursuit of basic questions by means of (1) rigorous training in the interpretation of important texts, supported by (2) extensive training in at least one foreign language, and by (3) the acquisition of the knowledge, approaches, and skills of conventional disciplines: historical, religious, literary, scientific, political, and philosophical.

Rationale

A richly informed question or concern formulated by each student guides the reading of texts. Classic texts are also informed by such questions; for example, Socrates asks: What is virtue? What is the good? What is justice? Aristotle and Cicero explore the relation of civic friendship to society. Freud asks: What is happiness? Can humans be happy? Milton investigates how poetic vocation may be related to political responsibility. Students who are engaged by these questions and others like them, and who find them both basic and urgent, may wish to continue to explore them more thoroughly and deeply within the structure of the program which provides the wherewithal to address them on a high level.

That wherewithal is to be found in the fundamental or classic texts (historical, religious, literary, scientific, political, and philosophical) in which the great writers articulate and examine questions in different and competing ways. These books illuminate the persisting questions and speak to contemporary concerns because they are both the originators and exacting critics of our current opinions. These texts serve as colleagues who challenge us to think that something else might actually be the case than what we already think. The most important questions may, at bottom, be the most contested, and those most susceptible to, and most requiring, sustained, probing engagement.

This program emphasizes the firsthand experience and knowledge of major texts, read and reread and reread again. Because they are difficult and complex, only a small number of such works can be studied. Yet the program proposes that intensively studying a profound work and incorporating it into one’s thought and imagination prepares one for reading any important book or reflecting on any important issue. Read rapidly, such books are merely assimilated into preexisting experience and opinions; read intensively, they can transform and deepen experience and thought.

Studying fundamental texts is, by itself, not enough. Even to understand the texts themselves, supporting studies and training are necessary: a solid foundation in at least one foreign language and in disciplines and subject matters pertinent to
the main questions of students are essential parts of the major. Students benefit from knowledge of the historical contexts out of which certain problems emerged or in which authors wrote; knowledge of specific subject matters and methods; knowledge of the language in which a text was originally written, as well as an understanding of the shape a given language imparts to a given author; fundamental skills of analysis, gathering evidence, reasoning, and criticism; different approaches and perspectives of conventional disciplines. All these are integral parts of the educational task.

Individual Program Design

Genuine questions cannot be assigned to a student; they must arise from within. For this reason, a set curriculum is not imposed upon students. Each student’s course of study must answer to his or her interests and concerns, and must begin from a distinctive concern. One student may be exercised about questions of science and religion; another about freedom and determinism; another about friendship and conversation; another by prudence, romance, and marriage; a fifth about distributive justice. Through close work with a suitably chosen faculty adviser, a student determines texts, text and author courses, and supporting courses as appropriate to address the student’s Fundamentals question. Beginning with a student’s questions and interests does not, however, imply an absence of standards or rigor; this program is most demanding.

Activities of Graduates

The Fundamentals program serves the purposes of liberal education, regarded as an end in itself, and offers no specific pre-professional training; yet Fundamentals graduates have successfully prepared for careers in the professions and in scholarship. Some are now pursuing work in law, medicine, journalism, ministry, government service, business, veterinary medicine, and secondary school teaching. Others have gone on to graduate schools in numerous fields, including classics, English, comparative literature, Slavic, history, philosophy, social thought, theology, religious studies, clinical psychology, political science, development economics, mathematics, film studies, and education.

Faculty

The faculty of the Fundamentals program comprises humanists and social scientists, representing interests and competencies in both the East and the West and scholarship in matters ancient and modern. This diversity and pluralism exists within a common agreement about the primacy of fundamental questions and the centrality of important books and reading them well. The intention is for the students to see and work with a variety of scholars presenting their approaches to and understanding of books that they love, that they know well, and that are central to their ongoing concerns.

Application to the Program

Students should apply in Spring Quarter of their first year to enter the program in their second year; the goals and requirements of the program are best met if students spend three years in the major. Students are interviewed and counseled
in order to discover whether or not their interests and intellectual commitments would be best served by this program. Admissions are decided on the basis of the application statement, interviews, and previous academic performance.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Fundamentals program is comprised of (a) **13 courses**, (b) the **Junior Paper**, and (c) the **Senior Exam**, for a total of 1500 units.

A. Course Work

1. **Introductory Sequence (2 courses).** The Introductory Sequence is to be completed in the first year of the program (second year of the College). It consists of two courses:
   - *Part 1: The Gateway Course (Autumn).* This course is specifically designed for the incoming cohort of Fundamentals students and is a mandatory part of the program. It is devoted to the close reading of one or two texts, chosen because they raise challenging questions and present important and competing answers. Through this course, students will study a variety of ways in which a text can respond to their concerns and can compel consideration of its own questions.
   - *Part 2 (Winter or Spring).* For the second half of the sequence, students may select any FNDL course that they feel will best serve as a starting point for exploring their question. This course should be selected in consultation with the program coordinator and/or the student’s adviser.

2. **Text/Author Courses (6 courses).** The Text/Author courses are devoted to the study of one or two particular texts or the work of a particular author. Through these courses, each student will develop a list of texts that will become the basis of his or her Senior Exam (see below). This list should contain works in the area of the student’s primary interest that look at that interest from diverse perspectives, and one of the six must be studied in an original language other than English, the same language in which the student establishes competency. Text/Author courses are generally cross-listed as FNDL courses in the Time Schedules (http://timeschedules.uchicago.edu/view.php?dept=FNDL); if a relevant course is not cross-listed, the student should contact the coordinator to see if it can be counted towards the major.

3. **Supporting Courses (4 courses).** These are courses that complement the student’s program, providing historical context, theoretical and methodological training, or other complements. They do not have to be listed as FNDL to satisfy this requirement, but they must be explicitly identified as supporting courses in consultation with the student’s adviser.

4. **Foreign Language (1 course).** Students in the program are expected to achieve a level of proficiency in a foreign language sufficient to enable them to study in the original language (other than English) one of the texts on their examination list. Such training ordinarily requires two years of formal language instruction or its equivalent. The third quarter of the second year of the language is counted toward the major. In addition, students are required
to take a course where they study a text in that language; the instructor of
the course may be asked to provide an evaluation of the student’s linguistic
proficiency on the basis of this work. Prospective Fundamentals students are
advised that course offerings and departmental resources limit the languages
with which this requirement can be fulfilled: Students must choose a language
in which they can take a Text/Author course or a text-based independent study.

B. The Junior Paper

In the Winter or Spring Quarter of their junior year, students write an extended
essay called the Junior Paper. This project provides the opportunity for students
to originate and formulate a serious inquiry into an important issue arising out of
their work and to pursue the inquiry extensively and in depth in a paper of about
twenty to twenty-five pages. At every stage in the preparation of the paper, students
work closely with their Fundamentals faculty adviser. Students register in the
independent study course FNDL 29901 in the quarter in which they write the paper;
they are also expected to participate in the Junior Paper Colloquium that takes place
in the Winter Quarter. Acceptance of a successful Junior Paper is a prerequisite for
admission to the senior year of the program.

C. The Senior Exam

At the end of Week Six in the Spring Quarter of their senior year, students are
examined on six texts they have studied in the context of their Text/Author courses
and approved independent study courses. Preparation for this examination allows
students to review and integrate their full course of study. During a three-day
period, students write two substantial essays on questions designed for them by
the associated faculty. The examination has a pedagogical intention, more than
a qualifying one; its purpose is to allow students to demonstrate how they have
related and integrated their questions, texts, and disciplinary studies. To take the
exam, students register in FNDL 29902 in the Spring Quarter (or, with the consent of
the chair, in the Autumn or Winter Quarters if there are scheduling issues).

Summary of Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Introductory Sequence (the Gateway Course and a second FNDL course of</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>choice)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Six Text/Author Courses</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td>Four Supporting Courses</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third quarter of second-year foreign language *</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>FNDL 29901 Independent Study: Junior Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>FNDL 29902 Independent Study: Senior Examination</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>1500</td>
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* or credit for the equivalent, determined by petition

GRADING, ADVISING, AND HONORS

Grading. The Junior Paper and Senior Exam (FNDL 29901 and FNDL 29902)
are graded Pass/Fail; all other courses within the major must be taken for quality
grades. Independent study courses must include a term paper, and students should be prepared to request statements of reference or evaluation from faculty with whom they have worked in this capacity.

**Advising.** Each student has a faculty adviser who is assigned to the student on the basis of their mutual interests and areas of expertise. The adviser closely monitors the student’s choice of texts, courses, and language studies, allowing for the gradual development of a fitting and coherent program. The faculty adviser may also oversee the student’s Junior Paper and is responsible for approving the final list of texts for the Senior Exam. In addition, the program coordinator is available for advice and consultation on all aspects of the program.

**Honors.** Honors are awarded by the Fundamentals faculty to students who have performed with distinction in the program. An overall GPA of 3.5 is necessary to be considered for honors, and special attention is paid to both the Junior Paper and the Senior Exam.

### Academic Year 2015–16 Courses

**Gateway Course (required for all incoming Fundamentals majors)**

**FNDL 20700. Aquinas on God, Being, and Human Nature. 100 Units.**
This course considers sections from Saint Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa Theologica*. Among the topics considered are God’s existence; the relationship between God and Being; and human nature.
Instructor(s): S. Meredith
Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Required of all incoming Fundamentals majors
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 23712, RLST 23605

**Independent Study (for registering for the Junior Paper and Senior Exam)**

**FNDL 29901. Independent Study: Junior Paper. 100 Units.**
Students who are on campus will be required to attend a series of colloquium meetings in Winter Quarter, but should enroll in the quarter that they will write the Junior Paper. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Must be taken for P/F grading.
Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open only to Fundamentals students with consent of faculty supervisor and program chair.

**FNDL 29902. Independent Study: Senior Examination. 100 Units.**
Students should expect to register for this independent study in the Spring of their final year, the quarter in which they will take their Senior Exam. Exceptions to this can only be made with the consent of the program chair. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Must be taken for P/F grading.
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open only to Fundamentals students with consent of faculty supervisor and program chair.
**AUTUMN QUARTER**

**FNDL 20700. Aquinas on God, Being, and Human Nature. 100 Units.**
This course considers sections from Saint Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa Theologica*. Among the topics considered are God’s existence; the relationship between God and Being; and human nature.
Instructor(s): S. Meredith Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Required of all incoming Fundamentals majors
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 23712, RLST 23605

**FNDL 21414. The Art of Leonardo da Vinci. 100 Units.**
The central focus of this course will be on the small, damaged and disputed body of paintings that Leonardo has left to us, the wealth of his drawings that help us make sense of that problematic heritage and provide the most direct route into his creative thinking, and the hundreds of pages of text in the form of notes in mirror-image handwriting that comment on art and so many other subjects. Our structure will be roughly chronological, including his late fifteenth-century Florentine artistic and social context (e.g., artists such as Verrocchio, Pollaiuolo, Ghirlandaio, and Botticelli), his two long periods in Milan as a court artist, his triumphant return to Florence and rivalry with the young Michelangelo, his brief and unsatisfying stay in papal Rome, and the little known, mythic final years in France. Among the themes that will be critically examined are: Leonardo’s role in the creation of what is still grandiosely called the High Renaissance; the value and problematic aspects of thinking of him as the quintessential artist-scientist; the significance of the fact that he has been a figure of such obsessive art-historical and broader cultural significance for over 500 years (e.g., readings by Vasari, Freud, and the innumerable artists who have interpreted and mimicked his work); and the ways in which recent scientific and digital imaging have shed surprising amounts of new light on his art. Through the concentrated art-historical material studied, the course will take seriously the attempt to introduce students with little or no background in art history to some of the major avenues for interpretation in this field, including formal, stylistic, iconographical, psychological, social, feminist, theoretical, and reception. Readings are chosen with this diversity of approach in mind.
Instructor(s): C. Cohen Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Students must attend first class to confirm enrollment. For nonmajors, any ARTH 17000 through 18999 course meets the general education requirement in the dramatic, musical, and visual arts.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 17121
FNLD 22001. Foucault and The History of Sexuality. 100 Units.
This course centers on a close reading of the first volume of Michel Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality*, with some attention to his writings on the history of ancient conceptualizations of sex. How should a history of sexuality take into account scientific theories, social relations of power, and different experiences of the self? We discuss the contrasting descriptions and conceptions of sexual behavior before and after the emergence of a science of sexuality. Other writers influenced by and critical of Foucault are also discussed.
Instructor(s): A. Davidson Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): One prior philosophy course is strongly recommended.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 24800, CMLT 25001, GNSE 23100, HIPS 24300

FNLD 23107. Introduction to Ethics. 100 Units.
In this course, we will read, write, think, and talk about moral philosophy, focusing on two classic texts, Immanuel Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and John Stuart Mill’s *Utilitarianism*. We will work through both texts carefully, and have a look at influential criticisms of utilitarianism and of Kant’s ethics in the concluding weeks of the term. This course is intended as an introductory course in moral philosophy. Some prior work in philosophy is helpful, but not required. (A)
Instructor(s): B. Callard Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21000, HIPS 21000

FNLD 24211. Lucretius and Marx. 100 Units.
Lucretius was a follower of Epicurus, whom Marx called “the greatest representative of Greek enlightenment.” In his poem *On the Nature of Things*, Lucretius seeks to convert his fellow Romans to an Epicurean way of life. He explains in detail what the world is made of (atoms) and that there is no reason to fear the gods or death. Marx wrote his doctoral dissertation on Epicurus and Lucretius. He was especially enthusiastic about the idea, which was developed by Lucretius, that humans are free to shape their own lives.
Instructor(s): E. Asmis Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor is required.
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 25606, CLAS 35606, LLSO 25606
FNDL 24525. Hannah Arendt: On Revolution. 100 Units.
This seminar will be focused on Hannah Arendt’s *On Revolution*, first published in 1963. Alongside a careful reading of the text, we may consider: the place of *On Revolution* in Arendt’s oeuvre; its significance for recent and contemporary democratic theory; its relation to Marxian theories of revolution; its reception in the 1960s, particularly within the "New Left"; its relation to political and social-scientific discourses about revolution, including particularly anti-colonial revolution, in the context of the Cold War; its relation to the contemporaneous re-emergence of "poverty" as an object of political concern in the United States; and the adequacy, inadequacy, and/or idiosyncracy of Arendt’s treatments of historical revolutions such as the American, French, Russian, German, Hungarian, and Cuban. (A)
Instructor(s): P. Markell Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): For advanced undergraduate and graduate students. Enrollment will be limited and consent required.
Note(s): Please do not contact the instructor for consent prior to the start of the term; interested students should simply attend the first session.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 34525, PLSC 24525

FNDL 25815. On the Natural History of Destruction: W. G. Sebald. 100 Units.
The difficulty of categorizing the sort of literary practice Sebald engaged in is notorious. The genres and hybrid styles with which his “novels” have been identified include: travel writing, memoir, photo essay, documentary fiction, magical realism, postmodern pastiche, cultural-historical fantasy, among others. And given the fact that his work so often deals, if only indirectly, with the Holocaust and its aftershocks, his work has furthermore been associated with that highly problematic generic and historical constellation, “Holocaust literature.” The seminar will address all of Sebald’s major works in the hope of elucidating this singular intersection of historical and literary complexity.
Instructor(s): E. Santner Terms Offered: Autumn 2015
Note(s): Texts will be available in English and German, discussion will be held in English.
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 35815, GRMN 25815

FNDL 25910. Racine. 100 Units.
Racine’s tragedies are often considered the culminating achievement of French classicism. Most famous for his powerful re-imaginings of Greek myth (Phèdre, Andromaque), his tragic universe nevertheless ranged considerably wider, from ancient Jewish queens to a contemporary Ottoman harem. We will consider the roots (from Euripides to Corneille) of his theatrical practice as well as its immense influence on future writers (from Voltaire to Proust, Beckett, and Genet).
Instructor(s): L. Norman Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): At least one French literature course 21700 or higher.
Note(s): Taught in French. All work in French for students seeking French credit; written work may be in English for others.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 35910, TAPS 28476, TAPS 35910, FREN 25910
FNDL 26047. Pushkin and Gogol. 100 Units.
Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837) is widely considered the founding genius of modern Russian literature, especially in his lyric and epic poetry; Nikolai Gogol (1809–1852) injected a manic strain of magic realism to create the modern Russian novel. Apollon Grigor’ev later called Pushkin “our everything”; Dostoevsky claimed “We all emerged out of Gogol’s ‘Overcoat.’” During the quarter we will read a representative selection of both writers’ major works, including Pushkin’s verse novel Evgenii Onegin, verse epic The Bronze Horseman, and novel The Captain’s Daughter, and Gogol’s novel Dead Souls in addition to his fantastic stories “The Nose” and “The Overcoat.” We will focus on close readings of the texts, paying particular attention to their experiments with literary form, as well as attending to their broader historical contextualization. We will focus particularly on the conceptions of realism projected by the texts and imposed by later readers. All readings will be in English translation.
Instructor(s): Robert Bird
Note(s): This course will offered in place of RUSS 25500
Equivalent Course(s): REES 36047,REES 26047

FNDL 26506. Agnes Varda. 100 Units.
This course examines the work of one of the most significant directors working in France today. Making important films from the 1960s to the present day, Varda has been crucial to the development of new film practices: both in the past—as with the birth of the French New Wave Cinema—and in the present by exploring new forms of plastic narration and by working with moving images in gallery spaces.
Instructor(s): D. Bluher Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 26810

FNDL 27202. Dante’s Divine Comedy 2: Purgatorio and Vita Nova. 100 Units.
This course is an intense study of the middle cantica of the Divine Comedy and its relationship with Dante’s early masterpiece, the Vita Nuova. The very middleness of the Purgatorio provides Dante the opportunity to explore a variety of problems dealing with our life here, now, on earth: contemporary politics, the relationship between body and soul, poetry and the literary canon, art and imagination, the nature of dreams, and, of course, love and desire. The Purgatorio is also Dante’s most original contribution to the imagination of the underworld, equally influenced by new conceptualizations of “merchant time” and by contemporary travel writing and fantastic voyages.
Instructor(s): J. Steinberg Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 32200,LLSO 27202,ITAL 22000
WINTER QUARTER

FNDL 21403. Shakespeare I: Histories and Comedies. 100 Units.
An exploration of Shakespeare’s major plays in the genres of history play and romantic comedy, from the first half (roughly speaking) of his professional career: Richard II, Henry IV Parts 1 and 2, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Much Ado about Nothing, Twelfth Night, and Troilus and Cressida. (D, E)
Instructor(s): R. Strier Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 16500, TAPS 28405

FNDL 22616. Soren Kierkegaard/Johannes Climacus: Concluding Unscientific Postscript. 100 Units.
This seminar will be a close reading of Kierkegaard’s text, written under the pseudonym of “Johannes Climacus”. Among the topics to be discussed are: the nature and task of subjectivity, what it is for subjectivity to be truth, irony and humor, what it is for a communication to be successful, ethical versus religious outlooks, the peculiar requirements of being a Christian. (V)
Instructor(s): J. Lear Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): For Philosophy and Fundamentals majors
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 27209

FNDL 22901. Many Ramayanas. 100 Units.
This course is a close reading of the great Hindu Epic, the story of Rama’s recovery of his wife, Sita, from the demon Ravana on the island of Lanka, with special attention to the changes in the telling of the story throughout Indian history.
Readings are in Paula Richman, Many Ramayanas and Questioning Ramayanas; the Ramayanas of Valmiki (in translation by Goldman, Sattar, Shastri, and R. K. Narayan), Kampan, and Tulsi; the Yogavasistha-Maharamayana; and contemporary comic books and films.
Instructor(s): W. Doniger Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor
Equivalent Course(s): HREL 42501, RLST 26801, SALC 42501, SCTH 40701

FNDL 23915. Plato’s Republic. 100 Units.
This course is devoted to reading and discussion of Plato’s Republic and some secondary work with attention to justice in the city and the soul, war and warriors, psychology, education, theology, poetry, gender, eros, and cities in speech and actually existing cities. (A)
Instructor(s): N. Tarcov Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor required.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 33915, LLSO 23915, CLAS 34216, CLCV 24216, PLSC 23915
FNDL 24301. Ludwig Wittgenstein’s "Philosophical Investigations" 100 Units.
Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* is one of the most important works of philosophy written in the twentieth century. Its influence has reached far and wide beyond the limits of philosophy. Yet its meaning remains deeply controversial. This is in part because Wittgenstein broke radically with some of the most common assumptions human beings, especially educated human beings, like to make about themselves, their minds, and the world. It is also because Wittgenstein’s philosophical method made it a point of principle to propose no theories of any kind. The purpose of this course is to make the *Philosophical Investigations* intellectually accessible to students with no professional training or interest in philosophy. The format will consist of a mixture of lecture and commentary, with some room for discussion of selected passages and points of special interest.

Instructor(s): C. Fasolt Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 28702, LLSO 28702

FNDL 24330. Short Stories from a Late Ming Collection. 100 Units.
This course will explore Feng Menglong’s three collections of vernacular stories: *Illustrious Words to Instruct the World* (1620), *Comprehensive Words to Warn the World* (1624), and *Constant Words to Awaken the World* (1627). Known collectively as the “Three Words,” these immensely popular and influential volumes map the social whole of late imperial China, tracking the friendships, romances, schemes, and follies of merchants and monks, students and courtesans, emperors and farmers. Alongside close readings of selected stories, we will examine the structure, sources, and publication history of the collections and locate them in a broader discussion of the meanings and functions of vernacular literature. All readings available in English.

Instructor(s): A. Fox Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 34330, EALC 24330

FNDL 24711. Lincoln: Slavery, War, and the Constitution. 100 Units.
This course is a study of Abraham Lincoln’s view of the Constitution, based on close readings of his writings, plus comparisons to judicial responses to Lincoln’s policies.

Instructor(s): D. Hutchinson Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 24711, HIST 27102

FNDL 25105. Readings in Ibn Tufayl’s Hayy b. Yaqzan. 100 Units.
No description available.
Instructor(s): J. Robinson Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 35004, RLST 25105, ISLM 35004
**FNDL 25300. Lolita. 100 Units.**
“Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul, Lolita: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate, to tap at three on the teeth.” Popular as Nabokov’s “all-American” novel is, it is rarely discussed beyond its psychosexual profile. This intensive text-centered and discussion-based course attempts to supersede the univocal obsession with the novel’s pedophiliac plot as such by concerning itself above all with the novel’s language: language as failure, as mania, and as conjuration. (B)
Instructor(s): M. Sternstein Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): RUSS 23900, ENGL 28916

**FNDL 26903. Gombrowicz: The Writer as Philosopher. 100 Units.**
In this course, we dwell on Witold Gombrowicz the philosopher, exploring the components of his authorial style and concepts that substantiate his claim to both the literary and the philosophical spheres. Entangled in an ongoing battle with basic philosophical tenets and, indeed, with existence itself, this erudite Polish author is a prime example of a 20th century modernist whose philosophical novels explode with uncanny laughter. In contrast to many of his contemporaries, who established their reputations as writers/philosophers, Gombrowicz applied distinctly literary models to the same questions that they explored. We investigate these models in depth, as we focus on Gombrowicz’s novels, philosophical lectures, and some of his autobiographical writings. With an insight from recent criticism of these primary texts, we seek answers to the more general question: What makes this author a philosopher?
Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): All readings in English.
Equivalent Course(s): REES 21000, ISHU 29405, REES 31000

**FNDL 27725. Machiavelli’s Florentine Histories. 100 Units.**
This course is devoted to a close reading of what is perhaps Niccolò Machiavelli’s most difficult work, the *Florentine Histories*. We will explore the extent to which the lessons of Machiavelli’s history of his native city conform with those that he earlier set forth in more famous works like *The Prince* and the *Discourses*. We will also examine the interpretive debates over the *Histories* that pervade the scholarly literature. Themes pertaining to the Florentine Republic to be considered include: liberty, patriotism, civic foundings, social conflict, partisan strife, religion and politics, tyranny, revolution, and corruption. (A)
Instructor(s): J. McCormick Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Advanced consent of instructor required.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 37725, LLSO 27725, PLSC 27725
SPRING QUARTER

FNDL 20502. Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago and Beyond. 100 Units.  
This course looks at Wright’s work from multiple angles. We examine his  
architecture, urbanism, and relationship to the built environment, as well as the  
socio-cultural context of his lifetime and legend. We take advantage of the Robie  
House on campus and of the rich legacy of Wright’s early work in Chicago; we  
also think about his later Usonian houses for middle-income clients and the urban  
framework he imagined for his work (Broadacre City), as well as his Wisconsin  
headquarters (Taliesin), and spectacular works like the Johnson Wax Factory (a field  
trip, if funds permit), Fallingwater, and the Guggenheim Museum. By examining  
one architect’s work in context, students gain experience analyzing buildings  
and their siting, and interpreting them in light of their complex ingredients and  
circumstances. The overall goal is to provide an introduction to thinking about  
arichitecture and urbanism.  
Instructor(s): K. Taylor Terms Offered: Spring  
Note(s): Students must attend first class to confirm enrollment. This course meets  
the general education requirement in the dramatic, musical, and visual arts.  
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 17410

FNDL 21300. James Joyce’s Ulysses. 100 Units.  
This course considers themes that include the problems of exile, homelessness, and  
nationality; the mysteries of paternity and maternity; the meaning of the Return;  
Joyce’s epistemology and his use of dream, fantasy, and hallucinations; and Joyce’s  
experimentation with and use of language.  
Instructor(s): S. Meredith Terms Offered: Spring

FNDL 21404. Shakespeare II: Tragedies and Romances. 100 Units.  
This course explores some of the major plays in the genres of tragedy and romance  
in the latter half of Shakespeare’s career. After having examined how Shakespeare  
develops and deepens the conventions of tragedy in Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and  
Antony and Cleopatra, we will turn our attention to how he complicates and even  
subverts these conventions in three romances: Cymbeline, The Winter’s Tale, and The  
Tempest. Throughout, we will treat the plays as literary texts, performance prompts,  
and historical documents. Section attendance is required. (D, E)  
Instructor(s): T. Harrison Terms Offered: Spring  
Note(s): ENGL 16500 recommended but not required.  
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 16600,TAPS 28406

FNDL 23112. The Autobiography of Teresa of Avila. 100 Units.  
In this course we will do a close reading of the autobiography of Teresa of Avila in  
which we will pay attention to her attitudes towards prayer and religious practice,  
mystical experience, community organization, sin and redemption, and gender. Our  
reading will be supplemented by other texts written by Teresa as well as secondary  
works that will help us interpret her in her historical context.  
Instructor(s): L. Pick Terms Offered: Spring  
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 19801,GNDR 20701,RLST 20701
FNDL 23806. Consciousness and Critique: The Autobiographies of Dorothy Day and Malcolm X. 100 Units.
A close reading of Dorothy Day’s *The Long Loneliness* (1952) and of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1964) will allow the exploration of the relation between self-creation or re-invention, on the one hand, and social critique and change, on the other. Day was a social radical who, motivated by the cause of the poor, became the founder of the Catholic Worker movement; Malcolm X was a revolutionary who became an iconic figure in the global Black freedom struggle. The reconstruction of memory, the relation of narration and consciousness, the appropriation of cultural and religious narratives, the diagnosis of personal fault and social ill, and the arc of conversion are among themes to be considered; reference will also be made to Augustine’s classic autobiography, *Confessions* (397).
Instructor(s): K. Culp Terms Offered: Spring

FNDL 25401. Confucius and Laozi. 100 Units.
In this course we will begin with reading two of the foundational texts of the Chinese philosophical tradition: the Lunyu or Analects of Confucius and the Daodejing or Classic of the Way and Virtue ascribed to Laozi. In addition to considering what these texts may have meant to their writers, we will also consider how they were written and how that writing may have influenced what they meant both to their writers and to their earliest readers. We will also take account of recent manuscript discoveries of these texts and what they might mean for their histories.
Instructor(s): E. Shaughnessy Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 25401,EALC 35401

FNDL 26100. Les Misérables. 100 Units.
In this course we read *Les Misérables* and discuss the work’s message, structure, and aesthetic vision. We will be particularly attentive to Victor Hugo’s role as an observer of nineteenth-century French society as well as an actor in the political life of his times.
Instructor(s): R. Morrissey Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): All classes and texts in French; presentations preferred in French, but English will be acceptable depending on the concentration. Written work in French or English.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 36103,FREN 26103
FNDL 26207. Reading Buddhist Scripture as Literature: The Lotus Sūtra. 100 Units.
The Lotus Sūtra, an early Mahayana Buddhist scripture that propounded startling new Buddhist beliefs and practices, is one of the most influential and widely read scriptures in the world, especially in East Asia: Its champions have touted it as profoundly meaningful, beautiful, and emancipatory. How and why is it good to read? To answer these questions, we will read an English translation of the work over the first half of the course, alongside some scholars who say that it should be read “as literature.” After completing our initial reading of the Lotus, we will turn to thinkers who attempt to destabilize our notions of what “reading,” “Buddhism,” “literature,” or “scripture” can even be said to consist of. As a final project, we will weigh in by developing our own readings of the Lotus, its history of interpretations, or the course itself. All texts in English.
Instructor(s): A. Hsu Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 26202, RLST 26200

FNDL 26405. D. W. Griffith. 100 Units.
No description available.
Instructor(s): Y. Tsivian Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): CMST 10100, ARTH 20000, ENGL 10800, ARTV 25300, or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 36405, CMST 26405

FNDL 28202. Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts. 100 Units.
Our main goal is a careful reading of the New Testament, while highlighting specific authors and specific passages. We will gain some useful knowledge of the historical, geographical, social, religious, cultural and political contexts of these documents and explore the major literary genres represented in the canon. Some insights will be given in the history of research, and current methodologies will be reflected. In the end, each participant should be able to find a personal way of dealing with these texts.
Instructor(s): M. Mitchell Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 32500, RLST 12000

POSSIBLE SUPPORTING COURSES
Supporting Courses are intended to provide further methodological training, historical context, and conceptual frameworks to enrich the student’s engagement with the texts, topics, and ideas relevant to his or her project; the selection of such courses will therefore vary considerably from person to person. The list below is a selection of what Fundamentals students might consider as their Supporting Courses, but it is by no means an exhaustive or prescriptive list. Students are encouraged to make a habit of reading the catalogs of other relevant departments and to comb through the quarterly Time Schedules (http://timeschedules.uchicago.edu) to locate courses that speak to their interests. The program coordinator and the student’s advisers are also valuable resources to consult when planning out the academic year.
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