Fundamentals: Issues and Texts

Department Website: http://fundamentals.uchicago.edu

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 at my.uchicago.edu; 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 first
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. Students and instructors should work closely together in determining how the student will demonstrate competency in the language. As the achievement of proficiency may differ vis-à-vis length of study from language to language, it may prove harder for students of some languages to read a text in its entirety even after completing two years of instruction. Any students who believe that their language is so difficult that doing so is unrealistic may petition to have the requirement met by reading a clearly marked-out portion of the text—perhaps a chapter or two, or series of smaller sections. To be considered, the petition must set out a clear plan and must be signed by the instructor of the text in question.

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 (roughly 8,000 to 10,000 words). 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

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Introductory Sequence (the Gateway Course and a second FNDL course of choice)</td>
<td>200</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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<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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FNDL 29902 Independent Study: Senior Examination 100

Total Units 1500

* 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 2016–17 Courses

Gateway Course (required for all incoming Fundamentals majors)

FNDL 21650. Kafka's The Trial. 100 Units.

This very close reading of Kafka's arguably most well known unfinished novel means to move away from megalithic glosses of Kafka as a writer of allegory—of bureaucratic oppression, social alienation, and a world abandoned by God, etc.—instead to look deeply at Kafka's precision, and strategic imprecision, of language, language as trauma, wound, and axe. Knowledge of German is not necessary.

Instructor(s): M. Sternstein Terms Offered: Autumn
Independent Study (for registering for the Junior Paper and Senior Examination)

**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.

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**Autumn Quarter**

**FNDL 21005. Philosophy: Plato's Phaedrus. 100 Units.**
The *Phaedrus* is one of the most fascinating and compelling of Plato's Dialogues. Beginning with a playful treatment of the theme of erotic passion, it continues with a consideration of the nature of inspiration, love, and knowledge. The centerpiece is one of the most famous of the Platonic myths, the moving description of the charioteer and its allegory of the vision, fall, and incarnation of the soul.

Instructor(s): E. Asmis
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): GREK 20300 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 31200, GREK 31200, GREK 21200

**FNDL 21320. A Couple Openended Novels. 100 Units.**
This course will consider two (or in the spirit of openendedness) three novels by modern whatisthefterm or postmodern or postpostmodern, openended novels—by writers, all of whom, to some extent, are artistic descendants of James Joyce. One of the novels will be *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace. This will be paired (or tripled?) with the following: *White Noise* by Don DeLillo and *Zazie Dans le Metro* by Raymond Queneau. (There were other possibilities: *Life: A User's Manual* by George Pereg; *Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon…). So like but then, the themes of the course will be: the postmodern (?postpostmodern?) dysfunctional family; ecodisaster; depression; prozac and its buddies; addiction and OCD; language: to proscribe (or prescribe) or not; the fear of death; and (natch) the problem of evil in a morally leveled ethical landscape. (B)

Instructor(s): S. Meredith
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 24005
FNDL 21650. Kafka's The Trial. 100 Units.
This very close reading of Kafka's arguably most well known unfinished novel means to move away from megalithic glosses of Kafka as a writer of allegory—of bureaucratic oppression, social alienation, and a world abandoned by God, etc.—instead to look deeply at Kafka's precision, and strategic imprecision, of language, language as trauma, wound, and axe. Knowledge of German is not necessary.
Instructor(s): M. Sternstein Terms Offered: Autumn

FNDL 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. Students should register via discussion section.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 25001, GNSE 23100, HIPS 24300, KNOW 27002, PHIL 24800

FNDL 22220. Marx’s Capital, Volume I. 100 Units.
*Field Satisfied: I & V, Ugrad Field: A*
Instructor(s): A. Ford Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Undergrads enroll in sections 01 & 02. Graduates enroll in section 03.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 32220, PHIL 22220

FNDL 24403. Herodotus and Thucydides: History and Politics. 100 Units.
In this course we read Herodotus and Thucydides not only as historians but as political thinkers. The course will be organized around an intensive engagement with two central texts: Herodotus’ *Histories* and Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*. As we read through these works, we will also take up the wider historical and political context—e.g., the fifth-century rise of Athenian democracy and imperialism—and the relationship between our texts and other genres, including philosophy, drama, and rhetoric. The aim of the course is not only to give students a close familiarity with our two authors and some of the scholarship surrounding them, but also, more broadly, to think through the relationship between political theory and history. How might political theory guide the writing of history, and how can history contribute to theorizing politics? What can our reading of Herodotus and Thucydides tell us about how to think about these questions in different eras and contexts?
Instructor(s): M. Landauer Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 34401, PLSC 24401

FNDL 27103. War and Peace. 100 Units.
Tolstoy’s novel is at once a national epic, a treatise on history, a spiritual meditation, and a masterpiece of realism. This course presents a close reading of one of the world’s great novels, and of the criticism that has been devoted to it, including landmark works by Victor Shklovsky, Boris Eikhenbaum, Isaiah Berlin, and George Steiner. *(B, G)*
Instructor(s): William Nickell Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): REES 30001, CMLT 22301, CMLT 32301, ENGL 28912, HIST 23704, ENGL 32302, REES 20001
FNDL 27201. Spinoza. 100 Units.
Seventeenth-century philosopher Benedict de Spinoza was expelled from his Jewish community at the age of twenty-three, and has been publicly reviled for much of the last 350 years. But how could a philosopher—let alone one who is famous, more than anything else, for his metaphysics—provoke such a visceral reaction? In this course, we’ll examine many of Spinoza’s metaphysical doctrines which caused such controversy, as well as their impact on our understanding of religion and human nature. Topics to be discussed include: revelation and miracles as natural events; pantheism; substance monism; necessitarianism; mind and body as “one and the same thing”; and teleology.
Instructor(s): A. Silverman Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 27201

FNDL 27950. The Declaration of Independence. 100 Units.
This course explores important intellectual, political, philosophical, legal, economic, social, and religious contexts for the Declaration of Independence. We begin with a consideration of the English Revolution, investigating the texts of the Declaration of Rights of 1689 and Locke’s Second Treatise and their meanings to American revolutionaries. We then consider imperial debates over taxation in the 1760s and 1770s, returning Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography to its original context. Reading Paine’s Common Sense and the letters of Abigail Adams and John Adams we look at the multiple meanings of independence. We study Jefferson’s drafting process, read the Declaration over the shoulders of people on both sides of the Atlantic, and consider clues to contemporary meanings beyond the intentions of Congress. Finally, we briefly engage the post-revolutionary history of the place and meaning of the Declaration in American life. (F)
Instructor(s): E. Slauter Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 17604, HMRT 17950, LLSO 27950, ENGL 17950

FNDL 20024. Nabokov’s Ada, or Ardor. 100 Units.
Described as a “difficult book [...] filled with ‘dense of intertextual allusion’,” Ada, Nabokov’s last (completed) novel (1969), is also his longest, most puzzling, and, arguably, most rewarding. As one critic has put it, "Aesthetically, intellectually, and even morally, this is a Difficult Book par excellence. It demands a lover’s patience. But sentences like these are our steadfast consolation for submitting to the wiles of Ada.” In this course we submit ourselves. (B)
Instructor(s): Malynne Sternstein Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 30024, ENGL 20024, REES 20024
FNDL 20301. Beginning the Chinese Novel. 100 Units.
This course will look at four of the most famous novels of pre-modern China: Romance of the Three Kingdoms, Water Margin, Journey to the West, and Dream of the Red Chamber. Deeply self-conscious about the process of their own creation and their place within the larger literary canon, these novels deploy multiple frames, philosophical disquisitions, authorial ciphers, invented histories, and false starts before the story can properly begin. By focusing on the first ten chapters of each novel, this course will serve as both an introduction to the masterworks of the Chinese novel and an exploration of the fraught beginnings of a new genre. All readings available in English.
Instructor(s): A. Fox Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 15100

FNDL 22211. Introduction à la littérature arthurienne. 100 Units.
Instructor(s): D. Delogu
Prerequisite(s): FREN 20500 or consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 22210

FNDL 23107. Introduction to Ethics. 100 Units.
In this course, we will read, write, and think about central issues in moral philosophy. This survey course is designed to give a rapid introduction to philosophical ethics (largely in the Anglo–North American tradition (although not entirely as a product of Anglo–North American philosophers). We will begin with work by Immanuel Kant and Henry Sidgwick and conclude with important twentieth-century work in metaethics and normative ethics (one thing that we will consider is the distinctions between metaethics, normative ethics, and the various fields united under the rubric ‘applied ethics’). This course is intended as an introductory course in moral philosophy. Some prior work in philosophy is helpful, but not required. (A)
Instructor(s): C. Vogler Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Students should register via discussion section.
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 21000, PHIL 21000
FNDL 24612. Dostoevsky. 100 Units.
Dostoevsky was an inveterate risk-taker, not only at the baccarat tables of the Grand Casino in Baden-Baden, but in his personal life, his political activities, and his artistic endeavors. This course is intended to investigate his two greatest wagers: on the presence of the divine in the world and on the power of artistic form to convey and articulate this presence. Dostoevsky’s wager on form is evident even in his early, relatively conventional texts, like *The Double*. It intensifies after his decade-long sojourn in Siberia, exploding in works like *The Notes from Underground*, which one-and-a-half centuries later remains an aesthetic and philosophical provocation of immense power. The majority of the course will focus on Dostoevsky’s later novels. In *Crime and Punishment* Dostoevsky adapts suspense strategies to create a metaphysical thriller, while in *The Demons* he pairs a study of nihilism with the deformation of the novel as a genre. Through close readings of these works we will trace how Dostoevsky’s formal experimentation created new ways of exploring realms of existence that traditionally belonged to philosophy and theology. The results were never comfortable or comforting; we will focus on interpreting Dostoevsky’s metaphysical provocations.
Instructor(s): Robert Bird Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HUMA 24800,REES 30013,RLST 28204,REES 20013

FNDL 26206. Gramsci. 100 Units.
In this course we read selections from Antonio Gramsci’s *Letters* and *Prison Notebooks* side by side with their sources. Gramsci’s influential interpretations of the Italian Renaissance, Risorgimento, and Fascism are reviewed *testi alla mano* with the aim of reassessing some major turning points in Italian intellectual history. Readings and notions introduced include, for the Renaissance, Petrarch (“the cosmopolitan intellectual”), Savonarola (the “disarmed prophet”), Machiavelli (the “modern prince”), and Guicciardini (the “particulare”); for Italy’s “long Risorgimento,” Vico (“living philology”), Cuoco (“passive revolution”), Manzoni (“questione della lingua”), Gioberti (“clericalism”), and De Sanctis (the “Man of Guicciardini”); and Croce (the “anti-Croce”) and Pirandello (theater and “national-popular” literature), for Italy’s twentieth century.
Instructor(s): R. Rubini Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Language to be determined by class makeup
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 36000,REMS 36000,ITAL 26000
FNDL 27517. Metaphysics, Morbidity, & Modernity: Mann’s The Magic Mountain. 100 Units.

Our main task in this course is to explore in detail one of the most significant novels of the twentieth century, Thomas Mann’s The Magic Mountain. But this novel is also a window onto the entirety of modern European thought, and it provides, at the same time, a telling perspective of the crisis of European culture prior to and following on World War I. It is, in Thomas Mann’s formulation, a time-novel: a novel about its time, but also a novel about human being in time. For anyone interested in the configuration of European intellectual life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Mann’s great (and challenging) novel is indispensable reading. Lectures will relate Mann’s novel to its great European counterparts (e.g., Proust, Joyce, Musil), to the traditions of European thought from Voltaire to Georg Lukacs, from Schopenhauer to Heidegger, from Marx to Max Weber.

Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): This is a LECTURE course with discussion sections. All readings in English.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 27517, GRMN 27517

FNDL 27800. Kant’s "Critique of Pure Reason" 100 Units.

This will be a careful reading of what is widely regarded as the greatest work of modern philosophy, Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason. Our principal aims will be to understand the problems Kant seeks to address and the significance of his famous doctrine of "transcendental idealism". Topics will include: the role of mind in the constitution of experience; the nature of space and time; the relation between self-knowledge and knowledge of objects; how causal claims can be justified by experience; whether free will is possible; the relation between appearance and reality; the possibility of metaphysics. (B) (V)

Instructor(s): M. Boyle Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Undergrads enroll in sections 01, 02, 03 & 04. Graduates enroll in section 05.
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 25001, CHSS 37901, PHIL 37500, PHIL 27500

Spring Quarter

FNDL 21203. Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams. 100 Units.

In this seminar we will engage in a close reading of Freud’s most famous book. Special emphasis will be made on the ways in which social, political, and cultural materials and pressures enter into the “dreamwork” explored by Freud in the midst of the decline of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Instructor(s): E. Santner Terms Offered: Winter

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. (B, G)

Instructor(s): S. Meredith Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21301
FNDL 21603. Machiavelli and Machiavellism. 100 Units.
This course is a comprehensive introduction to Machiavelli’s *The Prince* in light of his vast and varied literary corpus and European reception. The course includes discussion of Machiavelli as playwright (*The Mandrake*), fiction writer (*Belfagor, The Golden Ass*), and historian (*Discourses, Florentine Histories*). We will also closely investigate the emergence of myths surrounding Machiavelli (Machiavellism and anti-Machiavellism) in Italy (Guicciardini, Botero, Boccalini), France (Bodin and Gentillet), Spain (Ribadeneyra), and Northern Europe (Hobbes, Grotius, Spinoza) during the Counter Reformation and beyond.
Instructor(s): R. Rubini Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian. Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 25801, LLSO 21603, CMLT 35801, ITAL 23000

FNDL 21806. Pascal and Simone Weil. 100 Units.
Pascal in the seventeenth century and Simone Weil in the twentieth formulated a compelling vision of the human condition, torn between greatness and misery. They showed how human imperfection coexists with the noblest callings, how attention struggles with diversion and how individuals can be rescued from their usual reliance on public opinion and customary beliefs. Both thinkers point to the religious dimension of human experience and suggest unorthodox ways of approaching it.
Instructor(s): T. Pavel Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Third- or fourth-year standing.
Note(s): The course will be taught in English. For French undergraduates and graduates, we will hold a bi-weekly one-hour meeting to study the original French texts.

FNDL 21809. Immanuel Kant's Critique of Practical Reason. 100 Units.
This course is a careful reading and engagement with Immanuel Kant’s fundamental text in moral theory. If time allows, the course will also consider elements of Kant’s religious thinking in his philosophical theology.
Instructor(s): W. Schweiker Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): RETH 31702, RLST 24304

FNDL 22309. Zhuangzi: Literature, Philosophy, or Something Else. 100 Units.
The early Chinese book attributed to Master Zhuang seems to be a patchwork of fables, polemical discussions, arguments, examples, riddles, and lyrical utterances. Although it has been central to the development of both religious Daoism and Buddhism, the book is alien to both traditions. This course offers a careful reading of the work with some of its early commentaries.
Instructor(s): Haun Saussy Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Classical Chinese.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 21815

FNDL 22310. Dante's Rime. 100 Units.
Intensive reading course of Dante's lyric poetry. These erotic, doctrinal, and political poems are the least studied of Dante’s vernacular corpus but key to understanding the poet's methods and development.
Instructor(s): J. Steinberg
Note(s): Texts will be read in Italian. Discussion language to be determined by class makeup.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 22310, ITAL 32310
FNDL 24410. Montaigne dans l’histoire littéraire: inventions/récupérations. 100 Units.
Qu’est-ce qui fait de Montaigne un auteur moderne ? Question qui semble d’actualité en ce début du XXIe siècle. La modernité de Montaigne consisterait ainsi à repérer dans les Essais ce que nous sommes devenus aujourd’hui. Comme si les questions que se posait l’auteur des Essais étaient aussi nos questions en ce début du XXIe siècle. Nous verrons comment la plupart des lectures “modernes” de Montaigne sont souvent l’expression d’une forme de récupération idéologique (inconsciente) qui vise à placer le sujet universel sur un piédestal, au détriment de sa dimension purement historique et politique. Nous étudierons également ce que l’on pourrait appeler l’invention de Montaigne au cours des siècles.
Instructor(s): P. Desan Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 34410,FREN 24410

FNDL 24504. Justin Martyr. 100 Units.
It is probably safe to say that Justin Martyr was the first truly philosophic Christian theologian, unless one gives the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews that distinction. This course will focus on a careful reading of the Greek text of the First Apology and (as time permits) the Second Apology, with attention to Justin’s language and literary style. We will also concentrate on Justin as an early defender of and advocate for the Christian faith, the importance of his logos doctrine, his demonology, and his sacramental ideas and theology of worship.
Instructor(s): D. Martinez Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): At least two years of Greek.
Equivalent Course(s): GREK 34500,BIBL 41801,NTEC 41801,GREK 24500

FNDL 24901. Tolkien: Medieval and Modern. 100 Units.
J. R. R. Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings is one of the most popular works of imaginative literature of the twentieth century. This course seeks to understand its appeal by situating Tolkien’s creation within the context of Tolkien’s own work as both artist and scholar and alongside its medieval sources and modern parallels. Themes to be addressed include the problem of genre and the uses of tradition; the nature of history and its relationship to place; the activity of creation and its relationship to language, beauty, evil, and power; the role of monsters in imagination and criticism; the twinned challenges of death and immortality, fate and free will; and the interaction between the world of “faerie” and religious belief.
Instructor(s): R. Fulton Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Students must have read "The Lord of the Rings" prior to first day of class.
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 22400,HIST 29902

FNDL 25100. Thomas Mann’s Joseph and His Brothers. 100 Units.
Thomas Mann’s novel Joseph and His Brothers, a modern rewriting of the biblical story, was written over sixteen years (1926 - 1943) that shook German and European history through the assumption of power by the National Socialist party and the Second World War. Mann began the novel under the Weimar Republic and continued working on the novel in exile. The writer himself saw his novel as an act of resistance to his country’s anti-Semitic policies. In this course, we will closely read the novel, explore its relation to its biblical and other sources, learn about the history of its writing and publication and contextualize its genesis in Mann’s complicated involvement with German and world politics.
Instructor(s): O. Solovieva Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 25117,RLST 28215,CMLT 25103,JWSC 23402
Fundamentals: Issues and Texts

**FNDL 25817. W. G. Sebald: On The Natural History of Destruction. 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: Spring
Note(s): Texts will be available in English and German, discussion will be held in English.
We will “accompany” our reading of Sebald with a reading of Lucretius’s poem, On Nature.
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 35817,GRMN 25817

**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: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 12000,BIBL 32500

**FNDL 28204. Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. 100 Units.**
In this course we shall seek to understand Hegel’s 1821 book, *Elements of the Philosophy
of Right*. This book is traditionally understood to contain Hegel’s “political philosophy,”
but the book also proposes a metaphysics of human agency, claims about the relation of
philosophy to its own historical time, a rejection of utopian political thinking, a theory of
crime and punishment, and a theory of the relationship between individual and communal
life that he says is based on his “speculative philosophy,” and so is “dialectical.” In Hegel’s
terms, the book should be understood as his theory of “objective spirit,” and we shall attempt
to understand what that subject matter might be. The course will be a seminar/discussion
with restricted enrollment at both the undergraduate and graduate level.
Instructor(s): R. Pippin Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Prior work in philosophy, especially in practical philosophy, is highly
recommended.
Note(s): Undergrads enroll in sections 01 & 02. Graduates enroll in section 03.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 38203,SCTH 38004,PHIL 28203

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 classes.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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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>ARTH 10100</td>
<td>Introduction to Art</td>
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<td>ARTH 17610</td>
<td>Modernism</td>
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<td>ARTH 21511</td>
<td>Image, Spectacle, Sound</td>
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<td>ARTH 24110</td>
<td>Venetian Painting from Bellini to Titian</td>
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<td>ARTH 24812</td>
<td>Museums and Art</td>
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<td>CLCV 20400</td>
<td>Who Were the Greeks?</td>
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<td>CLCV 26216</td>
<td>Pagans and Christians: Greek backgrounds to early Christianity</td>
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<td>FREN 21503</td>
<td>Approches à l’analyse littéraire</td>
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<td>FREN 25301</td>
<td>Beautiful Souls, Adventurers, and Rogues. The European 18th Century Novel</td>
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<td>Tragedy</td>
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<td>ITAL 26200</td>
<td>Renaissance and Baroque Fairytales and Their Modern Rewritings</td>
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<td>LATN 21300</td>
<td>Vergil</td>
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<td>PHIL 21600</td>
<td>Introduction to Political Philosophy</td>
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<td>PHIL 21610</td>
<td>Medical Ethics: Who Decides and on What Basis?</td>
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<td>PHIL 22100</td>
<td>Space and Time</td>
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<td>PHIL 23000</td>
<td>Introduction to Metaphysics and Epistemology</td>
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<td>PHIL 23205</td>
<td>Introduction to Phenomenology</td>
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<td>History of Philosophy I: Ancient Philosophy</td>
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<td>PHIL 25200</td>
<td>Intensive History of Philosophy, Part I: Plato</td>
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<td>PHIL 26000</td>
<td>History of Philosophy II: Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy</td>
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<td>Intensive History of Philosophy, Part II: Aristotle</td>
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<td>PSYC 21950</td>
<td>Language, Culture, and Thought</td>
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<td>Beyond Good and Evil: The Psychology of Morality</td>
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<td>Florentine Political Thought</td>
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<td>Liberalism and Empire</td>
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<td>PLSC 24302</td>
<td>Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Politics</td>
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<td>Feminists Read &quot;the Greeks&quot;</td>
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<td>Authority, Obligation, and Dissent</td>
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<td>The Intelligible Self</td>
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<td>Introduction to Political Theory</td>
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<td>PLSC 28800</td>
<td>Introduction to Constitutional Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPAN 21500</td>
<td>Introducción al análisis literario</td>
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Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.