FUNDAMENTALS: ISSUES AND TEXTS

ABOUT FUNDAMENTALS

The Fundamentals program enables students to concentrate on questions and issues that intrigue them by reading texts that articulate and speak to these questions. It seeks to foster precise and thoughtful pursuit of these questions by means of (1) rigorous training in the interpretation of texts, supported by (2) extensive training in at least one foreign language, and by (3) the acquisition of the knowledge, approaches, and skills of various 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 texts (historical, religious, literary, scientific, political, and philosophical) in which the great writers articulate and examine questions in different and competing ways. These books, films, pieces of music, and artworks 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, government service, business, and education. Others have gone on to graduate school in numerous fields, including classics, comparative literature, English, history, philosophy, social thought, religious studies, psychology, political science, economics, mathematics, biology, and film studies.

FACULTY

The faculty of the Fundamentals program comprises scholars from various disciplines and divisions who represent interests and competencies in matters ancient and modern and expertise in different cultures and traditions. This diversity and pluralism exists within a common agreement about the primacy of fundamental questions and the centrality of important texts 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 comprises (a) 13 courses, (b) the Junior Paper, and (c) the Senior Examination, for a total of 1500 units.

**A. Course Work**

1. **Gateway Course (1 course) (Autumn Quarter or Winter Quarter):** 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 or the works of a single author, 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.

2. **Text/Author Courses (7 courses).** The seven Text/Author courses are devoted to the study of one or two particular texts or the work of a particular author. Text/Author courses are generally cross-listed as FNDL courses in Class Search (http://registrar.uchicago.edu/classes/); if a relevant course is not cross-listed, the student should contact the coordinator to see if it can be counted towards the major. In years when the Gateway Course is offered in Autumn Quarter, entering students are required to take at least one Text/Author course in Winter Quarter; in years when the Gateway Course is offered in Winter Quarter, entering students are expected to take at least one Text/Author course in Autumn Quarter.

   The Text/Author Courses and the Gateway Course—eight courses total—give each student the opportunity to develop a list of six 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 examine that interest from diverse perspectives. One of the six must be studied in an original language other than English, the same language in which the student establishes competency (any exceptions must be approved by the chair).

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).** The Fundamentals language requirement is designed with the belief that the texts you study in the program should come from diverse cultures and be appreciated in their original languages. In many cases, two years of formal language study will provide enough proficiency to analyze a non-Anglophone text in part or in whole. However, this is not true of all languages or all language learners. In cases where the target language requires more study to reach fluency, a student can prove proficiency through alternative routes. For example, a student could take a course in which the text will be studied in English translation, but agree with the instructor to read the text, in whole or in part, in its original language. In these cases, the instructor must be proficient in that language and be able to certify (in a short email to the Fundamentals coordinator and chair) that the student has engaged deeply with the text in its original language. The student could also study the text in its original language in an Independent Study course. In rare cases, the student could study the text on the student’s own and be given a sight-reading exam. The last two options are left to the discretion of the instructor, who need not be a Fundamentals core faculty member. In both cases, the instructor communicates with the program coordinator about proficiency. All students should be prepared to be examined on their non-Anglophone text in their Senior Examination and must demonstrate proficiency therein by citing passages from the original-language text.

**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 Examination**

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 examination, 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 Gateway Course</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Text/Author Courses</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Supporting Courses</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third quarter of second-year foreign language *</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNDL 29901 Fundamentals Junior Paper Colloquium</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNDL 29902 Fundamentals Senior Examination</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<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 Examination (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 2021–22 COURSES**

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

**FNDL 23005. Rousseau’s Political Thought I. 100 Units.**

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was a self-styled “Citizen of Geneva,” musical composer, best-selling novelist, paranoiac, botanist, professional solitary, chronic exhibitionist, and likely the most intensively studied political philosopher of all time. He left his mark on the European Enlightenment by engaging in a number of polemics on, among other things, consumerism, inequality, education, morality in art, mass political participation in modern societies, the role of women, and European geopolitics. He is blamed for the Terror in the French Revolution—the supposed result of the excesses of Enlightenment rationalism—and simultaneously worshipped as an icon of anti-modernist Romantic revolt. Thinkers such as Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud found inspiration in his work, while movements as diverse as free love, environmentalism, totalitarianism, and Montessori schooling are attributed to his influence. This two-quarter class will examine his social and political thought through close readings of a number of his works, including but not limited to the three discourses, The Social Contract, Émile, Julie, or the New Heloise, and his constitutional projects for Corsica and Poland.

Instructor(s): P. Cheney
Prerequisite(s): Ideal for students who have already taken Classics of Social & Political Thought; Power, Identity, Resistance; or Self, Culture, & Society.
Note(s): The first quarter of this course serves as the Gateway Course for Fundamentals. This is a two-quarter course that may be taken in part or whole, though for the best experience taking Parts I and II is highly recommended.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 22311

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

**FNDL 29901. Fundamentals Junior Paper Colloquium. 100 Units.**

Fundamentals students are required to register for and attend the Junior Paper Colloquium in Winter of their third year. This seminar provides structure and feedback during the Junior Paper writing process. Graded on a pass/fail basis, but unfinished Junior Papers will result in an “incomplete” grade. Occasionally also offered in Spring if a significant number of students successfully petition to write the Junior Paper that quarter.

Terms Offered: Spring Winter. Typically offered in Winter, occasionally offered in other quarters if multiple students are approved to write the JP late.
Prerequisite(s): Open only to third-year Fundamentals students.

**FNDL 29902. Fundamentals Senior Examination. 100 Units.**
Fundamentals students are required to register for this seminar in the quarter in which they will take their Senior Exam, typically in Spring. Exceptions to this can only be made with the consent of the program chair. This course does not have a set meeting time but is instead intended to create time in students' schedules to prepare for the exam. This course must be taken for a Pass/Fail grade. Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter. Typically offered in Spring. Occasionally may be taken in Autumn or Winter for students taking their exams early. Prerequisite(s): Open to fourth-year Fundamentals students.

**AUTUMN QUARTER COURSES**

**FNDL 20700. Aquinas: On God, Being and Evil. 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: Spring Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 23712, MDVL 20700, RLST 23605

**FNDL 21805. Introduction to Marx. 100 Units.**
This introduction to Marx's thought will divide into three parts: in the first, we will consider Marx's theory of history; in the second, his account of capitalism; and in third, his conception of the state. (A)
Instructor(s): A. Ford Terms Offered: Autumn Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21423

**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 Prerequisite(s): One prior philosophy course is strongly recommended. Equivalent Course(s): RLST 24800, PHIL 24800, KNOW 27002, GNSE 23100, HIPS 24300, CMLT 25001

**FNDL 25103. Xenophon's Education of Cyrus. 100 Units.**
This seminar is intended as an introductory reading of one of the classic treatments of political leadership, Xenophon's The Education of Cyrus. Themes will include the qualities and motives of a successful leader or ruler, especially in acquiring and expanding rule, relations between rulers and ruled, Xenophon's portrayals of Cyrus and other characters in the book, the relation between political and military leadership and more broadly between politics and war, the tension between empire and freedom, Cyrus's bi-cultural education and multinational rule, the roles of morality, religion, and love in politics, and differences between constitutional or legitimate and tyrannical or despotic rule. We will consider Xenophon's art of writing and the literary character of the book. Open to undergraduates with instructor consent. Instructor(s): Nathan Tarcov Terms Offered: Autumn Prerequisite(s): Open to undergraduates with instructor consent. Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 31719

**FNDL 25306. Deconstruction and Religion. 100 Units.**
In this seminar we will carefully consider selected works by French philosopher Jacques Derrida. We will address the emergence of religious themes in his early work and reconsider the relation between deconstruction and theology as divergent modes of discourse. We will then examine the roles of messianism, belief, and confession in his later work.
Instructor(s): Ryan Coyne Terms Offered: Autumn Note(s): This course meets the CS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 50112, RLST 23112, THEO 50112

**FNDL 25822. Topics in EALC: Themes in Traditional Chinese Thought. 100 Units.**
An introduction to ideas and ways of thinking in traditional China, and to some extent East Asia more broadly. This year, we will focus on ideas of qi ("breath," "vital energy," "psycho-physical stuff"), and related ideas about the human place in the cosmos, from their earliest appearance through their use in Neo-Confucian thought.
Instructor(s): P. Copp Terms Offered: Winter Equivalent Course(s): EALC 10717

**FNDL 26102. Chris Marker. 100 Units.**
Chris Marker (1921–2012) is one of the most influential and important filmmakers to emerge in the post-war era in France, yet he remains relatively unknown to a wider audience. Marker's multifaceted work encompasses writing, photography, filmmaking, videography, gallery installation, television, and digital multimedia. He directed over 60 films and is known foremost for his "essay films," a hybrid of documentary and personal reflection, which he invigorated if not invented with films like Lettre de Sibérie (Letter from Siberia, 1958) or Sans Soleil (Sunless, 1983). His most famous film, La Jetée (1962), his only (science) fiction film made up almost
entirely of black-and-white still photographs, was the inspiration for Terry Gilliam’s 12 Monkeys (1995). In 1990, he created his first multi-media installation, Zapping Zone, and in 1997 he experimented with the format of the CD-Rom to create a multi-layered, multimedia memoir (Immemory). In 2008, he continued his venture into digital spaces with Ouvroir, realized on the platform of Second Life. Marker was a passionate traveler who documented the journeys he took, the people he met, and revolutionary upheavals at home and afar. We will follow Marker’s travels through time, space, and media, during which we will also encounter artists with whom he crossed paths, with whom he collaborated, or who were inspired by his work.

Instructor(s): Dominique Bluher Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 20032, CMST 36303, MAAD 13303, CMST 26303

FNDL 27601. Lucretius. 100 Units.
We will read selections of Lucretius’ magisterial account of a universe composed of atoms. The focus of our inquiry is: how did Lucretius convert a seemingly dry philosophical doctrine about the physical composition of the universe into a gripping message of personal salvation? The selections include Lucretius’ vision of an infinite universe, of heaven, and of the hell that humans have created for themselves on earth.

Instructor(s): David Wray Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): LATN 22100, LATN 32100

FNDL 28401. Pasolini. 100 Units.
This course examines each aspect of Pasolini’s artistic production according to the most recent literary and cultural theories, including Gender Studies. We shall analyze his poetry (in particular “Le Ceneri di Gramsci” and “Poesie informa di rosa”), some of his novels (“Ragazzi di vita,” “Una vita violenta,” “Teorema,” “Petrolio”), and his numerous essays on the relationship between standard Italian and dialects, semiotics and cinema, and the role of intellectuals in contemporary Western culture. We shall also discuss the following films: “Accattone,” “La ricotta,” “Edipo Re,” “Teorema,” and “Salo”.

Instructor(s): Armando Maggi Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 33500, ITAL 38400, ITAL 28400, CMST 23500, GNSE 28600, GNSE 38600

WINTER QUARTER COURSES

FNDL 23780. The Chinese Classics. 100 Units.
The course will survey the first three of the Chinese Classics, the Yi jing or Classic of Changes, Shu jing or Classic of Documents, and Shi jing or Classic of Poetry, in three different moments of their histories: when they were first created, when they were canonized as classics, and when they were treated as the timeless wisdom at the heart of China’s traditions. All readings will be done in English, and will include both primary documents and some secondary readings.

Instructor(s): E. Shaughnessy Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 36510, EALC 26510

FNDL 25002. Plato’s Symposium. 100 Units.
The seminar is devoted to close readings and extended discussions of Plato’s Symposium. We will explore the views on Eros presented in the various speeches comprising the dialogue, among them: love’s relationship to physical beauty and human desire; its potential for prompting heroic action and forging moral education; its significance for the soul and place in the cosmos. We will also analyze the literary aspects of the work (plot, action, allegory); the dialogue’s historical setting (democratic Athens beset by domestic conspiracies and engaged in an apocalyptic war); its implications for political philosophy; and the function of a symposium in classical Athens. We will devote several sessions at the end of term to major interpretations of the dialogue.

Instructor(s): D. Kasimis, J. McCormick Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 35807, PLSC 25807

FNDL 25307. Milton and Blake: Conceptions of the Christian Epic. 100 Units.
Milton wrote Paradise Lost to capture in epic form the essence of Christianity;Blake wrote Jerusalem to correct Milton’s mistakes. We’ll read them together to get in on the debate.

Instructor(s): Richard Rosengarten Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 36401, ENGL 26411, ENGL 36401, RLST 26401

FNDL 25823. Topics in EALC: Dunhuang and the Silk Road. 100 Units.
Dunhuang, a key oasis town on the cultural and economic networks of ancient Eurasia known today as the “Silk Roads,” lay for centuries at the nexus of four major cultural spheres: those of China, Tibet, Central Asia, and the Steppe. Dunhuang is renowned especially for its connection with the Mogao Caves, a major Buddhist temple and pilgrimage site. Its immense importance today lies in the fact that it is not only the most important collection of Buddhist painting in the ancient world, but that it also held a cache of manuscripts and block-printed texts that has transformed our understanding of the history of the region, and especially of the histories of Buddhism, Daoism, Manichaeanism, and Christianity. Dunhuang’s location at the nexus of cultural spheres is reflected in the astonishing range of languages attested at the site, in manuscripts, epigraphy, and graffiti. These include Chinese, Tibetan, Khotanese, Sogdian, Old Uyghur, Old Türkic, Sanskrit, Sanskrit, Tangut, and Kucheane, among others. This course is an exploration of the rich history of Dunhuang and the Mogao Caves: not only the ancient histories reflected in its art, objects, and texts, but also the modern histories of those materials, which are today in good part scattered across the globe in museum and library collections filled by agents of 20th Century empires.
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Instructor(s): Paul Copp Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 10728

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): Robert 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, SCTH 38230

Spring Quarter Courses

FNDL 21221. Don Quijote. 100 Units.
The course will provide a close reading of Cervantes’ “Don Quijote” and discuss its links with Renaissance art and Early Modern narrative genres. On the one hand, “Don Quijote” can be viewed in terms of prose fiction, from the ancient Greek romances to the medieval books of knights errant and the Renaissance pastoral novels. On the other hand, “Don Quijote” exhibits a desire for Italy through the utilization of Renaissance art. Beneath the dusty roads of La Mancha and within Don Quijote’s chivalric fantasies, the careful reader will come to appreciate glimpses of images with Italian designs.
Instructor(s): Frederick de Armas Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Taught in English. Students seeking Spanish credit will read the text in the original and use Spanish for the course assignments.
Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 34202, CMLT 28101, CMLT 38101, SCTH 38250, SPAN 24202

FNDL 21300. James Joyce: 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.
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, Grothus, Spinoza) during the Counter Reformation and beyond.
Instructor(s): Rocco Rubini Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 25801, ITAL 23000, CMLT 35801, ITAL 33001

FNDL 21714. Boccaccio’s Decameron. 100 Units.
One of the most important and influential works of the middle ages—funnier than the “Divine Comedy.” Written in the midst of the social disruption caused by the Black Death (1348), the “Decameron” may have held readers attention for centuries because of its bawdiness, but it is also a profound exploration into the basis of faith and the meaning of death, the status of language, the construction of social hierarchy and social order, and the nature of crisis and historical change. Framed by a storytelling contest between seven young ladies and three young men who have left the city to avoid the plague, the one hundred stories of Boccaccio’s “Decameron” form a structural masterpiece that anticipates the Renaissance epics, Chaucer’s “ Canterbury Tales,” and the modern short story. Students will be encouraged to further explore in individual projects the many topics raised by the text, including (and in addition to the themes mentioned above) magic, the visual arts, mercantile culture, travel and discovery, and new religious practices.
Instructor(s): H. Justin Steinberg Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 33502, ITAL 23502

FNDL 23599. Christian and Anti-Christian: Kierkegaard and Nietzsche on Religion and Morality. 100 Units.
This course explores two radically different assessments of religion and morality, one by the Protestant thinker Søren Kierkegaard, and the other by an arch-critic of religion and morality, Friedrich Nietzsche. The course will focus on their assessments of Christian faith and its relation to morality and the human good. Both thinkers wrote in complex and confusing styles: Kierkegaard used pseudonyms; Nietzsche wrote in aphorisms. In order to explore their styles of writing and their critiques of religion and morality we will read Kierkegaard’s Fear and Trembling as well as Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morals. The general aim of the course, then, is to explore two seminal minds in the development of Western thought with the question in mind of their possible contribution to current theological and ethical thinking.
Instructor(s): William Schweiker Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): THEO 33599, RLST 23599, RETH 33599
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**FNDL 25308. Black Theology: Hopkins Versus Cone. 100 Units.**
Black Theology of Liberation, an indigenous USA discipline and movement, began on July 31, 1966 and spread nationally and internationally when James H. Cone published his first book in March 1969. Since that time, a second generation has emerged. In this course, we will create a debate between the second generation (represented by Dwight N. Hopkins) and the first generation (represented by James H. Cone). We will look at the political, economic, cultural, and sexual orientation parts of this debate.
Instructor(s): Dwight Hopkins Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): AMER 23111, GLST 23111, CRES 23111, RLST 23111

**FNDL 25311. Pale Fire. 100 Units.**
This course is an intensive reading of Pale Fire by Nabokov.
Equivalent Course(s): REES 30020, GNSE 29610, GNSE 39610, ENGL 22817, REES 20020

**FNDL 25876. Virginia Woolf's The Waves. 100 Units.**
We will read Virginia Woolf's The Waves for its visionary portrayal of social life in an expanded sense that embraces ancestors and nonhuman actors. Close reading of The Waves will be the primary task, but we will also look at theorists of ancestrality, intersubjectivity, and the public sphere for additional insight (Hans Ruin, Alfred Schutz, Bruno Latour). We will also briefly compare Woolf's project in The Waves with works of single consciousness fiction - Woolf's own Mrs. Dalloway and Flush, James Joyce's Ulysses - and engage with Woolf's critical thinking in her letters, lectures, and The Common Reader.
Instructor(s): Mark Payne Terms Offered: Spring

**FNDL 27603. Greek Oratory. 100 Units.**
Aeschines and Demosthenes. These two orators were fierce rivals in Athens; the luck of textual transmission allows us to read both of them smearing the other, and to explore what apparently passed for valid argument in the Athenian lawcourts. Demosthenes produced his finest work in attacking Aeschines; in this class we will explore both men's writings in depth.
Instructor(s): H. Dik Terms Offered: Spring. Topic: Aeschines and Demonsthenes
Prerequisite(s): Two years or more of Greek.
Equivalent Course(s): GREK 31900, GREK 21900

**FNDL 28332. Dostoevsky's Demons (1871-72) 100 Units.**
In this course we will be reading closely and discussing the controversial novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky, Demons (Bесы, 1871-72) about political tension and terrorism in late nineteenth century Russia. Based on the historical incident of the "Nечаев cell," a group that killed one of their own members as an act of political provocation, the novel gives a broad picture of the socio-political landscape, ideas about human agency in society, and the sensibilities of different social groups and classes in the late nineteenth century, and offers a philosophical meditation on the nature of political evil. We will read and discuss the novel in Russian. The final paper can be written in Russian or English. Taught in Russian.
Instructor(s): O. Solovieva Terms Offered: Spring

### 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 Class Search (https://coursesearch.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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